PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

(HANSARD)

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HOUSE OF COMMONS

OFFICIAL REPORT

THIRD SESSION OF THE FIFTY-THIRD PARLIAMENT
OF THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN
AND NORTHERN IRELAND
FIFTY-THIRD YEAR OF THE REIGN OF
HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

SESSION 2003–04

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RETAIL MANAGER—Mary de Souza

Catering Services - Palace of Westminster—

OPERATIONS MANAGER—Robert Gibbs

MANAGERS—Alexandra Hewitt, Vacancy

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BANQUETING CO-ORDINATORS—Jason Bonello, Diane Elderfield (maternity leave), Carlos Ramirez Canessa

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CLERK OF THE CROWN IN CHANCERY—Sir Hayden Phillips, KCB
COMPTROLLER AND AUDITOR GENERAL—Sir John Bourn, KCB
PARLIAMENTARY COMMISSIONER FOR ADMINISTRATION—Ann Abraham

19 April 2004

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 19 April 2004

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

St. Helena (Air Access)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for International Development (Mr. Gareth Thomas): On 16 September 2003, *Official Report*, col. 43WS, I announced in a written statement to the House that four expressions of interest had been received to last April's international invitation for private sector participation and potential investment in possible development of access by air for St. Helena. Since then, as anticipated in my statement, a full assessment of the four proposals has been carried out with the help of expert advice from Atkins Management Consultants and in consultation with the St. Helena Government.

That assessment is complete. After very careful consideration, and taking account of the advice provided in December 2003 and February 2004 by Atkins Management Consultants, we have concluded that none of the four outline proposals offers a basis upon which we might negotiate air access for St. Helena with DFID financial assistance as described in the invitation. The four respondents to the invitation have been informed. We have further decided, in the light of detailed scrutiny of the four proposals and subsequent analysis, to discontinue attempts to develop air access as part of a cross-linked package of private sector investment in which air access would be part-funded by proceeds from other private development. These decisions were based on our carefully considered conclusion that this approach presents unacceptable levels of risk and uncertainty to the St. Helena and UK Governments.

Nevertheless, we understand that air access still remains the preferred option of the people of St. Helena for maintaining physical links with the island after the present ship is withdrawn from service during or soon after 2010. We will work with the St. Helena Government to explore ways of providing air access and the value for money of these against other options. The costs are likely to be substantial. We therefore will conduct full feasibility and other investigatory work, which will take account of all costs and long-term impacts, in order to inform future decisions. The St. Helena Government and DFID expect to be in a position to take these decisions later this year.

Meanwhile, St. Helena has appointed its own local coordinator to assist in the process. We shall continue to ensure that, with her help, the people of St. Helena and others are kept as fully informed as possible of progress.

DEFENCE

ECHR Judgments (Courts Martial)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): On 6 January 2004, I set out the main findings of the judgment of 16 December 2003 of the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights in the cases of Cooper and Grieves and future conduct of courts martial. In particular, I stated the Government's intention to put a remedial order before both Houses under section 10 of the Human Rights Act 1998 for the purpose of making the necessary changes to naval court-martial arrangements that would ensure compliance with the ECHR.

The Naval Discipline Act 1957 (Remedial) Order 2004 came into force on 16 January 2004, pursuant to the procedure prescribed in paragraph 4 of schedule 2 to the Human Rights Act 1998. To date, I have received no representations concerning the order. I am grateful to the Joint Committee on Human Rights for recommending that the order be approved. The Government therefore do not intend to amend or replace the order currently before the House.

TREASURY

OGC Buying Solutions: Performance Targets 2004–05

The Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Paul Boateng):

Savings

The agency will facilitate at least £300 million value for money improvements for the public sector in 2004–05.

Customer satisfaction

The agency will continue to achieve levels of customer satisfaction above 90 per cent. as a headline figure and will demonstrate continuing improvements in customer satisfaction through other measures.

ROCE

The agency will make a return on capital employed of 6.5 per cent.

Efficiency

The agency will reduce by 5 per cent. the ratio of internal costs over value for money improvements with the outturn for the same ratio in 2003–04 (excluding any new business e.g. WDS)

A copy of the agency's Business Plan for 2004–05 can be found on their website www.ogcbuyingsolutions.gov.uk.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Agricultural Land

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): There has been a great deal of concern that agricultural land is being sub-divided into smaller plots and sold over the internet to purchasers who believe they may at some point in the future be able to build on the land. There are two issues of public concern surrounding the sub-division and sale of plots. Firstly, the erection of

fencing and the installation of caravans and access roads using permitted development rights granted under the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. This can lead to an unwelcome change in the appearance of open countryside, the loss of agricultural land and concern about the neglect of land split into different ownership. The other issue is whether buyers of the plots are being misled into thinking they will eventually be able to build properties on the plot and the fear from neighbours that development will be inevitable.

When the matter was debated at the Commons Report stage of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill, the Under-Secretary, my hon. Friend the Member for Pontefract and Castleford (Yvette Cooper), undertook to keep Members informed on progress made in considering what could be done to prevent the unwelcome development of sub-divided agricultural land. This statement provides an update on he measures that we have been considering.

As the issue arises from the sale of land in agricultural use in a way that implies the potential for development we have looked carefully at consumer protection measures. We do not think this offers a way forward at present. Cooling-off periods are usually a way of protecting people against high pressure selling techniques and they would probably not be effective here as there is no evidence that buyers have been subjected to these techniques. Moreover many of the purchasers of these sub-plots see themselves as making a long-term investment. They are not deterred by the knowledge that there is no likelihood of the land being granted planning permission for development.

We have also considered ways in which control over development on sub-plots could be tightened either by amending or removing permitted development rights, perhaps by requiring prior approval for development on sub-plots, or by classing the division of land into sub-plots or unused land as development. It became clear that real difficulties arose in trying to distinguish between the development we wanted to prevent and legitimate development we did not want to hinder. We need to balance the needs of legitimate users of permitted development rights against the desire to prevent unwelcome developments. Any benefits would be greatly outweighed by the negative impacts of any changes and open to further abuse.

A number of other issues have been raised during debates on this issue which fall within the remit of our review of the planning enforcement system in England and these points will be considered alongside that review.

However there are measures we can bring forward which will enable local planning authorities to take more immediate action as soon as evidence of abuse is suspected or emerges. We will consult in the summer on changes to enable local planning authorities to serve article 4 directions on site rather than in a newspaper to bring them into effect more quickly and on changes to allow an article 4 direction to come into effect without the Secretary of State's approval on a wider range of permitted development rights than is the case at present. We have already taken steps in the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill to introduce a measure to help speed up enforcement action following a breach of planning control that will enable local planning authorities to issue a temporary stop notice when a breach of planning control is first identified without first having had to serve an enforcement notice.

A large number of powers are already available to local authorities that some authorities use more effectively than others. We are also today issuing a letter to local planning authorities that sets out a summary of existing powers to deal with sub-plots. The letter encourages local planning authorities and amenity societies to advertise or use the Internet to give prospective plot purchasers a realistic idea of the likely development potential of their plots.

The Department of Trade and Industry and the Office of Fair Trading will investigate complaints about widespread misleading advertising or misselling of sub-plots. DTI's "Don't be A Mug!" website also provides a consumer's guide to scams and rip-offs and has recently been updated following a DTI campaign on investment scams. The address of the investment scams pages is http://www.dti.gov.uk/ccp/scams/page9.htm. Many of the points included on his section of the website are also applicable to sub-plots.

Unitary Development Plans (London)

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The test is of "general conformity" and not conformity. This means that it is only where an inconsistency or omission in a UDP would cause significant harm to the implementation of the spatial development strategy (SDS) that the UDP should be considered not to be in general conformity.

The fact that a UDP is inconsistent with one or more policies in the SDS, either directly or through the omission of a policy or proposal, does not, by itself, mean that the UDP is not in general conformity. Rather the test is how significant the inconsistency is from the point of view of delivery of the SDS.

Where a borough considers that one or more of the UDP policies and proposals are not consistent with the SDS, it must give robust reasons for this.

An opinion by the mayor that a UDP is not in general conformity does not mean the document automatically falls. Rather, the mayor's opinion on the matter would go forward as a duly made objection to be considered by the Inspector at the inquiry. The inspector will determine whether he or she supports the opinion and recommend accordingly.

In addition to any concerns about a lack of general conformity, the mayor may wish to make other representations concerning changes to specific policies and proposals which he would wish to see.

Where a UDP review has passed the formal deposit stage there is no specific provision for the mayor to make formal objections on the grounds of general conformity, although the mayor, like any other party, may make representations to a borough any time before the adoption of the plan. However, the Secretary of State would wish the mayor and the boroughs to resolve issues of general conformity through discussion, having regard to the Secretary of State's policy. It will be for boroughs to satisfy themselves that a UDP is in general conformity with the SDS before proceeding to adoption.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC Chairman

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): I wish to announce formally the appointment of Michael Grade CBE as the new Chairman of the BBC. Her Majesty the Queen approved his appointment in Council on 31 March and it will take effect from 17 May for a period of four years.

Michael Grade was the best candidate for the post. He has a passion for broadcasting, especially public service broadcasting. He knows it inside out. He has the energy to lead the BBC from the front, defending its independence and integrity from all comers. I am confident that, in Michael Grade, the BBC will have a Chairman of whom it can be proud.

The appointments process by which Michael Grade was appointed followed the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Conduct rules in full. The post was advertised in the national press and on the internet, shortlisted candidates were interviewed by a panel, including an independent assessor, who was involved throughout the process. Additionally, due to the exceptional public interest in this post, Dame Rennie Fritchie, the Commissioner for Public Appointments, chaired an independent scrutiny panel which acted as guarantor for the fairness of the process and to ensure its integrity.

Dame Rennie issued a press notice confirming that the Scrutiny Panel, consisting of Lord Steel of Aikwood, right hon. Dr Jack Cunningham and Lord Paul Condon, had examined the process thoroughly and rigorously and was entirely satisfied in the design, implementation and outcome.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Futurebuilders Fund

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for the Home Department (Fiona Mactaggart): I am announcing the establishment of an advisory group for the futurebuilders fund.

Futurebuilders is a £125 million investment fund to assist voluntary and community organisations and social enterprises in their public service work. It will enable organisations to modernise their operations so that they can increase the scale and scope of their public service delivery.

The fund will provide finance to acquire capital assets, through a range of funding solutions, including grants and various forms of loans. Advice and support will also be available to organisations to help them in accessing the fund.

The fund will be managed by Futurebuilders England, a consortium of organisations with experience of funding voluntary and community organisations.

The advisory group will advise ministers on the continuing objectives, priorities and governance and on the implementation and effectiveness of the fund. The group will have an independent chair, who will be appointed following an open recruitment process. Advertisements will appear in the press shortly.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 20 April 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Flood Defence Finding Review

The Minister for the Environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): On 12 March 2003 my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced the conclusions of our review of the funding and administrative arrangements for delivering a more efficient, effective and accountable flood and coastal defence service. A year on I want to update the House on the progress we have made towards implementing these conclusions, and outline what remains to be done.

We have set in hand arrangements for the Environment Agency to receive a single stream of Defra grant in aid funding from 1 April 2004. This will replace the previous mix of Defra grant for individual capital projects and, in large part, the levies previously raised through local authorities. This should provide the agency with more certainty of funding, allowing them to plan more strategically, while streamlining the procedures associated with implementing flood defence schemes. In future Defra approval will no longer be required for agency projects or strategies which are below £5 million though we will have the opportunity to call in strategies, and projects undertaken outside strategies, which are between £2 million and £5 million. We will also continue to ensure that the distribution of capital funding between the agency and other operating authorities (local authorities and internal drainage boards) is based on our priority scoring system which takes account of the number of people affected in relation to the cost of the project, the environment and benefit cost ratio.

Payment of grant in aid will be linked to robust targets in the agency's corporate plan. The agency may continue to raise limited levies on local authorities, agreed through flood defence committees on which local authorities have a majority, to fund locally important flood defence works beyond those covered by Defra funding. These local levies are set to raise some £24.4 million in 2004–05.

Work has also started on the procedures for transferring to the Environment Agency responsibility for those watercourses representing the greatest flood risk—the so-called critical ordinary watercourses. This will significantly improve accountability for flood risk with over 2,000 separate lengths of river identified for transfer. The necessary statutory procedures will start shortly with transfers taking place in stages until April 2006. Day to day management of the watercourses can be contracted back to internal drainage boards and local authorities where this is appropriate and agreed. As part of this exercise we are fully digitising the existing main river maps.

The Government also announced the intention to move to a single tier of flood defence committee to remove the bureaucracy and second-guessing of decisions involved in having two tiers of committee in several Environment Agency regions. The Environment Agency has consulted on the proposed successor arrangements and I expect to receive their recommendations for future structures within the next month. I shall consider their proposals and bring forward orders as appropriate.

We have also made progress on a number of other important initiatives to help improve the accountability and delivery of the flood defence service. From 1 April 2004 internal drainage boards will fall under the jurisdiction of the local government ombudsman and we have developed a complaints procedure for individual boards to adopt.

We are also working with the Association of Drainage Authorities and the Environment Agency to develop new targets for the administration and membership of boards but in the meantime I am encouraged that arrangements are already being made for 16 existing boards to merge into three larger boards in the Anglia region, and discussions are taking place in other regions.

Jointly with the Environment Agency we have considered ways in which overheads associated with capital schemes can be reduced. We will be implementing agreed findings and targets for overhead reduction will appear in the agency's corporate plan.

We will be assessing the benefits realised through implementation of these conclusions as part of a three-year review which we will undertake in 2007.

Whilst the funding review conclusions are being taken forward, Defra is simultaneously leading work on a new Government wide strategy for flood and coastal erosion risk management to be underpinned by the principles of sustainable development. This is being taken forward in full consultation with stakeholders and will look across all Government policies. As part of the strategy we are undertaking further work on possible new funding streams to go alongside Exchequer funding which, as we announced last March, will continue primarily to fund the service. We intend that the new strategy will steer the direction of policy over the next 10–20 years and that it will be completed in the coming financial year.

Defra, the Environment Agency and others are putting great effort into implementing the funding review outcomes and developing a new long-term strategy. Implementing flood defence grant in aid from this April is a notable achievement and other substantial reforms to improve accountability and effectiveness will be in place in the next 12 to 24 months.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (Ealing Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (BFI) follow-up inspection report on London Borough of Ealing Council was published on 14 April 2004 and copies of the report have been placed in the Library.

Following the housing green paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The "performance standards for housing benefits" allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the Standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

The BFI inspected London Borough of Ealing Council against the Performance Standards for housing benefits. The report finds that the council is not at Standard for any of the seven functional areas of the Performance Standards—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud, and overpayments.

However, the report finds that the council had made sustained improvements in a number of areas since the first BFI inspection report published in December 2000. The council:

> had significantly reduced its backlog of work from 46,000 items to 4,000; was processing housing benefits claims faster; had reduced the amount of time that customers wait when they make an enquiry by telephone or in person; had reduced the number of complaints and increased the level of satisfaction reported by customers; and had prosecuted more benefit fraudsters.

Weaknesses still remained in the controls for internal fraud and for recovering overpayments of benefit. The council still needs to do more to better manage its counter-fraud effort and, in particular, to deter fraud.

The council had improved its processing times for new claims to benefit and changes of circumstances, taking an average 51 days to process claims and 15 days to process changes of circumstances compared to the national standards of 36 and 9 days.

The council had carried out a number of good quality fraud investigations. During 2002–03, it had prosecuted 18 fraudsters compared to one during 1999–00 putting it in the top 25 per cent. of performers compared with the other London boroughs.

In 2002–03, London Borough of Ealing Council administered some £121.2 million in housing benefits, about 18 per cent. of its gross revenue expenditure.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

Benefit Fraud Inspectorate (Leicester City Council)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): On behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the benefit fraud inspectorate (BFI) inspection report on Leicester city council was published on 15 April 2004 and copies of the report have been placed in the Library. Following the housing green paper "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All", published in April 2000, the Department for Work and Pensions developed a performance framework for housing benefits. The performance standards for housing benefits allow local authorities to make a comprehensive self-assessment of whether they deliver benefit effectively and securely. They are the standards that the Department for Work and Pensions expects local authorities to aspire to and achieve in time.

The BFI inspected Leicester city council against the performance standards for housing benefits. The report finds that the council is not at standard for any of the seven functional areas of the performance standards—strategic management, customer services, processing of claims, working with landlords, internal security, counter-fraud and overpayments.

However, the report notes the considerable efforts made by members, senior officers and staff over a sustained period of time.

The report finds that the council had a backlog of around 14,500 cases, poor IT reliability, insufficient management information which together with limited planning had hindered the council's ability to deliver an effective benefits service. This had resulted in new benefit claims and changes of circumstances taking 141 days and 49 days to process during 2002–03.

Although processing times were taking too long, the quality of processing and verification of claims was found to be of a good standard. However, the lack of effective management checks meant that the council had only limited assurance that benefits were being paid correctly and securely. Also, customers were experiencing problems trying to access the benefits service by telephone.

The quality of fraud investigation work was good and all investigation officers were trained to professional standards. However, limited resources and weaknesses in the planning of investigation work were undermining efforts to secure the benefits system.

In 2002–03, Leicester city council administered some £97 million in housing benefits, about 16 per cent. of its total gross revenue expenditure.

The report makes recommendations to help the council address weaknesses and to further improve the administration of housing benefit and council tax benefit, as well as counter-fraud activities.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State is now considering the report and will be asking the council for its proposals in response to the BFI's findings and recommendations.

NORTHERN IRELAND

New Targeting Social Need

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): I wish to advise the House that on 14 April 2004 I launched a public consultation exercise in respect of a proposed way forward for new targeting social need (New TSN), the Government's high level policy for tackling poverty and social exclusion in Northern Ireland.

By undertaking this consultation we are fulfilling a commitment given by the previous Northern Ireland Executive, in its programme for Government, to review the New TSN policy.

Copies of the consultation paper "New TSN—the Way Forward Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy" have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Water Resource Strategy

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): Today I am publishing the Water Service's Water Resource Strategy 2002–30.

The Strategy provides a framework for meeting increasing water demand in Northern Ireland, through the efficient use of water including leakage reduction and by upgrading and rationalising the existing supply system.

An Executive Summary of the Strategy has been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and is available on the Water Service website at www.waterni.gov.uk.

DEFENCE

Joint Medal Office

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): As part of a wider modernisation of service personnel administration policies and the procedures and the introduction of the IT to support their delivery known as the joint personnel administration (JPA) programme, and following an investment appraisal and consultation with trade unions, the decision has been taken to concentrate the delivery of JPA from three sites: Innsworth, Gosport and Glasgow.

This will incorporate the creation, from March 2005, of a joint medal office at Innsworth the current location of the RAF medal office and will involve the phased closure of the army medal office at Droitwich and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines medal offices located at Gosport. In order to provide continuity of service and to build up the necessary expertise at Innsworth the transfer of responsibilities will be phased.

Consultation with MOD Trade Unions about the choice of the three sites from which JPA will be delivered has been undertaken and detailed local consultation about the implications for staff will start shortly. It is expected that some of the current staff will transfer to Innsworth with the work. It is anticipated that staff at Gosport and Innsworth who are unable to transfer to the JMO will be found other positions in the locality, but I cannot rule out a programme of early retirement and redundancy that may be required in particular at Droitwich.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Neighbourhood Wardens Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): The Government is today publishing a research report and research summary entitled "Neighbourhood Wardens Scheme Evaluation". This evaluation of the neighbourhood wardens scheme, undertaken by Social Development Direct, concludes that, in successful schemes, wardens are laving a significant impact. Neighbourhood wardens schemes represent value for money in relation to crime reduction. There are also important, but uncosted, additional benefits—improved quality of life, reduced fear of crime, improvements in environmental problems and anti-social behaviour.

Copies of the research report and summary are available at www.neighbourhood.gov.uk and in the Library of the House.

Regional Planning Guidance (North-West)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): The North West Regional Assembly (NWRA) published, on 19 April, a consultative draft of the Partial Review of Regional Planning Guidance for the North West (RPG13) that was published by my right hon. Friend, the Deputy Prime Minister in March 2003.

RPG13 sets out the spatial development strategy that encompasses proposals for the development of the Region's economy, housing and transport infrastructure, and other land uses. It also sets out proposals for the conservation, management and enhancement of the Region's natural and cultural environment.

Regional Planning Guidance also provides the regional framework for the plans and strategies of a range of public, private and voluntary organisations, including the preparation of local authority Development Plans and Local Transport Plans.

The consultation will also allow consideration of the implications of the Northern Way growth work being led by the Regional Development Agencies.

The selective, partial, review covers a number of key matters of importance to the future of the region, including:

Transport—The Regional Transport Strategy is updated in the light of a number of major studies in the region and consultations on national aviation policy. The review also includes transport investment priorities, the management of the regional highway network, a regional freight strategy and criteria to ensure that new developments are accessible by public transport;

Sustainable energy—targets are put in place that should help to increase the amount of energy supplied from renewable resources;

Waste management—a new approach to handling waste is set out that will encourage recycling and composting, and reduce landfill;

Climate change—a new policy on climate change is introduced that will aim to meet greenhouse gas reduction targets and allow planning for the implications of climate change;

Strategic Regional Parks— three broad areas of search for Strategic Regional Parks are identified based on the North West Coast, the Mersey Belt and East Lancashire; and

Strategic Views along the River Mersey—a policy to protect and enhance selected views for different parts of the Mersey valley is put forward.

The draft Partial Review is published for consultation with all regional stakeholders over a period of 12 weeks. An independent Panel will take into account all responses to the consultation before it hole s a Public Examination in November, where it will consider the issues arising from the consultation. The Panel will

produce a report for the First Secretary of State, who will then publish the final version of the RPG following further consultation, in 2005.

Copies of the relevant documents are available in the Libraries of both Houses and have been provided for all of the Region's MPs, MEPs and local authorities.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): The Foreign Secretary, the Minister for Trade and Investment and I attended the donor conference on Afghanistan held in Berlin on 31 March and 1 April, at which donors were invited to respond to the recent needs assessment compiled by the World Bank.

The conference was an opportunity for donors to: assess the political progress that has taken place in Afghanistan since the Bonn and Tokyo conferences of 2001 and 2002; discuss the challenges that now face the Afghan Government; and demonstrate continued commitment to Afghanistan's long-term future development.

The announcement by President Karzai of the plan to hold elections in September was warmly welcomed. At a side meeting donors pledged an additional $65 million to the election process, helping to keep it on track. The UK pledged an additional $5 million, taking our overall election funding to $24 million. Preparations for elections are on course although security for a free and fair election remains a major concern.

Donors demonstrated their commitment to Afghanistan, by pledging US$8.2 billion of assistance over the next three years. This represents two thirds of Afghanistan's requirements over this period, and it is hoped folly to meet Afghanistan's needs with increased money becoming available from donors that were only able to make one-year pledges in Berlin. Of this new pledge over half, US$4.5 billion, is for this financial year. This meets Afghanistan's request for the year and is more than double the amount disbursed in Afghanistan last year. This increase comes at an important time, as a number of Government programmes become effective and the Government's capacity to absorb funds and implement programmes increases.

As I outlined in my statement to Parliament prior to the conference, 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 74WS, I announced an increase of the UK's commitment to Afghanistan from £200 million over five years to at least £500 million over the same period. This funding is to support a range of reconstruction work, support for conflict prevention, and the counter narcotics effort. A booklet outlining DFID's programme in Afghanistan has been placed in the Library of the House.

Many donors acknowledged the particular challenges that both drugs and the security situation present to Afghanistan's successful development. I emphasised to the conference the UK's commitment as lead donor to tackling the opium industry in Afghanistan, and many other donors also acknowledged the importance of dealing with this. The UK's specific provision of £70 million over three years to tackle this problem is an important lead and we are working closely with other donors to increase their funding in this area and to ensure that all development assistance is delivered in a way which supports counter-narcotics objectives. In the light of the importance that the conference attached to this problem, it was also a real achievement for the Afghan Government that they signed the Berlin Declaration on Counter Narcotics with the six signatories to the Good Neighbourly Relations Declaration, agreeing a common stance on tackling drugs in the region.

TRANSPORT

Dibden Bay Port Terminal

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Tony McNulty): I am today issuing the decision on the proposals submitted by Associated British Ports to develop a new container port at Dibden Bay, near Southampton. The Inspector's report of the public inquiry held into the proposals between November 2001 and December 2002 is also being published today.

The decision and the reasons for it are set out in the decision letter.

After carefully considering the Inspector's report and taking into account all relevant considerations, I have decided to refuse permission for the port development, in line with the Inspector's recommendation.

The Government fully recognise the nation's and industry's needs for additional container port capacity in order to meet future economic demand. Every proposed port development must nevertheless be justified on its own merits.

One important factor in the making of this decision was the environmental impact of the proposals on internationally protected sites.

A copy of the decision letter has been placed in the House Library.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Council of the European Union

The Minister for Europe (Mr. Denis MacShane): The forthcoming business in the Council of the European Union is as follows:

Date	*Location*	*Event*
April		
26–27	Brussels	General Affairs & External Relations (GAERC)
26–27	Brussels	Agriculture & Fisheries Council
27	Luxembourg	EU/Russia Permanent Partnership Council (Troika?)
29–30	Brussels	Meeting of the Economic and Financial Committee
29–30	Brussels	Justice & Home Affairs (Ministerial Informal)
May		
1	Dublin	Enlargement Event
4–6	Dublin	EuroMed Foreign Ministers
6–7	Botswana	EU-ACP Council of Ministers

Date	*Location*	*Event*
7	Limerick	Meeting of Ministers with responsibility for Equality
9–11	Killarney	Agriculture Informal Ministerial Meeting
10	Brussels	Meeting of Eurogroup
11	Brussels	ECOFIN
11–12	Cork	Health Ministers Consultative Meeting
14–16	Waterford	Informal Meeting of EU Environment Ministers
17–18	Brussels	General Affairs & External Relations (GAERC)
19–20	Offaly	Informal Budget Committee
21	Moscow	EU/Russia Summit (Troika)
23–25	Brussels	Agriculture & Fisheries Council
24–25	Brussels	Meeting of the Economic and Financial Committee
24–25	Brussels	Agriculture & Fisheries Council
25–27	Co. Galway	Conference on Islands and Territorial cohesion-Meeting New Challenges
27–28	Brussels	Education, Youth & Culture Council
27–31	Dublin	Ministers and Directors General of Public Administration
28	Guadalajara	EU-Latin America/Caribbean Summit
June		
1–2	Luxembourg	Health Council
1	Dublin	Development Ministers' Meeting
1	Luxembourg	Meeting of Eurogroup
2	Luxembourg	ECOFIN
8	Luxembourg	Justice & Home Affairs Council Meeting
10–11	Luxembourg	Transport, Telecom & Energy Council
14–15	Luxembourg	General Affairs & External Relations (GAERC)
17–18	Brussels	EUROPEAN COUNCIL
21–22	Luxembourg	Agriculture & Fisheries Council
21–22	Brussels	Meeting of the Economic and Financial Committee
25–26	tbc	EU-US Summit
28–29	Luxembourg	Council Meeting of EU Environment Ministers

Date	*Location*	*Event*
July		
1	Brussels	Coreper 2
2–3	Maastricht	Competitiveness (Informal)
7	Brussels	Coreper 1
7–8	Brussels	Coreper 2
8	tbc	EU-Ukraine Summit
8–10	Maastricht	Social Policy (Informal)
9–10	Amsterdam	Transport (Informal)
12–13	Brussels	General Affairs & External Relations (GAERC)
12–14	Rotterdam	Informal Ministerial Education Youth and Culture
14	Brussels	Coreper 1
15	Brussels	Coreper 2
16–18	Maastricht	Environment (Informal)
19	Brussels	JHA Council
19	Brussels	Agricultural & Fisheries Council
22	Brussels	Coreper 2
23	Brussels	Coreper 1
August		
No meetings planned		
September		
1	Brussels	Coreper 1
2	Brussels	Coreper 2
3–4	Maastricht	Gymnich
5–7	Noordwijk	Agriculture & Fisheries (Informal)
8	Brussels	Coreper 1
8	Brussels	Coreper 2
9–10	Noordwijk	Health (Informal)
11	Sheveningen	ECOFIN
13–14	Brussels	GAERC
15	Brussels	Coreper 1
16	Brussels	Coreper 2
17	Brussels	Coreper 1
17–18	Noordwijk	Informal Ministerial Defence
20–21	Brussels	Agricultural & Fisheries Council
22	Brussels	Coreper 1
22	Brussels	Coreper 2
24	Brussels	Competitiveness Council
27	Brussels	(Possible) Council Transport, Telcom and Energy
29	Brussels	Coreper 1
29	Brussels	Coreper 2
30	Den Haag	JHA (Informal)

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 21 April 2004

DEFENCE

Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): I am pleased to be able to announce that we will be buying 64 Tomahawk land attack missiles from the United States under the terms of a foreign military sales case. These are conventionally armed land attack missiles. These new missiles will be to higher—Block IV—specification than our existing Block III missiles. As such, they will provide the ability to retarget or abort a mission in flight and will also provide battle damage indication. They will be capable of being fired from our current Trafalgar Class submarines as well as from our new Astute Class submarines when they enter service.

This decision shows our continued commitment to enabling precision attack at long range against selected targets.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Discretionary Social Fund

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): I am pleased to announce that the Northern Ireland discretionary social fund budget for 2004–05 will be £58.25 million; £12.64 million will be allocated to grants, £45.51 million to loans and £0.1 million will be held as a contingency reserve. The new allocations represent an increase of £1.65 million over the initial gross budget set at April 2004. This increase will be funded through higher loan recoveries, plus an increase in net treasury funding of £0.94 million for this year. This £0.94 million is the second of three annual increases from a £8.2 million boost for the discretionary social fund announced in the autumn 2002 pre-Budget report.

The community care grant budget has been increased by £0.94 million to £12.64 million. This will provide more help to customers, in particular families with children and the disabled.

The loans budget has been increased to £45.51 million, an increase of £0.71 million on the initial 2003–04 loans budget. To improve the fairness of the scheme, budgets will be allocated in a way that will over time achieve greater consistency of outcome for customers wherever they live.

Details of the budget allocations, together with a note explaining the basis on which they have been made, have been placed in the House of Commons Library today.

Youth Justice Agency

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): I have placed copies of the Youth Justice Agency's Corporate Plan for 2004–07 and Business Plan for 2004–05 in the Libraries of both Houses.

Business Plan contains eight key performance targets I have set for the Service for 2004–05. These are:

Contribute towards the development and publication of an NIO Public Service Agreement target to reduce the reconviction rate for all offenders (compared to a predicted rate for Northern Ireland).

During term-time, 95 per cent. of children in the Juvenile Justice Centre will receive 20 hours a week of education and training.

No escapes from the Juvenile Justice Centre.

Over the year no more than 3 per cent. of the total new admissions to the Juvenile Justice Centre should be non-accidentally injured.

Over the year no more than 2 per cent. of the total members of staff should be non-accidentally injured while engaged in the work of the Agency.

No members of the public should be non-accidentally injured on Agency premises.

Deliver at least 70 per cent. of the planned training days specified in the Corporate Training Priorities Plan for 2004–05.

Expenditure is within budget allocated.

CABINET OFFICE

Election Guidance

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Douglas Alexander): The Government have today issued guidance to civil servants on the principles which they should observe in relation to the conduct of Government business in the period before the forthcoming elections to the European Parliament, Greater London Authority and to local authorities in England and Wales.

The guidance stresses that civil servants should conduct themselves in accordance with the civil service code and is based on the need to maintain the political impartiality of the civil service and the need to ensure that public resources are not used for party political purposes.

The guidance will come into force on Thursday 20 May 2004, ahead of the elections on Thursday 10 June 2004.

Copies of the guidance have been placed in the Library.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Sustainable Development

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): I am delighted to announce that the consultation "Taking it on: Developing UK Sustainable Development Strategy" was launched today.

The UK Government, together with the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government and Northern Ireland are consulting to develop new

sustainable strategy for the UK. The consultation will include local and regional events and an online consultation facility, and will provide a strong basis for renewed action to deliver sustainable development.

The consultation will close on 31 July. We aim to publish the new UK strategic framework, and the UK Government's strategy, in spring 2005.

The consultation document will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses, and is also available on the UK Government's sustainable development website.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): The new arrangements for child support came into operation for new cases and some linked old scheme cases from 3 March 2003. Progress has been slower than anticipated, chiefly due to problems with the new computer and telephony systems. However, over the course of the first year of operation of the new scheme, progress in performance has grown steadily. For example, more than a third of all maintenance calculations and over 45 per cent. of all first payments were made in the latest quarter. Further improvement is expected.

The number of cases cleared in the final quarter rose above 50,000 taking the total number of clearances (calculations and closures) to over 150,000. The ratio of cases reaching calculation compared to those that closed continued to be 6:4 to the year's end, comparing favourably with the ratio of 4:6 under the old scheme.

Technical issues continue to preclude reliable figures on compliance and throughput for the latest quarter. The Department continues to retain around 15–20 per cent. of each monthly payment due to EDS, the service provider, due to the continuing problems with the computer and telephony systems. A special exercise is being undertaken to test accuracy to the year-end.

Average weekly child support maintenance payments to parents with care are shown below. Figures are for March 2004 only and are calculated as the total amount received and allocated divided by the number of cases.

	1 Qualifying Child	*2 Qualifying Children*	*3 Qualifying Children*
Average Weekly Payment	£34.25	£48.84	£53.91

Summary of Agency Performance to March 2004

Agency Performance	*Quarter 1 Mar–Jun 2003*	*Quarter 2 Jul–Sep 2003*	*Quarter 3 Oct–Dec 2003*	*Quarter 4 Jan–Mar 2004*	*Scheme to Mar 2004*
Applications received	73,582	78,982	85,306	83,652	321,522
Applications cleared	12,648	38,583	49,453	[1]51,876	[1]152,560
of which:					
Maintenance Calculations	6,671	23,857	29,672	[1]31,229	[1]91,429
Closures[2]	5,977	14,726	19,781	[1]20,647	[1]61,131
First payments made through the Agency	461	5,164	11,473	14,017	31,115
First Child Maintenance Premium payments made	77	3,314	6,173	7,484	17,048

Agency Performance (March 2003 to June 2003)	*March 2003*	*April 2003*	*May 2003*	*June 2003*	*Total in Quarter*
Applications Received	3,444	25,228	19,951	24,959	73,582
Applications Cleared	43	1,616	3,441	7,548	12,648
of which:					
Maintenance Calculations	10	721	1,810	4,130	6,671
Closures[2]	33	895	1,631	3,418	5,977
First payments made through the Agency	136 for 1st 3 months[3]			325	461
First Child Maintenance Premium payments made	17 for 1st 3 months[3]			60	77

Agency Performance (July 2003 to September 2003)	*July 2003*	*August 2003*	*September 2003*	*Total in Quarter*	*Scheme to September 2003*
Applications Received	28,897	23,761	26,324	78,982	152,564
Applications Cleared	10,526	11,923	16,134	38,583	51,231
of which:					
Maintenance Calculations	6,922	7,199	9,736	23,857	30,528
Closures[2]	3,604	4,724	6,398	14,726	20,703
First Payment made through the Agency	1,032	1,752	2,380	5,164	5,625
First Child Maintenance Premium payments made	267	1,596	1,451	3,314	3,391

Agency Performance (October 2003 to December 2003)	*October 2003*	*November 2003*	*December 2003*	*Total in Quarter*	*Scheme to December 2003*
Applications Received	35,724	28,841	20,741	85,306	237,870
Applications Cleared	19,832	16,011	13,610	49,453	100,684
of which:					
Maintenance Calculations	11,807	9,975	7,890	29,672	60,200
Closures[2]	8,025	6,036	5,720	19,781	40,484
First Payments made through the Agency	3,978	3,503	3,992	11,473	17,098
First Child Maintenance Premium payments made	2,108	1,915	2,150	6,173	9,564

Agency Performance (January 2004 to March 2004)	*January 2004*	*February 2004*	*March 2004*	*Total in Quarter*	*Scheme to March 2004*
Applications Received	27,950	24,680	31,022	83,652	321,522
Applications Cleared	16,418	16,316	18,318	[1]51,876	[1]152,560
of which:					
Maintenance Calculations	9,803	9,780	10,931	[1]31,229	[1]91,429
Closures[2]	6,615	6,536	7,387	[1]20,647	[1]61,131
First Payments made through the Agency	4,193	4,284	5,540	14,017	31,115
First Child Maintenance Premium payments made	2,283	2,220	2,981	7,484	17,048

Notes:

[1] Quarter 4 totals and Scheme to March 2004 figures include clerical cases (new scheme cases unable to be progressed on the new system) which are not included in the month-by-month figures. Figures for these are as follows:

Applications cleared	824
Maintenance Calculations	715
Closures	109

[2] Closures: Applications close for a variety of reasons. The main reasons are that the parent with care withdraws the application, perhaps due to reconciliation, or having agreed private arrangements with the non-resident parent.

[3] Figures marked with * are not available on a monthly basis for this period.

A proportion of cases that have a maintenance calculation in place may already be receiving payment directly, but will not be reflected in the figures shown above.

Figures for child maintenance premium payments include an estimate of the number of parents who receive the premium by way of a disregard to their income support/income-based jobseekers allowance. The disregard has been added from August as data were not available prior to this, and has also been included in the scheme to date figure.

Pension Credit

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): I can now provide latest monthly progress report on the take-up of pension credit, which became payable on 6 October 2003.

There are now 2.40 million pensioner households (2.91 million individuals) being paid pension credit, including 138,000 pension credit households (176,000 individuals) added in March. This is the greatest monthly increase in the number of pension credit households (so far to date) and means that we have met our published target for the end of March. As at 31 March, there are 1.74 million households (2.09 million individuals) now receiving more money as a result of the introduction of pension credit. The pension credit application line, at our four sites across the country, has received millions of calls since it became operational on 7 April 2003 and 95 per cent. of calls have been answered within 30 seconds. The average pension credit award is £41.34 per week.

Our direct mail campaign is continuing, supported by a major advertising campaign on TV and in the press. By the end of this month we will have written to every pensioner household in the country to tell them about pension credit. We are continuing to work with organisations such as Help The Aged, Age Concern and Citizens Advice, among others, both at national and local level, to encourage eligible people to take up their entitlement. In particular, the pension service is focusing on those customers who are less likely to take up their entitlement.

There is plenty of time for pensioners to apply for pension credit. To ensure that pensioners do not lose out there is a twelve-month backdating provision, as announced in the Budget statement. This will allow applications to be backdated for a year, or to the date entitlement begins if this is later.

I am placing in the Library a report showing progress so far, including regional breakdowns of the number of pension credit households and numbers of pension credit cards in parliamentary constituencies in Great Britain. Copies of the report are also available for hon. Members in the Vote Office.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 22 April 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Chairman of the Service Authorities (NCIS/NCS)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): I have appointed Paul Lever as the Chairman of the Service Authorities for the National Criminal Intelligence Service and the National Crime Squad from 1 April 2004.

I have also reappointed Caroline Burton and Jennie Harvey as independent members for a further two years from the same date.

These appointments will continue until such time as the arrangements for the Serious Organised Crime Agency are established.

Managed Migration

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): I am today announcing a series of measures to prevent abuse of immigration routes open to those wishing to come to the United Kingdom to study, work and marry here. These measures build on work which IND has been taking forward over several months, together with other departments, and which I indicated to the House on 30 March when I set out the next stage of policy in this area. They have been finalised by a series of managed migration taskforces, which we have set up to bring together policy, operational and intelligence personnel, enabling better co-ordination and focus. I am confident that the resulting package of measures achieves the necessary balance, in these areas, between facilitating the vast majority of genuine applicants from whom this country derives enormous benefits and protecting the system against actual and potential abuse. Other areas remain under review.

Students

The Government will establish a list of accredited private colleges. Discussions are already well advanced with the British Council and others on accreditation of English language schools. We will establish a scheme to broaden this to other colleges.

By the end of the year we will be in a position of only issuing visas to students attending accredited colleges. In the meantime, where there are doubts about whether a college not on the list is bona fide, applications will be put on hold while the Home Office investigates them. An urgent programme of such investigations will begin next week.

We will be consulting on introducing a requirement for all educational institutions to notify the Home Office where a foreign student does not enrol, or enrols and then disappears.

We will also step up enforcement. This will include targeted multi-agency enforcement operations to disrupt proprietors of sham institutions and remove illegal staff and/or students. We will create more Risk Assessment Units in Embassies abroad to work alongside entry clearance staff and improve the flow of intelligence on fraud and abuse.

We will consult on a requirement on foreign students to demonstrate self-sufficiency, and ability to meet the financial requirements of the course before granting entry clearance.

Marriage

I am announcing today that we will legislate to restrict the capacity to authorise marriages involving foreign nationals from outside the EEA to a number of designated register offices. We are consulting with registrars about the most effective means of doing so. This will enable expertise to be built up on abuse and mean that we can focus our enforcement efforts. Clearly not all marriages involving foreign nationals present the same level of risk in terms of immigration abuse: for example, foreign nationals who have been resident here for many years. We will be working with registrars to refine our proposals to achieve the necessary balance between facilitating the vast majority of genuine applicants and protecting the system from abuse.

We will also consult on making further changes to the marriage laws to reinforce these proposals, including empowering registrars to refuse to conduct a marriage they suspect is being carried out for the purposes of illegal immigration, until it has been properly investigated by the immigration authorities.

The Government will underpin these changes through a better co-ordinated intelligence-led focus on marriage abuse supported by an effective enforcement response where cases of abuse are detected.

In the coming months there will be a major new enforcement effort targeting sham marriages and those who organise them with the aim of arresting those engaged in such marriages and, where appropriate, prosecuting the organised criminality behind them.

We are strengthening current arrangements for joint working between caseworkers and immigration officers to ensure a better focus on analysing intelligence, and more effective following up reports, for example from Registrars about suspicious marriages.

We will set up a joint working group between the Home Office and Registrars to share intelligence and enable the enforcement effort and other counter-measures to be better targeted.

Quota-Based Schemes

The temporary quota based schemes for the hospitality and food processing industries are due to be reviewed at the end of May in the light of EU enlargement. I have also ordered a review of the quota based scheme for agricultural workers, for the same reason—around a third of these places were filled last year by nationals of the new EU accession states.

I have decided that in consultation with industry, we will at the end of May be setting reduced quotas for these schemes to reflect the fact that from 1 May accession nationals will be able to come and work

through the planned workers registration scheme. We will be able to take account of early information from the registration scheme in revising the quotas.

We will at the same time review control of both schemes.

ECAA

We will also be looking at the rules and practices for ECAA applications, from the remaining countries who will be covered by that scheme after 1 May, taking account of the outcome of the investigation, which Ken Sutton is undertaking, of procedures for dealing with ECAA applications in Bulgaria and Romania. In the meantime, ECAA applications from Romania and Bulgaria continue to be suspended.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Food Safety Promotion Board

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela Smith): Copies of the Food Safety Promotion Board annual report 2002 incorporating financial statements to December 2001 have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

This document provides details of the Food Safety Promotion Board's activities, its performance to the end of 2002 and its expenditure to December 2001.

Waterways Ireland

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Angela Smith): Copies of the Waterways Ireland Annual Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 December 2002 have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

This document provides details of Waterways Ireland's activities, its performance, and its expenditure for that year.

DEFENCE

Defence Science and Technology Laboratory

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The following key targets have been agreed for the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) for Financial Year 2004–05.

At least maintain overall customer satisfaction and understanding of Dstl; by 31 March 2005 implement new methodology and set the baseline against which Dstl will monitor and improve its customer relationships in the future.

Maintain and by the end of a three-year period show an increase in score for scientific and engineering capability in the technical benchmarking exercise from 67 per cent. in 2002–03 to 72 per cent. in 2005–06.

By 31 July 2004 publish an update of Dstl's technical strategy that identifies the key technical issues and Dstl's role in addressing them, and by 31 March 2005 agree with MOD a future process that ensures that Dstl aligns itself with MOD's S and T outputs.

Achieve planned progress to meet the completion date of 2008 for the transfer of Dstl onto three core sites at Porton Down, Portsdown West and Fort Halstead. Key milestones in 2004–05 are: issue the invitation to tender for the site rationalisation and facilities management contract (December 2004); pilot office layout options (March 2005); produce a plan for site remediation at Porton Down (October 2004).

Pilot at least three areas of category management—procurement of manpower technical support, travel and laboratory equipment—to achieve cost and efficiency savings of £5.5 million by 31 March 2005.

Maintain the average charge rate for manpower for 2004–05 and beyond below that for 2001–02 uplifted by GDP deflator.

Achieve a ROCE of at least 3.5 per cent. and a MOD dividend of £3 million[1].

[1] In addition to the 2004–05 ROCE target of at least 3.5 per cent. Dstl will aim to achieve a ROCE of at least 3.5 per cent. averaged across the period 2004–05 to 2008–09, as agreed with HM Treasury.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

House of Lords Reform

The Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor (Lord Falconer of Thoroton): I have today published the responses to the consultation paper *"Next steps for the House of Lords"*, and a Government summary of these. Copies of the summary have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The individual responses are available on the Department for Constitutional Affairs' website, www.dca.gov.uk.

TREASURY

Community Budget 2004

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly): The Statement on the 2004 Budget of the European Communities (EC Budget), entitled "European Community Finances" (Cm 6134), has today been laid before Parliament. This White Paper is the twenty-fourth in the series. As in the past, it covers annual budgetary matters and includes details of recent developments in European Community financial management and in countering fraud against the EC Budget. It also describes the EC Budget for 2004 as adopted by the European Parliament, and details the United Kingdom's gross and net contributions to the EC Budget for calendar years 1998 to 2004 and financial years 1998–99 to 2005–06.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Single Payment Scheme (English Regions)

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): On 12 February I announced the basis upon which the new single payment will be calculated in England once the scheme comes into operation next year. As part of those arrangements, I said that England would be divided into two regions, namely the severely disadvantaged areas of the less favoured areas (SDA) and land outside the SDA.

Since that announcement, I have been approached by a number of key representative interests who have argued that the original proposal did not adequately reflect the extent of the different land types in England. They have requested a further division of land in England that would identify moorland within the SDA as a separate region. They argued that this would more closely reflect land conditions and productive capacity and, therefore, current subsidy payments.

I have given careful consideration to those representations and to others which have argued for alternative solutions. However the further refinement of a moorland line within the SDA was ultimately the proposal of all the main representative bodies.

One of the purposes of setting the regional boundaries as proposed was to provide some limitation on the redistributive effects of the move to the new flat rate single payment. I accept that the boundaries as announced might have resulted in redistribution of subsidy away from more productive SDA land to less productive moorland. I have therefore decided to amend the regional boundaries as announced on 12 February.

The regions in England will now comprise the moorland within the upland SDA; the rest of the upland SDA; and all land outside the upland SDA. The upland SDA comprises all the areas classified in accordance with Article 3(4) of Directive 75/268/EEC. It does not include the Isles of Scilly which were classified as a less favoured area in accordance with Article 3(5) of that Directive.

In selecting moorland in the SDA as one of the regions, I am aware that it is possible that there may be some minor inaccuracies in the location of the boundary at certain points. I am therefore considering whether and what practical arrangements can be made for consideration of representations on this issue as part of the arrangements for the introduction of the new scheme. I will make a further statement on this at an early date.

I recognise that this decision to amend the regional boundaries may come as a disappointment to some. Although there will be farmers in the SDA who will gain from this decision, some others, particularly those within the moorland line, will see payments at a lower level than would have been the case under the original announcement, and in some cases less than their coupled historic receipts.

We will need to see that hill farming communities receive appropriate support from other sources, including the England rural development programme. The hill farm allowance scheme will continue to operate for the remainder of the current England rural development programme (up to the end of 2006). In addition, I want to ensure that farms in the uplands have a full opportunity to be rewarded for improved environmental management of their land, including through agri-environment schemes. I have therefore asked my officials to consider how the next round of rural development programming (from 2007 onwards), can better reflect the needs of upland communities, and the public interest in good management of some of our best-loved landscapes.

Written Ministerial Statements

Friday 23 April 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

British Waterways

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality (Alun Michael): I am pleased to advise that DEFRA and the Scottish Executive have begun a joint policy review of British Waterways. It will be a strategic review and its terms of reference are to:

assess how well British Waterways is operating within the framework of the policy documents "Waterways for Tomorrow and Scotland's Canals: An Asset for the Future"; and to

advise what changes are needed to enable British Waterways to improve its ability to deliver Government policies and customer satisfaction.

In particular, the Review will consider:

British Waterways' performance over the past five years;

whether the current governance, financial and legislative arrangements are conducive for getting the right performance from British Waterways;

whether the future direction of British Waterways as set out in its Our Plan for the Future 2003–07 is right, and whether it is consistent with "Waterways for Tomorrow and Scotland's Canals: An Asset for the Future"; and

whether DEFRA and the Scottish Executive's working relationships with BW could be improved to deliver better strategic Departmental objectives as sponsor.

On 19 April 2004, in conjunction with the Scottish Executive, I launched a public consultation exercise that will form a key part of the review. The consultation document invites views on the performance of British Waterways over the last five years and the way in which it should carry out its business in the future. In particular it asks for comments on the extent to which British Waterways has met its objectives as set out in its Framework Document "Waterways for Tomorrow", and "Scotland's Canals: An Asset for the Future" and the extent to which the Government's objectives for British Waterways as set out in these documents meet current needs. The consultation period will last for 12 weeks and close on 14 July.

A Steering Group, including representatives from DEFRA, The Scottish Executive, British Waterways, Treasury, ODPM and the Shareholder Executive, will oversee the review. Their terms of reference are:

"Having regard to British Waterways' Terms of Reference, to:

Commission Papers to examine particular aspects in detail.

Carry out public consultations.

Seek direction and approval from Ministers at key stages and oversee publication of the Review."

It will publish its recommendations in late autumn.

Copies of the consultation document can be viewed on DEFRA's website at http://www.defra.gov.uk/

DEFENCE

United Kingdom Hydrographic Office

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): Key Targets have been set for the Chief Executive of the UK Hydrographic office for the financial year 2004–05. The targets are designed to drive further improvements to the Agency's performance and are as follows:

Key Target 1. Safety

While aiming for 100 per cent., to achieve a safety index exceeding 95 per cent. of all radio navigational warnings issued to timescale.

Key Target 2. Defence

To achieve an index rating of more than 95 for the defence programme as set out in the tasking authorisation forms.

Key Target 3. Customer Satisfaction

Customer and end user satisfaction to exceed a scale rating of 87 by the end of the financial year 2004–05.

Key Target 4. Wider Markets

To earn revenue of £2.4 million from markets other than SOLAS navigational products and services.

Key Target 5. Finance

To break even taking one year with another, and to achieve a return on capital employed of 9 per cent. averaged over the period 2004–05—2008–09.

Key Target 6. Finance

Mark-up to be reduced to 200 per cent. by the end of 2004–05.

Air Combat Service Support Units

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The Ministry of Defence is continually examining ways of improving military capability and value for money for the taxpayer, including by keeping the size and location of our bases under review.

On 14 August 2003, I announced a review of the future basing requirement for the RAF's Air Combat Service Support Units (ACSSUs), elements of the Air Surveillance and Control System (ASACS) and some other minor units and the potential impact on the future requirement for RAF Boulmer, RAF Neatishead, RAF Sealand and RAF Stafford, should relocation of units currently based there be recommended.

The primary objective of this particular review was to meet the Department's basing needs in the light of the move towards expeditionary operations. A number of options were identified on which my officials have consulted widely. A number of hon. Members have made representations. The Review has now concluded.

I am now able to inform the House that I am inclined, subject to formal consultation with the trade unions, to accept the option which creates an ACSSU communications hub and a base for ASACS units at RAF Scampton and an ACSSU logistics hub at RAF Wittering. Implementation of this option as a whole would be over an extended period, beginning later this year and not complete until about 2012.

This option offers the greatest operational flexibility to our Armed Forces by collocating support units on main operating bases. It is also the most cost-effective solution. It would mean that communications personnel would relocate to Scampton from RAF Sealand (from 2005) and RAF Brize Norton (from 2005), together with AS ACS units currently based at RAF Neatishead (from 2004–05) and RAF Boulmer (from 2009), bringing the total number of people at the station up to around 2,400 by 2012. In the case of RAF Wittering, logistics personnel would relocate from RAF Stafford (from 2005). This would increase the number of personnel at the Station to around 2,130 personnel by 2006.

The Ministry of Defence has written to the trade unions to ask for their formal response to this option by 7 June 2004.

I will make my decision when I have received trade unions documents and will inform the House at that time.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Commercial Property Leases

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): The Government are today announcing a forthcoming consultation about whether to legislate to regulate terms in commercial property leases and if so what form that regulation should take.

April 2002, the commercial property industry introduced a new voluntary Code of Practice for commercial property leases. This sought to address Government concern about the lack of choice and flexibility in commercial leasing; in particular, the lack of alternatives to upward only rent reviews in longer leases and the poor information available to small business tenants. The Government announced that they would review the impact of the Code, and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister commissioned the University of Reading to undertake research. The Office asked the University to prepare an interim report on the first year of the Code, by the end of 2003, and a final report on the whole of the first two years of the Code, by the end of this year. The Government announced they would consider whether it would be sufficient to continue relying on a voluntary Code of Practice or whether to move to regulate lease terms, in the light of the research, feedback from stakeholders and an analysis of complaints received.

Informal feedback during the first year of the Code was that despite major efforts to disseminate it widely, it was having little effect on leasing practices. In view of this, the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in the 2003 Budget report that if the interim report suggested that little progress had been made, we would consult during 2004 on legislative options. This would enable the Government to introduce legislation at an early stage if the final report then confirmed that progress had been disappointing and the Government concluded that it should proceed with legislation.

Earlier this year the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister received Reading University's interim report, which we are publishing on our website today. This paints a disappointing picture of the impact of the Code in its first year. It has found that although there has been no reversal of previous trends towards shorter leases and that more leases contain operable "break" clauses, rent review provisions are almost universally upwards only. It is particularly disappointing that there are few signs yet of landlords offering alternative leasing packages at different prices, although the report finds that a degree of negotiation does take place. The Government are also concerned about the evidence that small business occupiers have too little information to be able to negotiate the best deals.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will therefore shortly issue a consultation paper in conjunction with the Welsh Assembly Government about the regulation of commercial lease terms in England and Wales. This will seek views on the whole principle of legislation in this field as well as the various options for regulating lease terms. The Government will not make a decision about whether or not to legislate until we have studied the final report from Reading University, due at the end of this year, taking account of the outcome of the consultation exercise.

Written Ministerial Statements

Monday 26 April 2004

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Planning Permission (Duration)

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill contains provisions to reduce the default period for the commencement of development under a planning permission, listed building consent or conservation area consent from five to three years. This provision is a crucial part of our agenda for speeding up the operation of the planning system.

Local planning authorities have flexibility under existing legislation to vary the length of a permission or consent. This flexibility will remain. The time limit for the commencement of development will normally be three years from the date of permission or consent, but a local planning authority may direct a longer or shorter period as it considers appropriate. Local arming authorities should look favourably upon requests for longer periods of duration where there are valid planning grounds for such a request. There will be cases where three years is unlikely to be long enough to allow developers to complete all the preparation needed before starting work. Longer periods are likely to be appropriate, for example, for complex generation projects.

After the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill has completed its Parliamentary passage, the Government will issue guidance to local planning authorities on the new provisions. In this guidance we will make clear the need for flexibility on the part of local authorities in their dealings with applicants on the duration of permissions and consents.

Antisocial Behaviour

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): The Government is today publishing draft guidance for social landlords on how they should prepare and publish their statements of policies and procedures for tackling antisocial behaviour on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website for consultation.

Section 12 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 places a new requirement on all social landlords (local housing authorities, registered social landlords and housing action trusts) to prepare and publish statements.

The consultation is aimed at all social landlords in England and those with an interest in housing and antisocial behaviour issues, including tenants groups. I would therefore urge the sector and others with an interest in these issues to consider the draft and supply their views.

A key part of tackling antisocial behaviour is to ensure that tenants know exactly what their landlord will do about it when it occurs. Tenants often feel left in the dark when they are experiencing problems with antisocial behaviour. They may not know what options are available to them or the landlord. Sometimes the problem may be because front-line housing management staff are unclear about what procedures they should be following either.

Guidance is intended to support landlords in preparing and publishing their statements, helping them further define and develop their approaches to tackling antisocial behaviour and ensuring they work in partnership with other agencies to meet the needs of their tenants and the wider community when deploying interventions.

Following consultation, statutory guidance issued by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will apply to local housing authorities and housing action trusts in England. The housing corporation will issue statutory housing management guidance in the form of a circular for registered social landlords, under the requirements of the Anti-social Behaviour Act. The National Assembly for Wales (NAW) will be issuing similar guidance in Wales.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Draft Identity Cards Bill

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): I am today publishing a draft Identity Cards Bill for consultation as part of a document explaining the need for legislation entitled "Legislation on Identity Cards: A Consultation" (CM 6178).

The draft Bill establishes the legislative framework that would be necessary for the incremental introduction of the national identity cards scheme as set out in "Identity Cards: The Next Steps" (CM 6020) published in November 2003.

The draft Bill includes provisions that would:

set up a National Identity Register that would include identity information on individuals who have been registered and issued with an identity card;

establish a family of ID cards based on new and existing documents;

create powers to ensure that the details provided by an applicant can be checked against information already held on other databases to guard against fraud. Each use of these powers will require Parliamentary approval;

provide reassurance that disclosure of information from the National Identity Register without the individual's consent will not be allowed, apart from for prescribed purposes such as on grounds of national security or for the prevention or investigation of crime, and to ensure there is independent oversight of these arrangements;

establish new criminal offences for the possession of false identity documents. These will cover offences relating to the new identity card as well as existing identity documents that are false or have been improperly obtained;

allow a date to be set when it would become compulsory to register and be issued with a card (but not compulsory to carry a card which is specifically prohibited in the draft Bill). This provision, together with the mandatory requirement to make ID cards the required proof of identity could be

brought in only following a vote in both Houses of Parliament, on a detailed report which sets out all the reasons for the proposed move to compulsion and how the Government propose to implement compulsion. Both Houses would be able to amend the proposition before being asked to take a final decision;

enable regulations to be made, once it was compulsory to register and be issued with an identity card, to make it a requirement to provide proof of identity by the production of an identity card to access public services.

We welcome the House of Commons Home Affairs Committee's announcement of its intention to examine the draft Bill.

Copies of the consultation document "Legislation on Identity Cards: A Consultation" are available in the Vote Office and the Printed Paper Office and have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses, and can also be viewed on the Identity Cards website www.identitycards.gov.uk. Interested parties are invited to submit their comments and views on the content of the draft Bill by 20 July 2004.

Terrorism Act 2002–03

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): I am pleased to announce that Lord Carlile of Berriew QC has completed the report on the operation of the Act, which will be laid before the House today.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits (Third Party Deductions for Fines)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Chris Pond): One of the Government's priorities is to improve performance in the collection of fines and reinvigorate fines as an effective penalty for those who commit crime, thereby increasing public confidence in the criminal justice system.

Currently, offenders who default on payment of fines and are receiving income support, jobseeker's allowance or pension credit, may have the sum of £2.80 deducted weekly from their benefit, by way of a third party deduction, until the fine or fines are recovered in full.

However, this cash repayment is frequently too low for effective enforcement of financial penalties. It is often below the minimum repayment rate that magistrates can accept from offenders unable to pay immediately and in full, and it results in a repayment period that is too drawn-out.

We are therefore increasing the amount of this weekly deduction from £2.80 to £5. This increase will be subject to the normal rules governing implementation of the various third party deductions from benefit that may be made, including the maximum amount for such deductions. If those rules preclude a £5 deduction but would allow one of £2.80, that rate will apply instead. This change is also consistent with the £5 now required from some non-resident parents on benefit towards child support maintenance.

This will support the Government's efforts to restore confidence in fines as an effective penalty and therefore a credible alternative to prison. The increase is aimed at those offenders who simply refuse to repay their fines or those who opt to pay by deduction from benefit. It supports the wide-ranging work that the Department for Constitutional Affairs is carrying out in this area.

We propose to amend regulations so that the increase will come into force from April 2005.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 27 April 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Energy Efficiency Implementation Plan

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): The Government published yesterday "Energy Efficiency—The Government's Plan for Action". This fulfils our commitment in the February 2003 energy White Paper to set out our delivery plan for the energy efficiency strategy contained in the White Paper. Copies of the plan were placed in the House Libraries yesterday.

In the document "Energy Efficiency—The Government's Plan for Action", I have designated an energy efficiency aim in accordance with the duty set out in section 2(1) of the Sustainable Energy Act 2003; such aim relates to the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in England and is compatible with Community obligations and any other international obligations of the United Kingdom.

The Government yesterday also published the first annual report on the energy White Paper, the Strategy for Combined Heat and Power to 2010, and the second fuel poverty annual report. Copies of these documents were also placed in the House Libraries yesterday.

In her written statement to the House of Commons on 3 February 2004, the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry said that the Government envisaged publication of the fuel poverty implementation plan with the above documents. The Government now envisage publication of the fuel poverty implementation plan in the summer.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Oversight Commissioner's Report

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Ian Pearson): I have today laid before this House a copy of the oversight commissioner's first statutory report for the year 2004, which is being published today, in accordance with section 68(4)(a) of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000.

This is the first report compiled by Al Hutchinson as oversight commissioner and the 10th in the series of oversight reports published since 2001.

I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the new oversight commissioner to this very important post.

DEFENCE

Defence Medical Education and Training Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The following key targets have been set for the Chief Executive of the Defence Medical Education and Training Agency (DMETA) for the Financial Year 2004–05:

Key Target 1—Deployable Personnel

To meet 100 per cent. of the Commander in Chief's requirements for secondary care personnel under DMETA command for operational deployments.

Key Target 2—Military Training

To ensure that 80 per cent. of all DMETA personnel, whose medical category permits, achieve their service's annual mandatory individual military training.

Key Targets 3—Training Success

(a) Initial Training (Phase 2)

To provide Initial Training (Phase 2) that meets the requirements, professional standards and timescales defined by the single services.

(b) Career, Professional and Continuation Training (Phase 3)

To provide career, professional and continuation training (Phase 3) that meets the requirements, professional standards and timescales defined by the single services.

Key Targets 4—Efficiency and Cost Management

(a) DMETA Estate

Ensure the rationalisation and efficient usage of the current DMETA estate, reducing the balance sheet value of the estate as at 1 April 2003 by at least 50 per cent. by 2010, thereby reducing the cost of training.

(b) Cost Measurement

To develop an output cost based methodology for efficiency and unit cost performance measurement for implementation by April 2005.

Key Target 5—Customer Focus

To develop and implement by 1 April 2005 a measure of the extent to which customers value the quality of DMETA outputs.

Defence Dental Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The following key targets have been set for the chief executive of the Defence Dental Agency for the financial year 2004–05:

Key Target 1—Meeting Operational Manpower Requirements

To meet 100 per cent. of the Commander in Chief's requirements for DDA manpower to support operations.

Key Target 2—Dental Risk

To achieve 90 per cent. of all Service personnel in dental risk categories A and B by 31 March 2005.

Key Targets 3—Treatment Needs

To reduce the Treatment Needs Index for each Service to the following: RN at or below 375;

Army at or below 600; RAF at or below 375 by 31 March 2005.

Key Targets 4—Military Training

To ensure that 80 per cent. of all DDA personnel, whose medical category permits, achieve their Service's annual mandatory individual military training.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Ashford Growth Area

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister has published for public consultation proposed changes to the Ashford growth area section of chapter XII of regional planning guidance for the South East (RPG9). They follow the public examination into the draft in December 2003 and the panel report in February 2004.

Growth areas are an integral part of regional planning guidance (RPG) and the draft chapter represents a revision to RPG9, as published in March 2001.

Other partial reviews of RPG9 are at various stages in the process. In particular, a public examination into the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub-regional strategy is under way, and the Secretary of State's proposed changes for the regional transport strategy are out for consultation.

Ashford is both a centre for regional economic development and a gateway to Europe. Growth must bring real benefits to the whole community, which is why our proposed policies promote the right development in the right place at the right time.

The regional planning guidance needs to define new policies that will not only support the projected growth of housing and jobs in Ashford but will guide the growth in a sustainable way.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister proposes accepting all the recommendations of the independent panel that held the public examination into the proposed alterations, with minor modifications.

I have written to the regional assembly with the proposed changes. There will now be a public consultation period on the proposed changes, which will end on 17 June.

Copies of the relevant documents are available in the Libraries of both Houses and have been provided for all of the region's MPs, MEPs and local authorities.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 28 April 2004

WORK AND PENSIONS

"Ambition: Health" Pilots

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): From September this year, Jobcentre Plus, in partnership with the National Health Service and the Learning and Skills Council, will begin a pilot on Merseyside of "Ambition: Health". This new initiative will provide local workless people with the skills for good jobs in the NHS. Those who gain employment as a result will receive further support and training to gain qualifications and a sound basis for career progression.

"Ambition: Health" will be the fifth of the Ambition programmes to be developed by the National Employment Panel and delivered by Jobcentre Plus. It joins programmes in the energy, construction, retail and IT sectors, which have directly involved employers in the design of high quality training, preparing participants specifically for their vacancies.

Preparations are under way for a second pilot in South Yorkshire, to follow early in the New Year. Jobcentre Plus is examining the feasibility of further local pilots to be launched during 2005.

HEALTH

Learning Disability Services

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Dr. Stephen Ladyman): I am today publishing "Valuing People: Moving Forward Together", the Government's second annual report on learning disability services. The report describes progress made in implementing the programme of action set out in the White Paper "Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century" (Cm 5086) and responds to "Rights, Independence, Choice and Inclusion", the second annual report of the learning disability taskforce, which was published in February this year.

"Valuing People" is a cross-Government strategy. In last year's annual report, "Making Change Happen" (HC 5114), we acknowledged the learning disability taskforce's concern that Government as a whole was not giving enough priority to people with learning disabilities and undertook to talk to Government Departments about learning disability and the impact of their work on people with learning disabilities. "Valuing People: Moving Forward Together" reports on that work and describes areas where departments have worked with, or will be working with, learning disabled people to ensure that they can be more fully included in society. It records a wide range of activity covering many aspects of daily life:

> The Department of Trade and Industry plans to work with people with learning disabilities to make sure that Consumer Direct provides information in a way that they can understand.
>
> The Department of Health and the Department for Education and Skills are jointly supporting a conference later this year on parenting and people with learning disabilities.
>
> Under the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Supporting People initiative, more than £400 million has been allocated to services for people with learning disabilities.
>
> The Department of Health has awarded the Home Farm Trust £194,000 over three years to set up a self sustaining national network of organisations supporting family carers who have adult relatives with learning disabilities.
>
> The Department for Transport has funded a project with Transport for London and a self-advocacy group to make buses and tubes in London easier for people with learning disabilities to use.
>
> The Department for Constitutional Affairs has been consulting people with learning disabilities over the Mental Incapacity Bill.

Today's report, like last year's, is written in an accessible form, using pictures and straightforward, jargon-free language. We commissioned people with learning disabilities from the London Consultative Group to advise us on making the report accessible and I should like to acknowledge the help we received from them. It is important that people with learning disabilities can see for themselves what is being done to improve the services they use and to increase the opportunities available to them to lead the type of life the rest of us take for granted.

"Valuing People" said that it would take a minimum of five years for its programme to be implemented. We are now over half way through that period and continue to make good progress.

Copies of "Valuing People: Moving Forward Together" have been placed in the Library.

CABINET OFFICE

Departmental Report 2004

The Minister for the Cabinet Office and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster (Mr. Douglas Alexander): I have today, with my right hon. Friend, the Chief Secretary to the Treasury, laid before Parliament the "Cabinet Office Departmental Report 2004" (Cm 6226).

The report describes the work of the Cabinet Office, and includes a performance report for each of our public service agreement targets. It explains how significant changes to the Cabinet Office's leadership and internal structure over the past year have enhanced our ability to deliver our objectives. The report also includes a set of tables showing past outturn and future expenditure plans.

Copies are available in the Vote Office and in the Library.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Middle-Income Countries

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Although DFID's primary focus is, and will remain, the poorest countries of the world, DFID is producing a middle-income countries' strategy to ensure that our resources are used effectively to deliver the millennium development goals. We are publishing a consultation paper for discussion with our partners, and a copy has been placed in the Library. Our aim is to secure an improved international consensus around support to middle-income countries.

We will publish the final version of the strategy later in 2004.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Small Business Service

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): The Small Business Service (SBS) is today publishing its business plan for 2004–05. I have deposited copies of the plan in the House of Commons Library. Electronic versions are available on the SBS website www.sbs.gov.uk.

The Government published a cross-departmental action plan "A Government action plan for small business" in January. The action plan defines Government's programme of work going forward and is the foundation for the 2004–05 SBS business plan. The SBS has a leadership role as a centre of expertise, an innovator and an engine for change within government based on its experience of delivering services to small businesses and its extensive research base and network of contacts.

The business plan sets out what the SBS will do to drive forward implementation of the Government action plan over the next 12 months. It also sets out the changes being made within the SBS to make a reality of its leadership role within Government on small business issues.

The plan identifies eight key agency targets for 2004–05 grouped—where relevant—under the strategy to which they relate.

Building an enterprise culture

Deliver a national enterprise awareness event involving public and private sector partners in November 2004.

Encouraging a dynamic start-up market

Complete the establishment of the council for graduate entrepreneurship by May 2004.

Building the capability for small business growth

Ensure by March 2005 that Business Link (both the website and the face to face service) is effectively promoting and delivering the DTI's new portfolio of business support products—particularly those relating to innovation, knowledge transfer and best practice.

Improving access to finance for small businesses

Complete an action plan for carrying forward the recommendations of the review of the small firms loan guarantee by December 2004, and launch a pathfinder round of enterprise capital funds within one month of state aid approval being received.

Encouraging more enterprise in disadvantaged communities and under-represented groups

Launch the second round of the City Growth Strategies and Phoenix Fund Building on the best projects from April 2004, monitor their progress and begin a programme of events to share best practice by February 2005.

Improving small businesses' experience of Government services

Plan the transfer of responsibility for the management of Business Link Operator contracts to the regional development agencies within a national framework that maintains core service standards with effect from April 2005.

Developing better regulation and policy

Complete a public consultation so that government can consider whether to extend the concept of common commencement dates for regulations to new areas of domestic law, and publish the responses.

Delivering the Government Action Plan for Small Business

Monitor, evaluate and drive forward implementation of the Government-wide "Action Plan for Small Business" published in January 2004, updating the web-based implementation programme available at www.sbs.gov.uk on a regular basis to record the progress being made.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Cyprus

The Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Jack Straw): I would like to inform the House of developments in relation to Cyprus since my written statement of 1 April. In that statement I described how, after talks in Cyprus and in Switzerland between the parties, and also with the leaders of Greece and Turkey, the UN Secretary-General produced a final version of his comprehensive settlement proposals. I looked forward to the referendums scheduled for 24 April.

The House will know that the referendum in the Turkish Cypriot community was carried by a large majority, but that in the Greek Cypriot community the settlement proposals were opposed by a large majority. Accordingly the Annan plan—which was designed to be self-executing in time for a reunited island to enter the EU on 1 May—is null and void. The United Kingdom's offer of territory from the sovereign base areas, which as an integral part of the plan is also null and void.

It follows that, on 1 May. Cyprus will join the EU, but in the absence of a settlement the EU acquis will be suspended in the north of the island.

On the evening of 24 April I made the following statement, which I should like to raw to the attention of the House:

"For thirty years, the international community has supported the efforts of Cypriots on both sides to resolve their differences and put an end to the tragic division of the island.

Over the last few years, Kofi Annan and his team have built on earlier efforts and worked tirelessly to bring about a comprehensive settlement package that meets the key interests of the two sides, and provides a solid foundation for a durable bi-communal, bi-zonal federal solution.

Britain has always given its strong support to the efforts of the UN and of those on both sides who have shown the courage to seek a realistic compromise solution.

We will respect the choice that the Greek Cypriots have expressed today. But I hope that they will continue to reflect on whether this choice is the right one for them. By this decision a majority of Greek Cypriot voters has rejected the settlement, despite the prospect it offered of reuniting the island, providing long-sought relief for the refugees of 1974 and progressively lifting the weight of militarisation—all this within the framework of political stability and economic security which European Union membership provides.

I am glad that the Turkish Cypriot community has voted so clearly for the settlement. The result shows what a fundamental change of attitude has taken place within the Turkish Cypriot community in recent years.

I understand very well their wish to end their isolation in the world, to join with Greek Cypriots in a reunified island, and to move together into the European Union that is the best guarantee for the future of their collective security and prosperity. I want them to know that this remains our goal too, and that we will continue to work for its ultimate realisation.

Meanwhile, I would like to assure all Cypriots that, if at any point in the future both communities decide in favour of a comprehensive settlement which would reunify the island in the European Union, the United Kingdom, as a guarantor power, a permanent member of the UN Security Council, and a leading EU member state, not to mention a long-standing friend and supporter of Cyprus, will be exerting all its efforts to ensure that the settlement is the practical and political success which Cypriots have for so long deserved".

These were the policies which I advocated at the 26 April meeting of the General Affairs and External Relations Council in Luxembourg. They met with wide agreement from our European partners. There was regret that the union's strong preference for accession by a reunited Cyprus had not proved possible. But there was also determination to build upon the positive aspects of the situation, including the contribution of the Governments of Greece and Turkey, and—in particular—the pro-EU, pro-settlement vote of the Turkish Cypriot community. The conclusions in respect of Cyprus issued by the council on Monday were as follows:

"The council noted the results of the referenda in Cyprus on 24 April and expressed its strong regret that the accession to the EU of a united Cyprus will not now be possible on 1 May. The council expressed its deep appreciation for the determined and sustained efforts of the UN Secretary General Kofi Annan and his colleagues in the search for a comprehensive solution of the Cyprus problem. The council also welcomed the contribution made by Greece and Turkey. It expressed its determination to ensure that the people of Cyprus will soon achieve their shared destiny as citizens of a united Cyprus in the European Union.

The Turkish Cypriot community have expressed their clear desire for a future within the European Union. The council is determined to put an end to the isolation of the Turkish Cypriot community. The council invited the Commission to bring forward comprehensive proposals to this end, with particular emphasis on the economic integration of the island and on improving contact between the two communities and with the EU. The council recommended that the 259 million euros already earmarked for the northern part of Cyprus in the event of a settlement now e used for this purpose.

The council asked COREPER to expedite discussion of the Regulation on a regime under Article 2 of Protocol 10 of the Act of Accession with a view to its adoption before 1 May, taking due account of the council's desire to send a signal of encouragement to the Turkish Cypriot community that its future rests in a united Cyprus within the European Union".

By these and other means we intend to demonstrate Europe's concern for the well-being of Turkish Cypriots. In the same spirit, I have noted the announced intention of the Cyprus Government to support the economic strengthening of the Turkish Cypriot community and to facilitate trade.

As these conclusions indicate, neither the UK nor the EU as a whole is proposing any change in our long-standing and consistent policy of non-recognition of "TRNC".

We look forward to a report from the Secretary-General during the course of May about he future of his good offices mission.

We continue to believe that the Annan plan represented the best available blueprint for settlement. I share the UN Secretary-General's hope, expressed after the "no" vote on 24 April, that the Greek Cypriot electorate may arrive at a different view in the fullness of time, after a profound and sober assessment of their decision.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

English Indices of Deprivation 2004

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): Today I am announcing the publication of the revised "Indices of Deprivation—Indices of Deprivation 2004".

The Indices of Deprivation 2004 (ID 2004) combine statistical indicators on economic and social issues into a single score and rank for each small area in England. This enables us to rank small areas according to their level of deprivation. The indices are used by Government and other agencies to identify where there are concentrations of disadvantaged people, so that resources can be targeted where there is greatest need.

The new index is a significant improvement on previous indices. It uses a new base geography, which is more consistent over time and in terms of size. This allows us to overcome some of the problems with electoral wards, which were of varying sizes and which were regularly changed. The new super output areas allow us better to identify where very small pockets of deprivation exist and to track changes over time.

We have also been able to include new indicators that give a more precise measurement of particular aspects of deprivation. For example, with the new pupil level annual school census, we are able to attribute educational deprivation to the area where the child lives rather than attributing it to the school, as was the case in the past. We have also overcome previous problems with crime data and have now included a crime domain

for the first time. There is also a new living environment domain, which aims to identify deprivation in the indoors and outdoors living environment. Both of these new domains were strongly supported in the two periods of public consultation held to determine the best process for updating the 2000 index.

The index also allows us to rank local authority districts. Districts are complex to describe as a whole and as a result, six different measures have been designed which focus on different aspects of multiple deprivation in the district. No single measure is favoured over another, as there is no single best way of describing or comparing districts. The six measures are:

The **Concentration** is an important way of identifying districts' hot spots of deprivation.

The **Extent** portrays how widespread high levels of deprivation are in a district.

The **Income Scale** measure gives the number of people in the district who are income deprived.

The **Employment Scale** measure gives the number of people in the district who are employment deprived.

The **Average of SOA Ranks** summarises the district as a whole, taking into account the ranks of both the deprived and least deprived SOAs.

The **Average of SOA Scores** also describes the district as a whole, taking into account the full range of SOA scores across a district.

The table below summarises the districts that are amongst the 50 most deprived on each of the six district measures.

Rank	*Rank of Average Score*	*Rank of Average Rank*	*Rank of Extent*	*Rank of Concentration*	*Rank of Income Scale*	*Rank of Employment Scale*
1	Knowsley	Tower Hamlets	Tower Hamlets	Knowsley	Birmingham	Birmingham
2	Liverpool	Hackney	Hackney	Liverpool	Liverpool	Liverpool
3	Manchester	Knowsley	Islington	Manchester	Manchester	Manchester
4	Tower Hamlets	Manchester	Manchester	Middlesbrough	Leeds	Leeds
5	Hackney	Islington	Liverpool	Newcastle upon Tyne	Bradford	Sheffield
6	Easington	Liverpool	Newham	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Sheffield	Bradford
7	Nottingham	Newham	Easington	Salford	Newham	Sunderland
8	Islington	Easington	Knowsley	Nottingham	Tower Hamlets	Wirral
9	Middlesbrough	Nottingham	Nottingham	Wirral	Hackney	Wigan
10	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Middlesbrough	Rochdale	Nottingham	Newcastle upon Tyne
11	Newham	Southwark	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Hartlepool	Sandwell	Wakefield
12	Hartlepool	Haringey	Southwark	Redcar and Cleveland	Leicester	Nottingham
13	Salford	Barking and Dagenham	Haringey	Bradford	Wirral	Doncaster
14	Halton	Sandwell	Halton	Blackpool	Bristol, City of	Bristol, City of
15	Haringey	Stoke-on-Trent	Hartlepool	Halton	Lambeth	Sefton
16	Birmingham	Halton	Birmingham	Stockton-on-Tees	Kingston upon Hull, City of	Kirklees
17	Stoke-on-Trent	Lambeth	Sandwell	Birmingham	Haringey	Stoke-on-Trent
18	Southwark	Hartlepool	Stoke-on-Trent	Gateshead	Southwark	Sandwell
19	Sandwell	Middlesbrough	Blackburn with Darwen	Tower Hamlets	Newcastle upon Tyne	Kingston upon Hull, City of
20	Blackburn with Darwen	Birmingham	Salford	Westminster	Sunderland	Barnsley
21	Blackpool	Salford	South Tyneside	St. Helens	Kirklees	Lambeth
22	Sunderland	Blackpool	Sunderland	Blackburn with Darwen	Brent	Leicester
23	Newcastle upon Tyne	Camden	Wolverhampton	Derby	Lewisham	Coventry
24	Rochdale	Greenwich	Camden	Sheffield	Wolverhampton	Newham
25	Camden	Sunderland	Barking and Dagenham	Easington	Coventry	Southwark
26	Barking and Dagenham	Waltham Forest	Newcastle upon Tyne	Leicester	Doncaster	Hackney
27	South Tyneside	Blackburn with Darwen	Gateshead	Stoke-on-Trent	Ealing	Salford
28	Wolverhampton	Wear Valley	Rochdale	Oldham	Enfield	Bolton
29	St. Helens	Hastings	Lambeth	Sunderland	Wakefield	Wolverhampton
30	Gateshead	South Tyneside	Mansfield	Bolton	Islington	Knowsley
31	Leicester	Barrow-in-Furness	Barnsley	Leeds	Croydon	Rotherham
32	Lambeth	St. Helens	Blackpool	Bristol, City of	Walsall	Haringey
33	Barrow-in-Furness	Bolsover	St. Helens	Barrow-in-Furness	Sefton	Gateshead
34	Barnsley	Barnsley	Doncaster	North East Lincolnshire	Stoke-on-Trent	Tower Hamlets
35	Mansfield	Leicester	Greenwich	Sefton	Salford	Dudley
36	Wear Valley	Mansfield	Hastings	Preston	Greenwich	Walsall
37	Hastings	Wolverhampton	Bradford	Barnsley	Waltham Forest	Lewisham
38	Bradford	Lewisham	Barrow-in-Furness	Coventry	Knowsley	Islington
39	Greenwich	Gateshead	Leicester	Burnley	Bolton	Brent

Rank	*Rank of Average Score*	*Rank of Average Rank*	*Rank of Extent*	*Rank of Concentration*	*Rank of Income Scale*	*Rank of Employment Scale*
40	Doncaster	Rochdale	Wansbeck	Mansfield	Wigan	St. Helens
41	Redcar and Cleveland	Penwith	Walsall	Hastings	Dudley	Rochdale
42	Burnley	Doncaster	Oldham	Wolverhampton	Rotherham	Ealing
43	Wansbeck	Sedgefield	Preston	Haringey	Camden	Brighton and Hove
44	Waltham Forest	Burnley	Burnley	Islington	Derby	Oldham
45	Bolsover	Tameside	Wear Valley	Great Yarmouth	Barnsley	Tameside
46	Oldham	Wansbeck	Sedgefield	Wansbeck	Rochdale	Plymouth
47	Wirral	Derwentside	Norwich	Wigan	Barnet	Camden
48	Westminster	Wigan	Bolton	Doncaster	Oldham	South Tyneside
49	Tameside	Westminster	Redcar and Cleveland	Wear Valley	Gateshead	North Tyneside
50	Wigan	Ashfield	Bolsover	Tameside	Brighton and Hove	Croydon

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 29 April 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Departmental Annual Report

The Minister for Rural Affairs and Local Environmental Quality (Alun Michael): The Defra 2004 Departmental Report, which contains information on progress against the Department's objectives, the challenges ahead and summary expenditure plans for 2003–04 to 2005–06, has been published today. Copies have been placed in the House Libraries.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Scottish Devolution Guidance Note

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): My noble Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State has made the following written ministerial statement in the other place today.

"I am today publishing a protocol on Scottish legislative proposals giving devolved powers and functions to UK bodies. This has been agreed by the UK Government and the Scottish Executive. It will be published as one of our series of Devolution Guidance Notes and copies will be deposited in the libraries of both Houses and on the following website http://www.dca.gov.uk/."

HEALTH

Departmental Annual Report

The Minister of State, Department of Health (Ms Rosie Winterton): The Department's annual report for 2004, (Cm 6204), was laid before Parliament today.

Copies have been placed in the Library.

Food Standards Agency

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Health (Miss Melanie Johnson): The Food Standards Agency's departmental report Spring 2004, Cm 6205 was laid before Parliament today.

Copies will be placed in the Library.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Departmental Annual Report

The Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (Mr. Andrew Smith): I am today able to announce the publication of the Department for Work and Pensions Departmental report. The report provides details of the Department's performance in 2003–04 against its public service agreement targets and sets out the Department's expenditure plans for 2004–05 and 2005–06. Copies have been placed in the Library.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

International Development Association

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): In 2002, the UK agreed to contribute £900 million to the thirteenth replenishment of the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's concessional lending arm which is designed to meet the needs of the world's poorest countries. In addition to this contribution, the UK set aside another £100 million to be provided on condition that a satisfactory framework was agreed to compensate IDA for the costs of introducing grants under its thirteenth replenishment (IDA 13). Both the initial £900 million contribution and the additional provisional contribution of £100 million were approved by Parliament on 3 December 2002.

I am pleased to announce that a satisfactory framework for compensating IDA 13 for the introduction of grants has now been agreed. Under this framework, donors will compensate IDA upfront for the administrative costs associated with providing grants, through making additional contributions to the next replenishment (IDA 14). (These are costs which arise early in the project cycle and, in the case of loans, would be covered by recipient countries.) Meanwhile, donors will compensate for the lost re-flows from recipient countries as and when these would have fallen due. Given the 10-year grace period provided under IDA on repayment of loans, this would not have happened until 2013 at the earliest. Compensation payments will not therefore be required until this time, and the exact means of compensation will be discussed as part of future IDA replenishments.

An essential and fundamental principle of the agreed grants compensation framework is that donors should contribute to the cost of compensation in line with their share of IDA 13 (their 'burden share'). If the UK were to contribute the full £100 million set aside to cover the costs of upfront compensation, we would effectively displace the contributions of other donors. We have therefore decided to cover both our burden share under IDA 13, and the structural financing gap inherent in this replenishment (equivalent to 9.37 per cent. of total resource needs from donors), making a total UK contribution for upfront IDA 13 grants compensation of £64.8 million.

Departmental Annual Report

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): I am today laying before Parliament copies of the Department for International Development's departmental report 2004.

SOLICITOR GENERAL

Crown Prosecution Service

The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman): My right hon. Friend the Attorney-General has made the following Ministerial Statement:

> The Director of Public Prosecutions has, in accordance with section 7A Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 as amended by section 53 Crime and Disorder Act 1998, extended the remit of work that may be undertaken by Crown Prosecution Service designated caseworkers.

Designated caseworkers are now permitted to undertake all work in the magistrates' court other than:

- Trials
- Proofs in absence in either-way cases
- Committals and sendings
- Pre-trial reviews
- Newton hearings
- Contested bail hearings

The extended remit of designated caseworkers will enhance the role of the designated caseworker and enable more effective court listing. It will also support the effective delivery by the Crown Prosecution Service of pre-charge advice.

A designated caseworker will not be permitted to undertake the extended remit until successfully completing a training programme and receiving a personal letter of appointment from the Director of Public Prosecutions.

The following documents will be lodged in the Libraries of Parliament:

- The extended remit of Crown Prosecution Service designated caseworkers.
- The Governance scheme for Crown Prosecution Service designated caseworkers, which sets out the supervision arrangements.
- The statement of ethical principles for Crown Prosecution Service designated caseworkers.

DEFENCE

Individual Training and Education (Armed Forces)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): Our armed forces have an enviable reputation throughout the world for their professional delivery of operational military capability in a vast spectrum of roles. These range from war fighting to the complex and often subtle requirements of peace support operations and counter-terrorism; besides turning their hand, as they have done in recent years, to providing support to the civil community assisting with fire-fighting, flood-relief and the foot and mouth outbreak. Most who come across Service personnel acknowledge that they have sound essential military skills and operate within an ethos that differs from that generally found within the sphere of civilian employment. Yet those who join the services are not fundamentally different from the rest of society. What turns a young man or woman into a service person, capable of taking on successfully the variety of challenging roles which our country demands of them, is the training and education undertaken by servicemen and women throughout their careers.

The Ministry of Defence is one of the largest providers of training and education to the 16 plus age group in the UK. The initial training delivered to new recruits is geared to provide them with the essential skills and knowledge to be capable of operating effectively in often unpredictable, violent, dangerous and stressful environments from the outset of their careers. MOD seeks to develop each individual to his or her maximum potential. Service personnel are given training and education to improve upon their latent ability; some who join may lack basic skills whilst others have graduate qualifications. The scope and scale of the training and education provision is considerable, and spans the whole length of a career in the forces. Not only does this help to recruit and retain people, but, equally importantly, when service personnel return to civilian employment, they take with them skills of value to society.

I am therefore pleased to announce that today I have placed in the Library of the House a Policy Paper, entitled "Individual Training and Education in the Armed Forces". The paper provides information on MOD's wide spectrum of training and education and explains the skills agenda to which this operates. At its core lies the fundamental requirement to prepare servicemen and women to deliver operational capability. It includes insights into the key stages of initial training and the training environment, and highlights the MOD's determination to remain at the forefront of developing skills for the 21st Century.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Annual Report

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): I am today arranging for my Department's annual report (Cm 6220) to be laid before Parliament in advance of publication on 30 April.

Copies will be deposited in the Libraries of both Houses and the text made available on the Department's website at http://www.culture.gov.uk.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Immigration Rules

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): I have today laid before the House a statement of changes to the immigration rules. From 1 May 2004, as a result of the accession of 10 new states to the European Union, nationals of those EU accession states will not require immigration leave to enter or stay in the UK. Consequently it is necessary to remove all references to the individual EU accession states in the immigration rules with effect from the date of accession.

We have also decided to amend the European economic area (EEA) national settlement requirements to enable those currently in immigration categories leading to settlement to aggregate time spent here under the immigration rules with that as an EEA national in the UK when making an application to settle. This ensures that new EU nationals will not have to spend a

longer time in the UK to qualify for settlement than they would if accession had not occurred. This mirrors the practice followed in previous accessions.

Zahid Mubarek

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): I am today announcing that, in line with the House of Lords judgment on 16 October 2003, I have established a public inquiry into the murder of Zahid Mubarek at Feltham Young Offender Institution in March 2000. The hon. Mr. Justice Keith will chair the inquiry; he will be assisted by three expert advisers who will provide advice and support to the inquiry on matters relating to race, prison operations and issues affecting prisoners. The inquiry will start immediately with the following terms of reference:

> "In the light of the House of Lords judgment in the case of Regina v. Secretary of State for the Home Department ex parte Amin, to investigate and report to the Home Secretary on the death of Zahid Mubarek, and the events leading up to the attack on him, and make recommendations about the prevention of such attacks in the future, taking into account the investigations that have already taken place—in particular, those by the Prison Service and the Commission for Racial Equality."

A report of the inquiry, subject to matters of confidentiality, will be published.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iran

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): The Government have issued an open licence for the export to Iran of goods that will be listed in the United Kingdom strategic export controls annual report as "Components for Military Aero Engines". The goods will be used by the oil and gas industry overhaul turbines that power pumps for oil and gas pipelines. The goods are military listed because they were originally designed and used for military aircraft engines. In this instance, the Government are satisfied that there is a minimal risk of diversion to a military end use, and are prepared to make an exception to the UK national arms embargo. Other aspects of the application were considered against the consolidated EU and national arms export licensing criteria.

TRANSPORT

Driver, Vehicle and Operator Group

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. David Jamieson): I am pleased to announce the Secretary of State's targets for 2004–05 in respect of the Driver, Vehicle And Operator Group.

The Secretary of State for Transport has set a range of high-level targets for the 2004–05 year on behalf of the Agencies within the Driver, Vehicle and Operator Group; the Driving Standards Agency, the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency, the Vehicle Certification Agency and the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency. They are included in the Agencies' Business Plans. The plans also include a range of management targets, performance indicators and key tasks which are appropriate to the Agencies' businesses and which reflect the wider DVO change agenda. Copies of the Business Plans will be placed in the Library shortly.

The key targets for the Driving Standards Agency are:

DVO Corporate Objective	*Secretary of State Target*
Deliver core services effectively	Deliver 6 week national average car practical test waiting time from January 2005.
	Maintain or improve levels of candidate satisfaction against the baseline of 90 per cent.
E-enable core customer-facing services	Introduce Advanced Speech Recognition for customers booking by telephone in August 2004.
Deliver a One Stop Service	Use Automatic Driving Licence Issue system to send pass results to DVLA to enable drivers to receive automatically updated licences from June 2004.
Help improve road safety	Deliver a national programme of 6,000 Arrive Alive presentations to 16–19 year olds.
	Deliver an interactive DVD to support learners to learn to drive safely by the end of March 2005.
	Improve the quality of trainers by effectively implementing the Approved Driving Instructors assessment programme.
Deliver more efficient services	Deliver Return on Capital Employed target of 3.5 per cent. over a five year period after offsetting the surplus in respect of 2003–04 and earlier years.

The key targets for the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency are:

DVO Corporate Objective	*Secretary of State Target*
Deliver core services effectively	Maintain or improve levels of customer satisfaction to 94 per cent. (2003 baseline 92 per cent.)
	Issue 98 per cent. of first driving licences within 8 working days
	Make 95 per cent. of vehicle registration (V5) changes within 12 working days.
	Maintain records that enable vehicle keepers to be successfully traced—target 75 per cent. of Harmonised Registration Certificates to be issued by March 2005.
E-enable core customer-facing services	Completion of Post Office barcoding (BART Phase 3) by August 2004 to enable automatic immediate update of DVLA licensing records.
	Commence national roll out of Electronic Vehicle Licensing phase 2 by March 2005.
Deliver a One Stop Service	First driver to receive replacement licence after passing their driving test, using the Automatic Driving Licensing Issue system by June 2004.

DVO Corporate Objective	*Secretary of State Target*
Improve data accuracy	First full Harmonised Registration Certificate issued on 1 July 2004.
Help reduce driver and vehicle related crime and anti-social behaviour	Reduce revenue loss arising from Vehicle Excise Duty evasion from 4.5 per cent. to 4 per cent. by end of March 2005.
	Successfully reduce the vehicle "inactive register" arising from Continuous Registration by 10 per cent. by end of March 2005.
Deliver more efficient services	Deliver Return on Capital Employed target of 3.5 per cent.
	Deliver 2.5 per cent. efficiency gain.

The key targets for the Vehicle Certification Agency are:

DVO Corporate Objective	*Secretary of State Target*
Deliver core services effectively	Have at least 98 per cent. of approved certificates issued error-free.
Help improve road safety	Have plans in place and on track to implement new approval procedures for buses by 2007 (working with VOSA).
Deliver more efficient services	Achieve at least break even for 2004–05.
	Complete the roll out of the integrated expense management system across the Agency and provide data to support better business development for 2005–06 Business Plan.

The key targets for the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency are:

DVO Corporate Objective	*Secretary of State Target*
Deliver core services effectively	Improve licence application turnaround times by determining 85 per cent. of unopposed applications within 10 weeks from date of receipt of the application.
	Improve HGV and PSV test availability by offering a test appointment on or within 18 days of the requested date 95 per cent. of the time
	Maintain or improve levels of customer satisfaction against 2003 baselines (operators licensing 78 per cent., testing 73 per cent.; fitters and presenters—roadside checks 89 per cent., testing 92 per cent.; and MOT customers 93 per cent.)
E-enable core customer-facing services	Have a robust MOT computerisation system being rolled out nationally by March 2005.
Deliver a One Stop Service	Develop a commercial customer portal delivering access to operator self-service by May 2004, an e-payment facility by 31 March 2005 and development of self service test bookings for implementation by April 2006.
Help improve road safety	Contribute to the improved compliance of the lorry, bus and coach industries (operators and drivers) through effectively targeted compliance inspections, penalties and advice; as measured by Performance Gain points (2003 baseline of 8,295,459).
Deliver more efficient services	Contribute to the DVO Group 5 per cent. Value for Money target by delivering against an agreed VOSA Value for Money plan, achieving 2.5 per cent. efficiency and 2.5 per cent. effectiveness measures.
Develop joined-up support services	Agree design templates for our estate modernisation programme and have completed 30 per cent. of phase one by 31 March 2005.

Road Transport (Working Time) Directive

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. David Jamieson): On 21 October 2003, the Department for Transport launched a consultation exercise to consider the options for implementing the road transport (working time) directive—2002/15/EC (RTD) into UK legislation. This directive provides extra protection for drivers and crew of heavy goods and public service vehicles, who carry out road transport activities covered by the EU drivers' hours rules—regulation (EEC) 3820/85.

This exercise has now finished. In the light of responses received the Government has decided that the UK regulations should:

Implement the two derogations available under the RTD. This means that:

The four month reference period for calculating the average 48-hour week can be extended to six months.

night workers will be allowed to work more than 10 hours work for every 24-hour period.

To take advantage of the derogations, there will need to be either a collective agreement, or a workforce agreement at company level between the employer and employees. In addition, drivers will still be subject to the limits under EU drivers' hours rules (regulation 3820/85/EEC)

define "night time" as a period between 00.00–04.00 for drivers and crew of goods vehicles, but as 01.00–05.00 for drivers and crew of passenger vehicles.

VOSA (DVTA—NI) will enforce the new regulations; primarily in response to complaints they receive. This approach will be reviewed before March 2009.

Self-employed drivers will not be covered by UK regulations until March 2009.

Workers who are only occasionally subject to the RTD will be covered by the requirements of the directive—in particular the 60 hour weekly limit, 10 hour limit (when doing night work) as well as the daily/weekly rest requirement and break requirements.

The definitions under the RTD will be copied in to domestic law.

Detailed guidance on the new legislation, including the definitions (notably, working time and periods of availability) and occasional drivers or mobile workers will be published in due course.

In early June, the Department will consult on the draft text of the new regulations. The RTD will be implemented by 23 March 2005.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Parliamentary Boundaries

The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Paul Murphy): The Parliamentary Constituencies Act 1986, as amended by the Boundary Commissions Act 1992, requires that the Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland undertake periodical reviews of constituencies in Northern Ireland. The commission are required to submit a report to the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland not less than eight or more than twelve years from their last report. The present review commenced on 16 May 2003.

The commission are announcing their provisional recommendations for constituencies in Northern Ireland today. The proposals are to be made available for public inspection at district council headquarters and electoral offices, public libraries and at the offices of the Electoral Commission and the Boundary Commission to coincide with the formal publication of the provisional recommendations on 6 May. The commission are required to take into consideration any representations made within one month of publication of the proposals.

I will, of course, report back to Parliament once the commission has made its final recommendations.

Written Ministerial Statements

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NORTHERN IRELAND

Prison Service

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (Mr. Ian Pearson): I have placed copies of the "Northern Ireland Prison Service's Corporate and Business Plan for 2004–2007" in the Libraries of both Houses.

The Corporate and Business Plan contains key performance targets I have set for the service for 2004–05. These are:

No escape for top and high-risk prisoners.

No more than three escapes per 1,000 medium and low risk prisoners.

The number of staff assaulted by prisoners is less than a ratio of five per 100 prisoners.

The number of prisoners assaulted by prisoners is less than a ratio of six per 100 prisoners.

An average of at least 18 hours constructive activity per week for each sentenced prisoner.

An average of at least nine hours constructive activity per week for each remand prisoner.

To ensure 82.5 per cent. of prisoners serving six months or more are working to a resettlement plan and that 95 per cent. of lifers work to a resettlement plan, including preparation of the plan, in the first six months from sentence.

Deliver at least 85 per cent. of the planned training days associated with the agreed corporate training priorities.

Reduce the rate of absenteeism to an annual average of no more than 19 days per head.

Lay the annual report and audited accounts before Parliament prior to the summer recess.

Ensure the average cost per prisoner place does not exceed the target to be agreed with HM Treasury.

The Government have committed substantial resources to implementing the Steele report, so that staff remains in full control. This does not mean any reduction in the need to tackle the other costs that make for an excessively high cost per prisoner place.

Also, in light of developments following the Steele report, and to support the development of partnerships with a wider range of statutory and voluntary agencies beyond the criminal justice system, I have agreed some adjustments to the service's statement of purpose, which now reads as follows:

"The Northern Ireland Prison Service, through our staff, serves the community by keeping in secure, safe and humane custody those committed by the courts; by working with prisoners and with other organisations seeks to reduce the risk of re-offending; and in so doing aims to protect the public and to contribute to peace and stability in Northern Ireland."

TRANSPORT

Departmental Annual Report

The Secretary of State for Transport (Mr. Alistair Darling): I have today published my Department's Annual Report for 2004. Copies have been laid before Parliament and placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

The report sets out the Department's work over the last year and it shows that progress has been made. It also describes the Department's future expenditure plans for the period of the spending review 2002.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Veterinary Medicines Directorate

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Mr. Ben Bradshaw): I have set the veterinary medicines directorate the following performance objectives for 2004–05.

Objective 1: Authorise veterinary medicines efficiently, using good science, thus ensuring their safety, quality and efficacy.

Objective 2: Ensure the field-use of veterinary medicines is safe and effective, principally through the use of best practice in pharmacovigilance.

Objective3: Ensure the safe use of veterinary medicines authorised in the UK through surveillance of residues and follow-up action where misuse is detected.

Objective 4: Develop policy to ensure that veterinary medicines can be used effectively and safely, offering protection to human health, animal health and welfare and the environment.

Objective 5: Seek to encourage the proper use of veterinary medicines and actively discourage improper use.

Objective 6: Develop the VMD to ensure it is fit for purpose and its vision, aim and objectives are contributing to DEFRA's PSA VI as well as the Department's overall vision and values.

TREASURY

Valuation Office Agency

The Paymaster General (Dawn Primarolo): I have today set the following key performance indicators for the Valuation Office Agency for 2004–05:

Valuation Accuracy

Contain reductions in 2,000 local rating lists to less than 7.5 per cent. in respect of compiled list appeals settled in 2004–05, and to a maximum of 4.7 per cent. of the total compiled list rateable value over the entire life of the 2,000 rating lists.

Rating Revaluation

Prepare for the forthcoming revaluation of non-domestic properties in England and Wales by producing draft rating lists by 30 September 2004 and compiled rating lists by 31 March 2005.

Council Tax Revaluations

Prepare for the forthcoming revaluation of domestic properties in Wales by producing draft valuation lists by 1 September 2004 and compiled valuation lists by 31 March 2005.

Prepare for the forthcoming revaluation of domestic properties in England by digitising data for 97.5 per cent. of properties by 31 March 2005 and, by 31 July 2004, evaluating

whether the automated valuation model can be utilised effectively for the banding of a minimum of 60 per cent. of dwellings.

Customer satisfaction

Maintain customer satisfaction, based on annual surveys, at 86 per cent.

Value for money

Improve productivity by 2.5 per cent. in 2004–05 and achieve improvements of at least 15 per cent. by 2007–08.

Land Services

Achieve an increased fee income of £19.2 million ensuring that its share of VOA costs is covered.

People satisfaction

Improve staff satisfaction in working for the VOA in comparison with other places of work, based on annual surveys, by 1 per cent.

Financial "break even"

Recover full resource costs within Parliamentary approved estimates, including a return on capital of 3.5 per cent., from fees and charges.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Annual Report and Corporate Plan

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): We have today published the Home Office's 2004 Annual Report and 2004–05 Corporate Plan. Copies are available in the House Library and on the Home Office website. Both describe how the Home Office builds trust and security, by promoting cohesive communities and active citizenship; and through the effective enforcement of law, order and our borders. Both the report and the plan describe how these themes provide the context for all that we do, and contribute towards civil renewal. The report is primarily focused on 2003–04, setting out our performance against key targets and describing how our activities contributed towards them. The plan is focused on the present financial year, explaining how we will deliver better public services and how the Department is organising itself to deliver these.

Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre

The Minister for Citizenship and Immigration (Mr. Desmond Browne): The Government have today published the report of Stephen Shaw, the prisons and probation ombudsman, into the allegations of racism and abuse at Yarl's Wood immigration removal centre, which were reported by the Daily Mirror in December. The report is available on the immigration and nationality directorate (IND) website at http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/default.asp?pageid=4903. Copies of the report have been placed in the House Library.

We are very grateful to Stephen Shaw for the speed and thoroughness of his investigation and for the comprehensive nature of his report.

The investigation of this matter has revealed a number of disconcerting incidents at Yarl's Wood and confirmed that the principal allegations published by the Daily Mirror were correct. However, Stephen Shaw was able to establish that the remarks reported by the Daily Mirror were made by a small number of people at Yarl's Wood and that there was no evidence to indicate a general culture of racism or the improper use of force at the centre.

Stephen Shaw's investigation was preceded by an internal investigation by Global Solutions Ltd. (GSL), the company contracted by IND to operate Yarl's Wood. This investigation resulted in the dismissal of one member of staff and the suspension of another, followed by his resignation. Stephen Shaw satisfied himself as to the thoroughness of the GSL investigation and the appropriateness of the action taken by the company thereafter.

Stephen Shaw's report, which also covers the security implications of the journalist's undercover activity, contains 19 recommendations directed at GSL and ten recommendations directed at IND and the independent monitoring board (IMB) at Yarl's Wood. GSL have responded positively to the recommendations made to them. We have accepted all the recommendations, including that relating to the need to investigate an historical allegation of assault on a detainee, and IND officials will be working closely with GSL and the IMB to implement them.

DEFENCE

Service Children's Education

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The Chief Executive of Service Children's Education has been set the following Key Targets for 2004–05.

KEY TARGET 1

Sustain threshold level performance at each of the Key Stages 1, 2 and 3 by remaining at least 3 per cent. ahead of national (England) achievement.

Sustain the percentage of pupils obtaining A*-C at GCSE as a three-year rolling average.

Sustain the percentage of students obtaining A-E at "A" Level as a three-year rolling average.

KEY TARGET 2

Sustain SCE's notional position in the English Local Education Authority league tables, within the leading 25 (of 150) LEAs at each of Key Stages 1, 2 and 3.

KEY TARGET 3

At the higher levels of attainment (i.e. level 3+ at Key Stage 1, level 5+ at Key Stage 2, level 6+ at Key Stage 3) match national level of performance in 50 per cent. of the 12 subject elements in 2004, rising in equal steps to 66 per cent. in 2006.

KEY TARGET 4

For GCSE, show improvement in Average Points' scores by achieving at least the England "capped" upper quartile figure (38.8).

KEY TARGET 5

To achieve Grade 4 or above (on the OfSTED seven point scale) in at least 85 per cent. of schools inspected, in each of the following areas:

Overall effectiveness of the School

Overall standards achieved

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal qualities

The quality of education provided by the school

The leadership and management of the school

KEY TARGET 6

To demonstrate customer satisfaction with a survey result of 69 per cent. satisfaction or more from Army Continuous Attitude Surveys.

Armed Forces Pension Scheme

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): During Standing Committee consideration of the Armed Forces (Pensions and Compensation) Bill in February, concern was expressed that the Government should provide more independent oversight of the arrangements provided for the armed forces in this area. I made clear to Committee members that I recognised the intent behind these concerns and we have considered how we might respond. We have now decided that we will give the independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) a role in externally validating the provisions of the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS); we plan that this will be done in the context of their quinquennial valuation of the AFPS, though more frequent examinations of the scheme provisions could be undertaken if wider developments justified this.

The broad intent is that the AFPRB would compare the scheme provisions with practice elsewhere in the economy and consider the extent to which they meet the recruitment and retention needs of the armed forces. The Review Body's observations would then be made public in a supplement to the following annual report and the Government would also make public their response to these observations. I am pleased to say that the Chairman of the Review Body and his colleagues have agreed to take on this additional responsibility and we are now in discussion on the detail to determine the timing of the first such review. I am confident that this change will provide for more independence in reviewing the terms of the AFPS while equally helping us to ensure coherence across the broader remuneration package, comprising both pay and pensions. It should also provide additional reassurance for service personnel by ensuring effective independent validation of the appropriateness of the pension provisions for our armed forces.

Freedom of Information

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The first duty under the Freedom of Information Act to be implemented by Government Departments was the requirement to prepare publication schemes. MOD's publication scheme is accessible via the internet at www.foi.mod.uk . Since the scheme was published in November 2002, we have continued to look for opportunities to extend the commitment to make information available proactively. To date, a further five classes of information have been added to the original publication scheme and a process for identifying and adding more is in place. The new classes cover information provided by the Army Historical Branch, the Naval Historical Branch, Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) Corporate Documents, Defence Data Definitions, and Defence Statistics.

As a further step in this process, I am announcing today that a new class of information will be included to require publication of the consolidated results of corporate level quantitative opinion surveys carried out to gauge the attitude of members of the public to the Ministry of Defence and the armed forces. The results of similar surveys undertaken internally with a random cross-section of the Department's own staff will also be published. The results of the external corporate level surveys undertaken since 1999 are also being placed in the Library of the House.

From October 2004, we also plan to release the results of the continuous attitude surveys that are undertaken by each of the three services to measure the morale and understand the concerns of their personnel across a spectrum of issues. These surveys are sent out annually to a random sample of around 8,000 military personnel at all ranks. This commitment to publish the results of these surveys will also be reflected through a class of information in MOD's publication scheme.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC New Services Review

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (Tessa Jowell): I have today announced the start of the independent reviews of the BBC's new digital radio and television services along with the names of the two individuals who will conduct these studies.

The services concerned are: BBC Three; BBC Four; Cbeebies; CBBC; 1Xtra; BBC Asian Network; BBC Five Live Sports Extra; BBC 6 Music; and BBC 7. I have also published today the BBC's submission on these services, an electronic copy of which is available in the Libraries of both Houses.

I have announced previously my intention to appoint one reviewer for the digital television channels and one for the digital radio channels. I am pleased to be able to confirm the appointment of Patrick Barwise to the former position and Tim Gardam to the latter.

The reviews will begin immediately and will run concurrently. In accordance with the conditions that I laid down when giving my approval for the BBC to develop these new digital services, both reviews will include both a period of public consultation and a market impact study. I have asked both reviewers to submit their reports to me by the end of August 2004.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Annual Report

The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. John Prescott): The Chief Secretary to the Treasury and I are pleased to present the Annual Report of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister for 2004 to Parliament. It sets out the achievements of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

The aim of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is to create sustainable communities—places where people want to live. It is about revitalising communities,

delivering sustainable economic growth, revitalising areas of neglect, improving the quality of local environment and protecting the countryside.

This, our second annual report, details an impressive array of achievements in every area of our work. We are driving up the quality and supply of housing, speeding up the planning system, reducing the incidence of rough sleeping and the number of homeless families in B&B accommodation, improving our public spaces and giving people a bigger say in what happens in their regions. We are delivering strong, effective local government services and devolving power to local neighbourhoods. We are also renewing and regenerating neighbourhoods particularly in our most deprived areas and reducing social exclusion.

But we must not be complacent and we know more remains to be done. We will therefore continue to work hard to deliver our aim of creating sustainable communities that provide a better quality of life, now and in future generations.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Annual Report

The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman): My right hon. Friend the Attorney-General has made the following Ministerial Statement: "The learned Law Officer's Departments Departmental Report 2004" has today been published and laid before Parliament. Copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Written Ministerial Statements

Tuesday 4 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Hamer Report

The Minister for Crime Reduction, Policing and Community Safety (Ms Hazel Blears): I have today placed in the Library of the House copies of the final report of the "Independent Review of the Selection and Appointments Process of Independent Members of Police Authorities", undertaken on behalf of the Home Secretary by Mr. Kenneth Hamer.

This report makes a range of recommendations to improve the selection and appointments process to key posts in police authorities, highlighting the need to engage local people and the importance of police authorities continuing to develop effective links with other community groups.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Temporary Accommodation (Homeless Households)

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper): I am pleased to announce today the significant achievement against the Government's bed-and-breakfast reduction target that, by March 2004, local authorities should ensure that no homeless family with children should have to live in a bed-and-breakfast hotel except in an emergency, and even then for no longer than six weeks.

Figures collected by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister show a 99.3 per cent. reduction in the number of homeless families with children living in bed-and-breakfast hotels for longer than six weeks, and who were placed there by a local housing authority as a discharge of a homelessness duty, over the two years since March 2002 when the target was set. Local authorities reported a total of only 26 families with children in bed-and-breakfast in excess of six weeks as of 31 March compared with an estimated 3,500–4,000 homeless families with children placed long-term in bed-and-breakfast hotels in March 2002. This reduction reflects the excellent achievement of local authorities working with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. A total of 328, or 95 per cent., of local authorities met the bed-and-breakfast target.

In London, where the highest concentrations of homelessness exist and where the highest number of families had been accommodated in bed-and-breakfast hotels, there were no homeless families who have been in bed-and-breakfast for longer than six weeks on 31 March.

Figures collected also show that the total number of homeless families with children in bed-and-breakfast was reduced by 88 per cent. from an estimated 6,730 in March 2002 to 780 in March 2004. This is the first sustained reduction in total use of bed-and-breakfast to house homeless families for over a decade.

Tabled below shows the breakdown of bed-and-breakfast figures for March 2004 for the 16 local authorities that failed to meet the target. A table showing the breakdown for all local authorities is available in the Libraries of both Houses. Further information is also available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's web site www.odpm.gov.uk.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will continue to work with local authorities, voluntary sector organisations and other stakeholders to sustain this target and our successful reductions in rough sleeping. We will also continue to work with stakeholders on tackling and preventing wider homelessness problems more effectively.

Numbers of families with children in B&B accommodation on 31 March 2004

	Local Authority	*Region*	*No. of FWC in B&B*	*No. in B&B>6 weeks*	*Comments*
1.	Waveney	Eastern	17	7	It is disappointing that Waveney predicted a lower number of FWC in B&B for longer than six weeks but was then unable to match the success of other authorities facing similar conditions. 5 FWC moved out of B&B by 19 April 1 FWC moved out of B&B on 29 April 1 FWC due to move out of B&B on 5 May
2.	Gloucester	South West	10	2	1 FWC moved out of B&B on 5 April 1 FWC housed pending review outcome then moved out of B&B on 26 April
3.	Arun	South East	5	2	1 FWC moved out of B&B on 7 April 1 FWC housed pending review outcome then moved out of B&B on 28 April
4.	South Somerset	South West	6	2	Both FWC moved out of B&B on 1 April
5.	Erewash	East Midlands	10	2	1 FWC moved out of B&B on 1 April 1 FWC moved out of B&B on 2 April
6.	Crawley	South East	11	1	FWC moved out of B&B on 1 April
7.	Swale	South East	7	1	FWC moved out of B&B on 22 April
8.	North Dorset	South West	1	1	FWC moved out of B&B on 16 April
9.	North Wiltshire	South West	3	1	FWC housed pending review outcome then moved out of B&B on 22 April

	Local Authority	Region	No. of FWC in B&B	No. in B&B>6 weeks	Comments
10.	Purbeck	South West	1	1	Large FWC, identifying suitable large property has delayed re-housing. Provisional date of 7 May for move out of B&B
11.	Rushcliffe	East Midlands	2	1	FWC moved out of B&B on 8 April
12.	Harrogate	Yorkshire & Humber	1	1	FWC moved out of B&B on 2 April
13.	North Shropshire	West Midlands	3	1	FWC housed pending review outcome then moved out of B&B on 5 April
14.	Surrey Heath	South East	2	1	FWC moved out of B&B on 8 April
15.	Torridge	South West	1	1	FWC housed pending review outcome, re-housing plan depends on review decision. FWC still in B&B
16.	Vale Royal	North West	3	1	FWC moved out of B&B on 12 April

The table shows the 31 March 2004 monthly monitoring figures for homeless families with children (FWC) in B and B accommodation for the 16 authorities that failed to meet the target.

All local authorities that failed to meet the target provided details of the families concerned. A number of families are described as "housed pending review outcome". In these cases the families have submitted an appeal against the authority's decision on their homelessness application. In such instances the local authority can choose to continue to house the family under discretionary powers.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Businesslink.gov Website

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): The Department of Trade and Industry has transformed its services to businesses by listening to the needs and priorities of business people.

I am today launching a one-stop website for business. Businesslink.gov.uk will act as a gateway for information and support from across Government.

The new DTI-sponsored site removes the confusing array of advice about Government services that up to now has confronted businesses—particularly small businesses. Businesslink.gov is the result of a successful collaboration involving a wide range of Government Departments and Agencies: DTI, HM Treasury, Office of the e-Envoy, Small Business Service, Inland Revenue, HM Customs and Excise, Health and Safety Executive, the Department for Education and Skills, Environment Agency, ACAS and Companies House.

For the first time ever one site provides quick and easy on-line access for firms needing information about funding and services provided by Departments and Agencies, including advice on starting up a business, taxation, employing people and health and safety.

Services include opportunities for businesses to register for e-filing with Customs and Excise, Inland Revenue and Companies House in one go as well as a filter to help users identify which licences they need to trade.

Advice is provided in clear language on issues which businesses have identified as important and relevant to their needs. It is supported by practical tools to achieve results and therefore reduce the time that businesses have to spend on regulations and other matters.

Work has now largely been completed on the radical restructuring of the DTIs business support to create products that promote enterprise innovation and best practice to meet customer need for a streamlined range of products that are easy to access.

Four of these new products were released in 2003: Grant for Research and Development, Knowledge Transfer Partnerships, Grant for Investigating an Innovative Idea and the Small Firms Loan Guarantee.

Five new support products became available to businesses during April this year. These are: Collaborative Research and Development, Knowledge Transfer Networks, Access to Best Business Practice, Support to Implement Best Business Practice and Selective Finance for Investment in England.

Small and medium sized businesses will be able to access these products through Business Link. Larger corporates and business organisations can access them through the DTI while the Regional Development Agencies will deliver products which deal with specific regional issues. Detailed information about all these products are available to businesses through the Business Support Directory available on Businesslink.gov.

In the development of these products I have been advised by an expert Investment Committee that includes and is chaired by independent business members. The Committee will ensure that the impact of DTI products is thoroughly evaluated and that there is a clear economic rationale for the support we provide.

The closure of business support schemes the DTI has funded in the past is progressing as quickly as possible but at a pace which meets outstanding commitments.

Written Ministerial Statements

Wednesday 5 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Probation

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): Today I am delighted to announce that Her Majesty the Queen has approved the appointment of Andrew Bridges as HM Chief Inspector of Probation. Mr. Bridges' appointment will be for an initial period of 12 months. Through their expertise and rigour of approach the probation inspectorate have provided a major contribution to the national probation service. I am confident that Andrew Bridges will continue that tradition and that he will play a key role in monitoring the National Offender Management Service.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): The Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission is a key institution of the Belfast agreement. We in Government want it to succeed and are committed to helping it to do so. It is in all our interests that we have a strong, independent and self-confident Commission, which draws support from all parts of the community. It is from this position that we are approaching the coming year.

We have listened to the criticism of the Human Rights Commission. We have also listened to the other side, those who see the Commission doing the best job it can in difficult circumstances. We have thought carefully about the issues and how to address them.

We will shortly begin a process to recruit a new chief commissioner and a full set of commissioners to the Northern Ireland Human Rights Commission. We expect the process to take some months, with the new chief commissioner and commissioners being announced in the autumn. We propose to invite a number of those commissioners to take office soon after appointment. We will do this after discussion with the chief commissioner-designate, who will also be invited to join early. He or she will not become chief commissioner until the end of Brice Dickson's appointment. The remainder of the incoming commissioners will take office on 28 February 2005, at which point those who have served two terms will leave.

We will begin this process shortly. In the meantime we will be working on the details of the process. We will use search consultants. An independent assessor will be involved throughout and there will be a human rights expert, alongside the independent assessor, on the panel that interviews candidates.

This does not mean that the current Commission is winding down. Far from it. They have a great deal still to achieve.

From the outset, each commissioner has played an important role in promoting a culture of rights in Northern Ireland. They will leave behind an impressive body of work which I believe history will judge kindly. They have served in the best interests of all the people of Northern Ireland, at times under great pressure. For this, they deserve our gratitude and our support in their ongoing work.

For our part, the Government remain committed to establishing a broadly-based forum on the Bill of Rights. We will engage the political parties in a renewed effort to build consensus to this end.

We understand there is much detail behind these proposals which people will want to discuss. I will be inviting the parties to put forward their views. I am clear that these discussions must respect the terms of the Belfast agreement and the independence of the Commission. In this context, we will also conclude the review of the Commission's powers.

I would urge all parts of the community to work with us over the coming year. There are significant opportunities ahead to build on the great progress we have seen since in the field of rights since the Belfast agreement was reached in 1998. It is imperative that all parts of the community take those opportunities and everyone receives the same benefits.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Humanitarian Response in Darfur

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): The Government are gravely concerned about the situation in Darfur, Western Sudan. The UN estimates that the fighting has led to the internal displacement of over 750,000 people, with about 130,000 refugees sheltering in Chad. The civilian population is in a precarious state. Humanitarian requirements for food, water and shelter are enormous, but access remains limited. Civilian protection is a major concern with reports of systematic attacks on civilians, including killings, rape, pillage and destruction of livelihoods. The approaching rainy season, due to start in mid-May, will add to the problems, increasing the risk of epidemics and hindering the movement of relief supplies.

The humanitarian ceasefire agreement, signed on 8 April, is a welcome step forward in resolving the crisis in Darfur. The parties must now live up to those commitments and allow international monitoring with full access to the areas and people affected.

James Morris, Head of the World Food Programme, has just returned from a mission to Sudan. I met him on 4 May and discussed the grave humanitarian situation and the need for the international community to do more.

I have therefore today agreed an additional £10 million from our contingency reserve for the continuing and severe humanitarian needs in Darfur. This will bring total UK commitments for Darfur to £19.5 million. The UK is the second biggest donor to the Darfur crisis, after the US. Additional information on the UK response to date is set out as follows:

OCTOBER–DECEMBER 2003

Early assistance for organisations with some access (albeit very limited and variable) to Darfur:

Save the Children UK (for North Darfur) £0.5 million

World Food Programme £2 million

International Committee of the Red Cross £1 million

Assistance to refugees in Eastern Chad:

UN High Commission for Refugees £1 million

Total financial assistance October to December 2003: £4.5 million

Continuing pressure on the Sudanese Government to allow humanitarian agencies unimpeded access to affected populations and security to operate, and to stop the fighting.

JANUARY–MARCH 2004

Following partial opening up of Darfur for humanitarian agencies, support to meet basic needs of affected population:

UN Children's Fund £1 million

Medecins Sans Frontieres (for South Darfur) £1.15 million

GOAL (for North Darfur) £0.58 million

Action Contre la Faim (for North Darfur) £0.25 million

Additional assistance to refugees in Eastern Chad:

World Food Programme £1million

UN High Commission for Refugees £1 million

Total financial assistance October 2003 to March 2004: £9.5 million

Support to UN Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs to improve its co-ordination and assessment capacity in response to the crisis:

Senior humanitarian adviser based in Khartoum for three months (extended to six months)

Three humanitarian affairs officers based in Geneina, El Fasher and Nyala for three months

One support staff for one month through International Humanitarian Partnership

One focal point for UN co-ordination and logistics for one month through UN Disaster Assessment and Co-ordination team

Continuing pressure on the Sudanese Government to allow humanitarian agencies unimpeded access, protect civilians from attack and agree a ceasefire with international monitoring

Involvement in ceasefire talks between SLM/JEM and the Government of Sudan in N'Djamena.

APRIL 2004 ONWARDS

Oxfam (for North and South Darfur) £2.2 million

Planned further contributions to UN and other international organisations

Total financial assistance to date: £11.7 million

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Water Pollution

The Minister for the Environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): The Chancellor confirmed in his pre-Budget report that we would be launching a consultation on developing measures to address diffuse water pollution from agriculture in the early part of this year.

The synergies between agriculture and environment are key to sustainable development. Given our desire to gain maximum value from a wide-ranging consultation on how best to both increase the sustainability of English agriculture and ensure it plays its part in making water in England as clean and as healthy as practicable, we will now be publishing this consultation on 17 June.

TREASURY

Debt Management Office

The Financial Secretary to the Treasury (Ruth Kelly): The Debt Management Office (DMO) is today publishing its business plan for 2004–05. The DMO's targets for 2004–05 are set out in the business plan. A brief commentary on last year's outturn in relation to the comparable targets will be included in the DMO's report and accounts for 2003–04. A copy of the business plan has been placed in the Library of the House.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Operating and Financial Review

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): I am launching today a consultation on draft regulations for a statutory operating and financial review (OFR), following a recommendation of the company law review and proposals set out in the Government's White Paper "Modernising Company Law" of July 2002. Copies have been placed in the Libraries of both Houses and the Vote Office.

The OFR regulations will require quoted companies to provide a narrative report setting out the company's business objectives, its strategy for achieving them and the risks and uncertainties that might affect their achievement. It will require companies to report on other matters where these are necessary for an understanding of the business. These matters include employees, the environment and social and community issues. It is proposed that where directors believe that they have nothing to report on those matters, they will have to state that fact. The OFR will represent a move from reporting on past performance to an assessment of the future prospects of the company in both the short and the long term. It will enable shareholders to judge whether the directors' view of the business meets their own long-term investment needs and their own expectations of the way good companies should perform—companies that understand the importance of human capital, open dealings with customers and suppliers, and their impact on the environment and on the wider community.

The OFR will apply to all quoted companies. These are companies registered in Great Britain that are either listed in the UK or in any other European economic area (EEA) state or whose shares are traded on the New York stock exchange or NASDAQ. The regulations also implement related changes to the directors' report of other companies required by the Accounts Modernisation Directive.

A number of quoted companies already prepare OFRs or adopt the broad approach set out in a guidance statement originally introduced by the Accounting Standards Board in 1993 and revised in 2003. The directors of those companies recognise that such reporting can contribute to the profile of the company and offer the market confidence about its management and prospects. The OFR regulations will provide directors with the opportunity to provide key information to shareholders within a statutory regime that will give reassurance on the quality of the information provided. It will enable the best companies to maintain and promote their high standards while allowing other companies to raise their standards. It will contribute to market stability, shareholder engagement, investment, company performance and corporate social responsibility. It will facilitate informed dialogue between directors and shareholders, encouraging responsible institutional investors to adopt an understanding of the particular businesses their investments rely upon.

The Accounting Standards Board will be preparing a new reporting standard for the OFR. In addition, alongside the consultation, a working group chaired by Rosemary Radcliffe and representing a range of business, investor and wider interests, is publishing practical guidance for directors on the preparation of the OFR. I am extremely grateful to the working group for the hard work it has undertaken on this essential element of the OFR.

The consultation period will end on 6 August. After taking into account responses to the consultation, I intend to lay the regulations before the end of the year, so that they can apply to accounting periods beginning on or after 1 January 2005. I hope that all those interested in this issue will respond to our consultation and help us ensure that the OFR is an effective tool.

Special Shares (Energy Companies)

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Patricia Hewitt): I wish to inform the House about the Government's decision on the future of special shares held in the British Energy Group, Nuclear Generation Decommissioning Fund Limited, National Grid Transco plc, Viridian, Phoenix Natural Gas, Scottish Power, and Scottish and Southern Energy.

The Secretary of State for Scotland and I jointly hold a special share in British Energy plc. I hold a special share in British Energy's English operating subsidiary, British Energy Generation Limited, and the Secretary of State for Scotland holds a special share in the Scottish operating subsidiary, British Energy Generation (UK) Limited. I also hold a special share in the Nuclear Generation Decommissioning Fund Limited (NGDF) that would be subsumed into the new Nuclear Liabilities Fund (NLF) being created as part of the proposed restructuring of British Energy. In addition, I also hold a special share in National Grid Transco plc. The Secretary of State for Northern Ireland holds special shares in Viridian and in Phoenix Natural Gas. The Secretary of State for Scotland holds special shares in Scottish Power, and Scottish and Southern Energy.

Special shares in these companies require the consent of the relevant Minister for certain significant decisions affecting shareholdings, the structure of the company or disposal of certain assets. In particular, Government consent is required for any move that would allow a single person to own more than 15 per cent. in any of the companies.

We have been considering carefully the future of these shares that date back to the original privatisation of the companies in the light of the European Court of Justice (ECJ) judgments on special shares (including BAA) on 13 May 2003, and, in the case of British Energy, the proposed restructuring of the company. The Government have concluded that the current legal and regulatory framework now provides adequate protection of the public policy objectives, which the special shares were initially set up to cover. We will maintain only those that can be justified and are necessary in the public interest.

Taking account of the ECJ judgments, the Government have decided to redeem the special shares held in National Grid Transco plc, Viridian, Phoenix Natural Gas, Scottish Power, and Scottish and Southern Energy.

The Government have decided, however, that it would be justifiable to retain two key provisions of the British Energy special share: first, to require anyone who has purchased more than 15 per cent. of the issued shares of British Energy to obtain the Government's consent; and, secondly, to require the consent of the appropriate Secretary of State for any disposal of a nuclear-station by British Energy. It is proposed that both provisions will be amended to provide that Government consent may be refused only on national security grounds. The nuclear security regime operated by the Department's Office for Civil Nuclear Security is robust and comprehensive, and is designed to prevent unauthorised access to nuclear stations or nuclear material falling into inappropriate hands. But in the context of nuclear energy we believe it is justified and proportionate to the risks involved to retain these two particular special share provisions in the companies of the British Energy Group.

Other provisions of the special shares in the British Energy Group would be given up on the same basis as for the conventional electricity companies. In the light of the ECJ judgment in would not be justified to retain general powers over the commercial operations of the company. These rights have not protected, and will not protect, the Government's economic interest in British Energy. This interest arises from the Government's ultimate responsibility to ensure safe management and funding of BE's nuclear liabilities, which would always fall to the Government in the last resort given their duty to safeguard nuclear safety, security and environmental protection. For the future, it is the contractual arrangements we are putting in place as part of the restructuring that would compel British Energy to

contribute to its liabilities and help minimise demands on the taxpayer, and enable us to monitor the performance of the company.

The special share in the NGDF will be retained and carried forward into the NLF if British Energy's restructuring is successful. The special share contributes to the protection of the Government's significant interest in ensuring that the NGDF/NLF Company achieves its purpose of receiving, investing and ultimately paying out moneys for the decommissioning of British Energy's nuclear power stations.

DEFENCE

Future Rapid Effect System (FRES)

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The Ministry of Defence has approved the launch of a two-year assessment phase for the future rapid effect system (FRES). FRES is the most significant armoured vehicle project for the next decade. It is central to the Army's future force structure, providing a family of network-capable armoured vehicles as part of a coherent and highly deployable medium-weight force. It will deliver a step-change in the capability of our forces to meet the challenges of future expeditionary operations. FRES is also intended to meet the need to replace a number of in-service vehicles, such as SAXON, with modern, battle-winning equipment.

The assessment phase will be led by a systems house, independent of product or manufacturing capability, selected for their programme management, risk management and systems engineering capabilities. The successful candidate will be selected via competition and a contract should be placed in late 2004. The systems house will provide an objective view of ideas and technologies, which may be applicable to FRES, and of the risks inherent in complex "system of systems" integration. It will exploit and build on previous work wherever possible. In addition, as part of an incremental acquisition approach, the assessment phase will include a range of risk reduction and technology demonstration work to examine the risks of relevant technologies and to determine if they are suitable for FRES, allowing the insertion of new technologies as they mature.

The FRES project also provides excellent opportunities for UK defence industry to engage in the programme in line with defence industrial policy. The assessment phase will reach as wide and deep as possible to harness the broadest range of industrial capability, creativity and innovation. The systems house will therefore need to work closely with companies in the armoured fighting vehicle and other related sectors to draw on their expertise. There will also be opportunities for such companies to participate in the technology demonstration work during the assessment phase.

Options for future phases of the programme have deliberately been kept open, but the way forward for FRES announced today provides the right foundations for the project and for the successful delivery of this important capability.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Housing

The Deputy Prime Minister (Mr. John Prescott): I am today announcing my approval to 58 new schemes that could release up to £3 billion more investment to tackle another 170,000 homes and further reduce the number of non-decent social homes. This adds to the considerable achievement of there already being 1 million fewer social homes below the decency standard than seven years ago.

I am also announcing a new scheme which would enable proposed stock transfers with a funding gap to go ahead. This will ensure that the option of a stock transfer is available to those cases where the stock has a negative value.

The new schemes draw on funding using our three designated routes for councils that need extra resources to make their stock decent:

I have awarded 12 local authorities places on the fourth round of the Arm's-Length Management Programme. These are Bassetlaw, Brent, Ealing, Eastbourne, Hammersmith and Fulham, Newark and Sherwood, Nottingham, Rotherham, Sandwell, Sheffield (partial), Slough, and Wolverhampton. Together, the bids from these authorities are for over £1.8 billion and cover just under 114,000 non-decent homes.

I have agreed nine new schemes under the private finance initiative. These are in Cheshire, Derby, Kent, Kirklees, the London Boroughs of Croydon, Islington and Lambeth, Manchester and West Wiltshire. We are making PFI credits of around £370 million available to tackle 5,300 non-decent homes as well as providing new and refurbished affordable housing and building new sheltered and supported housing.

Thirty stock transfer schemes in 14 local authorities have been awarded places on the 2004 transfer programme: Broxbourne, Ellesmere Port and Neston, Halton, Hyndburn, Kings Lynn and West Norfolk, Lambeth, Tower Hamlets, Macclesfield, Mid-Devon, North Somerset, Sedgefield, Stafford, West Lancashire and Sheffield. Seven more in four local authorities have had places held open: Manchester, North Norfolk, Preston, Teesdale. Together they generate £1 billion of private sector investment to tackle 56,000 non-decent homes and keep the stock in good condition for 30 years.

These announcements are a tremendous achievement which show that we are making great strides toward our aim, which I confirmed in the sustainable communities plan in March 2003, of making all social housing decent by 2010.

Written Ministerial Statements

Thursday 6 May 2004

HOME DEPARTMENT

Royal Household (Security)

The Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr. David Blunkett): I am today publishing the Security Commission's report on the implications for security of the activities of the *Daily Mirror* reporter, Ryan Parry, at Buckingham Palace. I assured the House on 19 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 775, that I expected the review to cover all aspects of the process of checking those who form part of the royal household. I also said that one of the strengths of our democracy is that such breaches are open to scrutiny, that we can learn quickly from them, and that nothing is swept under the carpet.

I therefore welcome the Security Commission's report on this incident and applaud the thoroughness with which it has approached its task.

The recommendations are clear and pragmatic and include the creation of a post of Director of Security for the royal households, the development of a wide range of checks that can be carried out on employees of the royal households and the creation of an annual plan to be agreed and implemented by the households, together with the police and the Home Office.

I am happy to note the progress that has already been made in the intervening period to improve security within the royal households and I look forward to the implementation of the report's recommendations. The appointment this week by Buckingham Palace of a director of security is particularly welcome, as this new post will oversee the security vetting process across the royal households reporting to the Queen's Private Secretary.

It is clearly welcome to note the Commission's finding that the existing framework for dealing with the security of the royal family is considered sound and provides an appropriate strategic structure for the oversight of security vetting and related work. Responsibility for delivery will accordingly continue to be shared: policy and funding responsibility to rest with the Home Secretary; operational responsibility to lie with the police; and the royal households having overall responsibility for personnel security and for procedures within royal residences. The Commission recommended a tightening of the arrangements for day to day delivery of these procedures within the royal household through the creation of the director of security post, a new annual security plan and a regular process of review. Overall responsibility, as the House would expect, will continue to rest with me as Home Secretary with the constituent parts of the system being responsible for delivery in their areas.

The Commission also met the authorities of the Palace of Westminster, in order to discover whether similar issues might arise in relation to Parliament. On reflection, the Commission felt that the differences require a separate review, but none the less made a number of suggestions. The report will therefore be copied to those undertaking the existing security view of the Palace of Westminster announced by the Leader of the House of Commons last month. None the less, the Commission endorsed recent changes to security at the Palace of Westminster, including the decision of the House of Commons Commission to construct a security screen around the public gallery on the recommendation of the Director General of the Security Service.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Waste Management

The Minister for the Environment (Mr. Elliot Morley): I am pleased to announce today the publication of the "Review of Environmental and Health Effects of Waste Management: Municipal Solid Waste and Similar Wastes."

The Prime Minister's Strategy Unit, in its report "Waste not, Want not" recommended that an independent body should bring together the literature and evidence on the relative health and environmental effects of all the different waste management options, relative both to each other and to other activities affecting health and the environment. Defra commissioned this report in response to that recommendation.

The review was commissioned in early 2003, and has been carried out by a team led by Enviros, environmental consultants, and Roy Harrison, Professor of Environmental Health at the Institute of Public and Environmental Health, University of Birmingham. The team should be congratulated on bringing together and considering a wide range of evidence, both from the UK and abroad.

The report examines the waste management options for treating municipal solid and similar waste. It focuses on the principal types of facilities that are currently used for dealing with such waste in the UK and in Europe and on what the currently available scientific evidence can tell us about their environmental and health effects.

It is very comprehensive, bringing together, for the first time, a wealth of evidence from existing studies of the health and environmental impacts of waste management. It provides a convenient and authoritative compendium of current knowledge in this area.

The report has been peer reviewed by the Royal Society and Professor Howard Dalton, Defra's chief scientific advisor, has provided me with advice on the scientific analyses.

The report's authors conclude that, on the evidence from studies so far, present day municipal waste management has at most a minor effect on human health and the environment. For example:

> dealing with municipal solid waste by incineration accounts for less than 1 per cent. of UK emissions of dioxins, while domestic sources such as cooking and burning coal for heating account for 18 per cent. of emissions;

less than 1 per cent. of UK emissions of oxides of nitrogen, which reduce air quality, come from municipal solid waste management, while 42 per cent. come from road traffic.

The report rightly recognises that there is more that we can and should still learn and we will be addressing the need and priorities for further research through our waste research strategy this summer. The search for knowledge is never complete, and this report usefully identifies areas of research that we will be taking forward as part of our continual efforts to refine the evidence base for policy making.

We must manage the growing amount of waste we produce. We will do this by basing our policies on the best available scientific evidence and on an assessment of the comparative risks. We will continue to develop our scientific knowledge to support our policies. This report is a helpful contribution to that process.

Emissions Trading Scheme

The Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Margaret Beckett): The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and I are today publishing the UK national allocation plan for the EU emissions trading scheme. Copies of the plan will be available in the Libraries of the House from 11 am today.

The EU emissions trading scheme is the most significant measure in the EU climate change programme, and begins on 1 January 2005. The objective of the scheme is to reduce, in the most cost effective way, EU emissions of CO_2 that contribute to the problems associated with global warming and to encourage investments by business to help EU member states and accession countries achieve the reductions necessary for meeting their Kyoto targets for 2008–12.

The plan was submitted to the European Commission on 30 April to meet a commitment given by Ministers at the end of March. It is being published today as part of a package including a consultation document that explains decisions taken following earlier consultation on a draft of the plan and further issues on which comments are being sought.

The overall number of allowances to be allocated in the first phase of the scheme is consistent with an initial reduction in UK carbon dioxide emissions of 15.2 per cent. on 1990 levels by 2010. The Government are firmly committed to its national goal of moving towards a 20 per cent. reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide by 2010. The overall level of allowances to be allocated in the UK in phase 2 of the scheme (which runs from 2008–12) will be consistent with the trading sector's contribution to achieving the 20 per cent. goal.

I have emphasised to the European Commission the UK's commitment to the scheme and the importance that the UK attaches to the Commission's scrutiny of all national allocation plans to ensure that they deliver on the EU's Kyoto goals—not least because widely varying and inconsistent approaches could be said to have competitive implications. Given the approach that the UK has taken in its plan, it is politically important that the Commission plays this role effectively.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act

The Minister of State, Northern Ireland Office (Mr. John Spellar): Last year the Government announced a review of the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (Disapplication of Part IV for Northern Ireland Parties, etc) Order 2001.

The Order, made under section 70 of the Act, exempts the Northern Ireland political parties from the requirement to comply with Part IV of the Act for four years. Part IV regulates donations to parties so that foreign and anonymous donations are prohibited.

After consulting the Northern Ireland political parties, political parties in Ireland, the Northern Ireland Affairs Committee and the Electoral Commission, and taking into consideration the changed political landscape since the Order was first made, the Government are now minded to let the current Order expire in February 2005.

The Government recognise that the current funding arrangements lack transparency and that they are open to abuse. Moreover, the current regime creates clear differences between political parties in Northern Ireland, on the one hand, and those in the rest of the United Kingdom and in Ireland in terms of their access to funds.

However, the Government are fully aware of the special circumstances that exist in Northern Ireland both as regards the continuing fear of intimidation of donors and Ireland's special role in Northern Ireland's political life, as set out in the Belfast agreement. Any new arrangements, therefore, will have to take these important issues into account.

Equally, however, there is a reasonable demand in many quarters for greater transparency and accountability. The Government are, therefore, inviting views on what new arrangements might be made within those objectives, and will aim to announce its decisions by the end of the year. Parties or individuals willing to comment should, therefore, do so by 30 June 2004.

I will, of course, report back to the House in due course.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Lottery Young People's Fund

The Minister for the Arts (Estelle Morris): I am pleased to inform the House that on 5 May I formally issued the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) with policy directions in connection with the new lottery young people's fund. We announced our intention to establish such a fund, initially funded with £200 million from NOF's balances, in the national lottery funding decision document published last July. It was specified as a new NOF initiative in the New Opportunities Fund (Specification of Initiative) Order 2004, which came into force on 23 January 2004, following a resolution of each House of Parliament.

The policy directions I have issued to NOF will allow it to take forward development of the fund, within a framework that supports key priorities for the Government and the devolved administrations. The

focus of the young people's fund will be on projects promoting youth inclusion, specifically by providing facilities and activities, both after school and in holiday periods. In England, the development of the fund will be closely aligned with the aims and principles of the Green Paper "Every Child Matters", published last September.

The fund will address the particular problems faced by young people at risk of social exclusion and provide a welcome new focus for lottery funding for this age group. Plans for the fund will be developed in consultation with representative groups of young people. Young people will also be involved in the design and development of project proposals, decisions on which projects are supported, and the implementation, management and evaluation of projects.

I have placed a copy of the policy directions in the Libraries of both Houses.

DEFENCE

Queen Victoria School

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Defence (Mr. Ivor Caplin): The Chief Executive of the Queen Victoria School has been set the following key targets for 2004–05:

Pupil Population

To maintain the staying on rate at school for S4 to S5 at a minimum of 6 per cent. above the Scottish National average for the current year.*

Educational

To maintain a percentage of pupils of the S4 roll gaining 5 + awards at level 5 or better (post-appeal) by the end of S4, at 5 per cent. above the Scottish National average.*

To maintain a percentage of the S4 roll gaining 3 + awards at Level 6 or better (post-appeal) by the end of S5, at 4 per cent. above the Scottish National average.*

Financial

To achieve a pupil per capita cost of not more than £15,750 by 31 March 2005. The 2003–04 target was £15,250.

To generate gross income to the School of at least £330,000 by 31 March 2005. The 2003–04 target was £300,000.

*All Queen Victoria school statistics to be based on the school's results over the last three years, compared with the Scottish National average for the current year, those statistics being as published in the Scottish Executive Statistical Bulletin. All educational key targets for 2003–04 are shown pre-appeal and will be updated with post-appeal figures when the latter are published by the Scottish Executive. However, the reported performances of all educational key targets for 2003–04 are shown post-appeal.

Analytical Services Agency

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the Chief Executive of the Defence Analytical Services Agency (DASA) for financial year 2004–05, and are as follows:

Delivering Services to Meet Customer Needs

To meet at least 95 per cent. of the timeliness and quality targets in the 36 Service Level Agreements with customers for on-going work, and Project Agreements for surveys, modelling and other one-off projects.

To publish the five key defence National Statistics on time, with no major errors and with no breaches of the pre-release access arrangements, and to meet 95 per cent. of the timeliness and quality targets for other defence National Statistics publications.

To have at least 90 per cent. of customers saying, in the annual Customer Satisfaction Survey, that they are satisfied with the overall service they receive from DASA.

Investing in Quality

To conduct a National Statistics quality review of DASA's service pensioners statistics, and recommend improvements in their quality and scope.

To implement 75 per cent. of the 2004–05 targets in the implementation plan for the defence finance and economic statistics National Statistics quality review conducted in 2002–03.

Developing People

To have at least 85 per cent. of staff saying, in the annual Staff Opinion Survey, that they are satisfied with working in DASA.

Efficiency

To make sufficient efficiency gains to provide the necessary resources for (a) Key Target 5 to be addressed, (b) a scoping study to be conducted into DASA's taking on responsibility for the collection and presentation of deployment statistics, and (c) an expanded investment appraisal advice service established.

Anti-Structures Munition (ASM)

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): The Ministry of Defence has selected two systems offered by Dynamit Nobel and Saab Bofors Dynamics to proceed into a competitive assessment phase for the anti-structures munition programme. This follows a successful and comprehensive evaluation as part of the concept phase. The cost of the assessment phase is likely to be approximately £7 million.

The ASM programme is intended to produce a man portable, shoulder launched, precision weapon for use against fixed structures and other emplacements at a range of around 200m, utilising enhanced blast warhead technology. A decision on whether to commit to demonstration and manufacture of the system will occur at Main Gate.

The strategic defence review new chapter placed increased emphasis on the need for precision in the face of force and ASM has the potential to provide the armed forces with a significant advancement in capability in this area, particularly for expeditionary operations in urban and mountainous terrain. It is designed to minimise casualties and will be fully in accordance with our obligations under international humanitarian law.

Defence, Transport and Movement Agency (DTMA)

The Minister of State, Ministry of Defence (Mr. Adam Ingram): Key targets have been set for the Chief Executive of DTMA for Financial Year 2004–05. The targets are as follows:

Key Target 1

To achieve at least a "SATISFACTORY" rating in the provision of planning and delivery of transport and movements support to emerging operations, an increase in the tempo of existing operations or other requirements.

Key Target 2

To achieve at least a "SATISFACTORY" rating in the planning and delivery of transport and movements support to enduring operations.

Key Target 3

To provide Roll-on Roll-off (Ro-Ro) vessel capability at the Readiness States required.

Key Target 4

To meet customers' requirements as negotiated and agreed in Customer Supplier Agreements (CSAs) to deliver:

97 per cent. or more of Agency transactions and services, however provided, to be within agreed Time, Quantity, Quality and Cost (TQQC) criteria.

At least 92 per cent. of transactions against each service to be within agreed TQQC criteria.

Key Target 5

To reduce the average unit cost of output by 2 per cent. in real terms.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Armenia and Azerbaijan

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (Mr. Bill Rammell): Her Majesty's Government remain committed to the OSCE arms embargo against both Azerbaijan and Armenia, which we interpret as covering all goods and technology controlled under entries in Part III of Schedule 1 to the Export of Goods (Control) Order 1994 commonly known as the military list).

In April 2004, the Government approved an export licence application for de-mining equipment for the HALO Trust for de-mining operations in Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The decision was made in accordance with our practice occasionally to make an exemption to our interpretation of the embargo by approving exports of non-lethal military goods to humanitarian, media or peacekeeping organisations where it is clear that the embargo was not intended to prevent those exports and there is a strong humanitarian case for them.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Jamaica

The Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn): Debt repayments totalling £9.45 million owed by the Government of Jamaica on past loans from the UK have been cancelled by the Department for International Development (DFID). This sum comprises the following:

Relief under the Commonwealth Debt Initiative (CDI) for all repayments due in 2004–05, £3.53 million;

Relief of loan repayments due to the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) in 2004–05, £2.91 million;

Reimbursement of loan repayments made to the CDC during 2003–04, £3.01 million.

Part of the debt held by the Commonwealth Development Corporation was transferred to DFID in 1999, when the CDC was transformed into a public limited company. This debt is now managed within the CDI process.

The Commonwealth Debt Initiative, launched in October 1997 by my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer, aims to provide additional relief in respect of Government to Government loans to low and middle-income countries in the Commonwealth that are committed to achieving the millennium development goals, promote transparent and accountable Government, and pursue economic policies that encourage sustainable development.

Approval of debt relief for Jamaica follows a detailed assessment by the Governments of Jamaica and the UK against these criteria. The assessment considered the effects of Jamaica's high level of debt and its impact on pro-poor expenditure, and the high levels of crime and violence. It also considered the steps taken by the Government of Jamaica to modernise the public sector, which is central to economic recovery and growth; to develop a comprehensive strategy to reduce crime and violence and promote security; and to develop a medium term socio-economic policy framework, which will provide a coherent framework for policy decisions which promote growth, security and the reduction of poverty.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Government Inquiries

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Christopher Leslie): My noble Friend the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor has today, with the agreement of the Public Administration Select Committee, published a consultation paper which sets out the Government's response to the "Issues and Questions" paper published by the Public Administration Select Committee on 24 February 2004 as part of its inquiry into "Government by Inquiry".

The consultation period will run until 29 July 2004.

The Government believe that there is a strong case for considering what steps could be taken to improve the arrangements for inquiries called by Ministers to ensure that the benefits of their recommendations can be obtained more quickly, and economically. On 25 May, my noble Friend the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs and Lord Chancellor will give oral evidence to the Committee. As well as consideration by the Committee, the Government feel that matters discussed in the memorandum merit wider comment.

I have placed copies of the consultation paper in the Libraries of both Houses and it has been published on the Department for Constitutional Affairs website at: www.dca.gsi.gov.uk/consult/confr.htm

Hutton Inquiry

The Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. David Lammy): My noble Friend Lord Filkin has today made a statement concerning the cost of the Hutton inquiry.

The estimated cost to the Government is £2.54 million, of which £1.68 million was incurred by the inquiry itself.

TREASURY

International Monetary Fund/World Bank

The Chancellor of the Exchequer (Mr. Gordon Brown): I travelled to Washington last week for the spring meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank, and for a meeting of G7 Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors. I chaired a meeting of the International Monetary and Financial Committee (IMFC), the main policy-making committee of the Board of Governors representing the 183 members of the IMF. I then attended the Development Committee of the IMF and the World Bank in his role as Chairman of the IMFC.

In addition, I addressed a G7 dinner with Middle East and North African Finance Ministers; attended a G7 outreach meeting on combating the financing of terrorism; and attended a conference on the private sector in developing countries with representatives from the private sector.

I also had bilateral discussions with Jim Wolfensohn (President of the World Bank), Anne Krueger (Acting Managing Director of the IMF), US Treasury Secretary John Snow, Nicholas Sarkozy (Finance Minister, France), Ali Babacan (Minister of State, Republic of Turkey), Ralph Goodale (Finance Minister, Canada), Hilde Johnson (Minister of Development, Norway), Rodrigo Rato (candidate for the post of Managing Director of the IMF) and attended a meeting of African Finance Ministers.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Overcrowded Housing

The Minister for Housing and Planning (Keith Hill): I am publishing today a review by De Montfort University of the evidence and literature relating to the impact of overcrowded housing on health and education. Copies of the report will be made available in the Libraries of both Houses and on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website www.odpm.gov.uk and will also be available from the ODPM Publication Sales Centre.

I am also making available two in-house statistical papers describing overcrowding at national and regional level and at sub-regional level. These papers bring together the available data from household surveys: "The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Survey of English Housing", "The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Condition Survey" and "The Department for Work and Pensions Family Resources Survey". Copies of these papers will also be placed in the Libraries of both Houses and on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website.

SOLICITOR GENERAL

Infant Death Convictions

The Solicitor-General (Ms Harriet Harman): My noble Friend the Attorney-General has made the following ministerial statement:

"My statements of 19 January and 5 February gave details of a review process established following the judgment of the Court of Appeal in the case of Angela Cannings. I wish to inform the House of progress.

The review process is now well advanced. A thorough search to identify all potentially relevant cases has been undertaken, and the process has been extended to include cases involving carers. These measures have resulted in an increase in the total number of cases subject to review from 258 to 298.

To ensure thorough and independent scrutiny of all cases, a three-stage review process has been established. Every case file is subject to a preliminary review by a Crown Prosecution Service area to ascertain its key characteristics. Cases are then passed to a central review team comprising prosecutors who are highly experienced in complex criminal casework. A smaller number of cases are then referred to an interdepartmental group, for a final decision on whether the legal representatives of the convicted persons should be notified that there may be features in a case that warrant further consideration by the Court of Appeal or the Criminal Cases Review Commission. The interdepartmental group works under my direction, and includes representatives from the police, Crown Prosecution Service and Criminal Cases Review Commission.

Reviews have been completed in 97 cases. In 38 of these the person convicted is still serving a custodial sentence.

A significant further number of cases are at an advanced stage of review.

Letters have been sent to the legal representatives of five convicted persons, notifying them that it may be appropriate for the safety of their clients' convictions to be considered further by the Court of Appeal or, if appropriate, the Criminal Cases Review Commission. Two of those convicted are sentenced to life imprisonment and remain in custody. Two have already unsuccessfully sought to appeal their convictions.

I have made the Court of Appeal aware of the action I am taking and have liaised closely with the Chairman of the Criminal Cases Review Commission to ensure that any cases referred to these bodies will be treated expeditiously. My office stands ready to refer appropriate case files to the CCRC.

The fact that a case has been referred to legal representatives of the convicted person does not amount to a positive determination that their conviction is unsafe. Should any appeals result from this review, it will be for the Crown Prosecution Service to independently decide whether to contest the appeal.

Sixteen live cases were identified by the CPS as potentially affected by the Cannings judgment. Fifteen have been reviewed. Two cases have been discontinued: a Hampshire case discontinued before trial and a Coventry case discontinued before retrial.

It would not be appropriate to place in the public domain the names of defendants or convicted persons in these cases. This will be a decision for them, following advice from their legal representatives.

CPS Areas, the central review team and the interdepartmental group continue to accord this work the highest priority. I am determined that the review should be completed as soon as possible, to bring to an end this period of uncertainty for all those involved. I shall keep the House informed of further progress".

Written Answers to Questions

The following answers were received between Friday 2 April and Friday 16 April 2004

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Bail Appeals

Vera Baird: To ask the Solicitor-General how many appeals against grants of bail were made in *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2002–03 by Cleveland Crown Prosecution Service; and how many were successful in each year. [164443]

The Solicitor-General: The Bail (Amendment) Act 1993 gives the prosecution a right of appeal where a magistrates court grants bail to a person who is charged with or convicted of:

an offence punishable by a term of imprisonment of five years or more; or

an offence under section 12 (taking a conveyance without authority) or 12A (aggravated vehicle taking) of the Theft Act 1968.

Over the period 2001–03, the Crown Prosecution Service in Cleveland made applications under the Bail (Amendment) Act as follows:

In 2001, there were three appeals of this nature and all of them succeeded.

In 2002, there were four appeals, three of which were successful.

In 2003, there were seven appeals, four of which were successful.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Criminal Defence Service

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the Criminal Defence Service will announce the result of its consultation into the provision of funding to suspects before charge. [164335]

Mr. Lammy: The Government announced on 2 February that it intends to make a number of changes to the Criminal Defence Service. The changes follow a full consultation and are designed to improve value for money by targeting criminal legal aid more efficiently on more serious offences. Funding is currently available for legal advice and assistance to suspects before charge, and there are no plans to remove this.

European Parliamentary Elections

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the electorate is for each *(a)* constituency and *(b)* area for the forthcoming European parliamentary elections; how many members are to be elected for each (i) constituency and (ii) area; and what percentage of the electorate voted in the previous European parliamentary elections in each (A) constituency and (B) area, and how many people. [165780]

Mr. Leslie: The precise electorate for the 10 June elections will not be known until the register closes on the publication of notice of election. Each European parliamentary electoral region is a single multi-member constituency. The following table shows the UK European parliamentary electoral regions, the number of MEPs to be elected for each region in June, and the local government electorates as at December 2003. The administrative unit for counting the votes in the European parliamentary elections in June is the local authority area. Electorate figures for these are available from the recent Office for National Statistics table "UK Electoral register 1 December 2003: Local government electors", which can be accessed on the ONS website at www.statistics.gov.uk. Statistics relating to the 1999 European parliamentary elections can be found in the Home Office Statistical Bulletin for 29 September 2000 (Issue 16/00, ISSN 1358–510X).

UK European parliamentary electoral region	*Local government electors at December 2003*	*Seats to be elected, June 2004*
East Midlands	3,241,566	6
Eastern	4,170,840	7
London	5,143,392	9
North East	1,922,446	3
North West	5,188,717	9
South East	6,087,103	10
South West	3,845,253	7
West Midlands	4,016,007	7
Yorkshire and the Humber	3,730,275	6
Wales	2,228,030	4
Scotland	3,877,194	7
Northern Ireland	1,069,136	3
Total	44,519,959	78

High Court Judges

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the process by which High Court judges are *(a)* selected and *(b)* appointed. [165612]

Mr. Leslie: My noble and learned Friend the Secretary of State and Lord Chancellor recommends to Her Majesty those candidates who best meet the published criteria for appointment to the High Court Bench.

Recommendations are based on the results of the recent selection round. Advertisements in the national and legal press in July 2003 invited applications for appointment to the High Court. In addition, the senior judiciary were invited to nominate candidates. A wide consultation exercise sought evidence from senior judges and others to the extent to which all candidates met the criteria. This evidence was assessed by independent sifters and moderated by senior civil servants who then submitted advice to the Lord Chancellor and senior judiciary on the degree to which candidates met the criteria for appointment. After discussing that advice with the senior judiciary, the Lord Chancellor decided on a list of candidates considered to be appointable to the High Court.

Individual recommendations about appointment to the High Court are made by the Lord Chancellor, after consulting the senior judiciary, from those classified as appointable and having regard to the specific needs of the High Court at the relevant time.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the Department's proposals for the selection and appointment of High Court judges. [165615]

Mr. Leslie: The Constitutional Reform Bill, currently before Parliament, will establish a Judicial Appointments Commission. The Commission will be responsible for selecting candidates for appointment as High Court judges, as well as other judicial appointments. The manner in which the Commission does so will be for it to determine, subject to the overriding criterion that selection must be on merit, and subject to any guidance which the Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs may issue, for example, in requiring the Commission to seek to expand the pool of candidates from which a selection may be made.

Having made its selection, the Commission will put forward one name for each post to the Secretary of State. He will normally be expected to recommend that candidate for appointment to the Queen, but he will have limited powers to ask the Commission to reconsider, once, or to reject a particular candidate, once, or to require the selection process to be rerun. The Secretary of State for Constitutional Affairs will have no power to recommend to Her Majesty the appointment of a candidate of his own, who has not been selected by the Commission.

Queen's Counsel

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list the QCs who received the highest overall payments *(a)* from the Community Legal Service budget and *(b)* from the Criminal Defence Service budget in 2002–03. [141417]

Mr. Lammy *[pursuant to his reply, 26 January 2004]:* I said in my previous answer that James Sturman was the QC who received the highest total payments from the Criminal Defence Service in 2002–03. This answer failed to take into account payments made under Very High Cost Case Contracts administered separately by the Legal Services Commission. The highest total payments were in fact made to John Rees who received in the region of £664,000. I apologise for this error.

Care should be taken not to misinterpret these payments as an indication of annual earnings for work carried out in the year for the following reasons:

1. Payments made during any financial year will include payments or work carried out before the start of the year, and will include payments for cases, which started and concluded over several years.

2. Payments received during any financial year do not necessarily mean that they were paid for work carried out at the rank of QC

3. Barristers may be paid directly by an instructing solicitor as part a solicitors disbursement.

4. The figures quoted above are gross payments and are inclusive of VAT, and may include payments on account where applicable as well as travel and hotel expenses incurred.

House of Lords Reform

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to propose changes to the voting rights of peers on secondary legislation. [165545]

Mr. Leslie: The Government decided not to proceed with its proposals for reforming the House of Lords this Session, in view of the determined opposition to the proposals in the House of Lords, and the consequent threat to the legislative programme. Instead, the Government is seeking further discussion of the ways in which the role, powers, procedures and composition of the Lords should be reformed.

Supreme Court

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs whom the Government consulted about the proposed establishment of a Supreme Court. [165610]

Mr. Leslie: The Government issued a consultation paper, "Constitutional Reform: a Supreme Court for the United Kingdom" on 11 July 2003. The consultation period closed on 7 November 2003 and 174 replies were received from a wide range of interested organisations and individuals. The responses can be viewed on the Department's website.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much money has been spent on planning the Supreme Court. [165611]

Mr. Leslie: The spend to date on planning the Supreme Court is approximately £113,000. This consists of fees of £19,000 on the search for potential sites for the Supreme Court. A further £94,000 has been committed on the analysis and evaluation of the building options, completion of the Treasury 'Green Book' style economic appraisals and, more recently, detailed work on feasibility and outline design.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the implications of the proposed Supreme Court are for the judicial appeals process. [165616]

Mr. Leslie: The UK Supreme Court will assume the current jurisdiction of the Appellate Committee of the House of Lords and the devolution jurisdiction of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council. Combining these jurisdictions in a new court will not affect the appeals process, but will offer improvement in the efficient management of work load through enhanced facilities and services within the court and greater flexibility for hearing cases.

Unpaid Fines (Cleveland)

Vera Baird: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the total number of overdue unpaid fines in the Cleveland Petty Sessional Division was on 1 April. [165338]

Mr. Leslie: Information regarding fines is produced on a monthly basis as at the end of each month.

The data we have on the Cleveland Magistrates Courts Committee show that the total number of overdue unpaid fines at the end of March 2004 was 33,013.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Doug Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's priorities are for the forthcoming spending review. [164686]

Tessa Jowell: My Department's strategic aim is to improve the quality of life for all through cultural and sporting activities, support the pursuit of excellence and champion the tourism, creative and leisure industries. Decisions taken in the spending round will reflect that.

Mr. Doug Henderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her Department's priorities are for sport and physical activity funding in the forthcoming spending review. [164688]

Tessa Jowell: My Department's priorities are to build on progress made since the last spending review through continued significant investment in sport and physical activity in schools and at grass roots level as a means of improving the health and well-being of people in this country, and in giving our most talented athletes the very best chance of fulfilling their potential.

Information Technology Projects

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list each information technology project being undertaken by her Department and its agencies including the *(a)* start date, *(b)* planned completion date, *(c)* current expected completion date, *(d)* planned cost and *(e)* current estimated cost; and if she will make a statement. [165010]

Mr. Caborn: The Department is currently undertaking the following IT projects:

1. Development of an information management programme to support Freedom of Information and other key business objectives, including pilot implementation of an Electronic Document and Records Management System—started September 2003—planned completion January 2005—expected completion January 2005—planned cost £1.3 million—cost to date £491,000.

2. Development of an extranet to link DCMS and its sponsored bodies—started March 2004—planned completion July 2004—expected completion July 2004—planned cost £20,000—cost to date none.

TV Licensing

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what arrangements are in place for *(a)* monitoring and *(b)* providing civil redress for unjustified actions by TV Licensing. [165593]

Estelle Morris: The BBC, as licensing authority, monitors the handling of complaints received by TV Licensing. Complaints are dealt with in the first instance by TV Licensing's customer relations team; there is an avenue of appeal first to the Head of Customer Relations and then to the Customer Services Director. If a complaint remains unresolved, the case is referred to the BBC for review. These procedures are additional to any right to seek legal redress through the courts in respect of any alleged unlawful action. The BBC considers that it adheres to all relevant UK legislation and codes of practice and requires its agent TV Licensing to do likewise.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pension Credit

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners he estimates have failed to claim their Pension Credit in each constituency in North Wales. [164854]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the form requested. However, as at 29 February, there were approximately 133,000 households (approximately 162,000 individuals) in Wales receiving Pension Credit. As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 4–5, we have published the latest monthly Pension Credit progress report with information up to the end of February.

The report, copies of which are available in the Library, is accompanied by tables showing the number of Pension Credit households and corresponding individuals in each constituency in Great Britain.

Pensioners (Somerset)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the number of pensioners in Somerset who will receive the £100 payment towards council tax, broken down by *(a)* parliamentary constituency and *(b)* local authority area. [165599]

Malcolm Wicks: We are looking at the most effective and cost-efficient way to make the payments of £100 to eligible households. It is intended that a single one-off payment is made in 2004–05.

The latest available data showing households in Somerset with at least one occupant aged 70 or over broken down by *(a)* parliamentary constituency and *(b)* local authority area are in the tables. We expect the 2004–05 figures to be similar.

Households in Somerset with at least one occupant aged 70 or over by parliamentary constituency.

Parliamentary Constituency	*Households*
Bath	9,185
Bridgwater	10,030
Somerton and Frome	9,280
Taunton	11,095
Wansdyke	8,185
Wells	10,430
Weston-Super-Mare	10,155
Woodspring	8,570
Yeovil	10,190
Total	87,120

Households in Somerset with at least one occupant aged 70 or over by local authority

Local Authority	*Households*
Mendip district council	9,530
Sedgemoor district council	10,745
South Somerset district council	15,685
Taunton Deane borough council	10,525
West Somerset district council	4,540
Total	51,025

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Any residence found to have four or more occupants is not included in these figures as it is assumed to be a Residential Care Nursing Home.
3. Local authorities and parliamentary constituencies have been allocated using the relevant ONS postcode directory.
4. Parliamentary constituency boundaries might not match exactly with local authority boundaries.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, Winter Fuel Payments data Winter 2002–03 100 per cent. sample.

Winter Fuel Payment

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners *(a)* were eligible for, *(b)* applied for and *(c)* received the Winter Fuel Payment in the constituency of Weston-super-Mare in each year since its inception. [165601]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of people in the Weston-super-Mare constituency who received Winter Fuel Payments each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. I regret that information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 schemes is not available. Nor is it possible to say how many have applied each year but were not eligible. Without establishing their circumstances it is not possible to say how many others would have been entitled to payments but did not apply.

	Number of payments made
1999–2000	20,770
2000–01	22,605
2001–02	22,830
2002–03	23,230
2003–04	23,345

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. The majority of pensioners do not need to apply because they receive their Winter Fuel Payment automatically.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

DEFENCE

Afghanistan

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to send more troops to Afghanistan to bolster NATO-led operations in the coming months; and if he will make a statement. [165598]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my written statement of 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 96WS.

Aircraft Carriers

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence with which countries talks have taken place on the sale of UK aircraft carriers. [165392]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence's Disposal Services Agency has had no discussions with foreign nations on the disposal of the Navy's current aircraft carriers when they reach the end of their planned in-service life.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of the construction of the two new aircraft carriers; what the military specifications of the aircraft carriers will be; and if he will make a statement on the contract for construction. [165614]

Mr. Ingram: The Future Carrier (CVF) programme is currently in its assessment phase and discussions are continuing on the contracting arrangements for the demonstration and manufacture (D&M) of the carriers. As with any new equipment project, the Department has not sought to fix the dimensions of the aircraft carriers during this phase. The design of the ships will continue to evolve as we seek to balance overall performance, time and cost as part of normal assessment phase activity. Ministers are currently considering proposals on the overall CVF programme and on when to proceed to the D&M phases.

Army Personnel (Early Release)

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many army personnel of all ranks have requested early release from their contracts in each year since 1997. [165513]

Mr. Caplin: The information requested on the numbers of Army personnel who have submitted applications to leave before the expected end of their contract is contained in Tri-Service Publication 5, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Bosnia-Herzegovina

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his policy is on NATO presence in Bosnia-Herzegovina once the EU has taken over the Stabilisation Force operation there; and if he will make a statement. [165595]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

Work continues on the delineation of tasks between the EU and NATO in Bosnia once the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) withdraws. We would expect the continuing but limited NATO role in Bosnia to focus on defence outreach and some operational tasks, including in support of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, once SFOR withdraws.

Departmental Budget

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his Department's budgetary requirement over the next decade. [165548]

Mr. Ingram: Spending plans for 2004–05 and 2005–06 are set out in the Government's Expenditure Plans for the Ministry of Defence 2003–04 to 2005–06, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Spending plans up to 2007–08 are the subject of the 2004 Spending Review, which will conclude later this year. Plans beyond 2007–08 will be addressed in future spending reviews.

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list his Department's top level budget holders in each financial year from 1997–98 to 2000–01. [165563]

Mr. Ingram: The top level budget holder structure for the periods requested is as follows:

1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Commander-in-Chief Fleet	Commander-in-Chief Fleet	Commander-in-Chief Fleet	Commander-in-Chief Fleet
General Officer Commanding (Northern Ireland)	General Officer Commanding (Northern Ireland)	General Officer Commanding (Northern Ireland)	General Officer Commanding (Northern Ireland)
Commander-in-Chief Land Command	Commander-in-Chief Land Command	Commander-in-Chief Land Command	Commander-in-Chief Land Command
Air Officer Commander-in-Chief RAF Strike Command	Air Officer Commander-in-Chief RAF Strike Command	Air Officer Commander-in-Chief RAF Strike Command	Air Officer Commander-in-Chief RAF Strike Command
Chief of Fleet Support	Chief of Fleet Support	Chief of Joint Operations	Chief of Joint Operations
Quarter Master General	Quarter Master General	Chief of Defence Logistics	Chief of Defence Logistics
Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief RAF Logistics Command	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief RAF Logistics Command	2nd Sea Lord/Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command	2nd Sea Lord/Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command
2nd Sea Lord/Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command	2nd Sea Lord/Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command	Adjutant General (Personnel and Training Command)	Adjutant General (Personnel and Training Command)
Adjutant General (Personnel and Training Command)	Adjutant General (Personnel and Training Command)	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief RAF Personnel and Training Command	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief RAF Personnel and Training Command
Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief RAF Personnel and Training Command	Air Officer Commanding-in-Chief RAF Personnel and Training Command	2nd Permanent Under Secretary of State	2nd Permanent Under Secretary of State
2nd Permanent Under Secretary of State	2nd Permanent Under Secretary of State	Chief Executive Defence Procurement Agency/Chief of Defence Procurement	Chief Executive Defence Procurement Agency/Chief of Defence Procurement
Vice Chief of Defence Staff Chief of Defence Procurement	Vice Chief of Defence Staff Chief of Defence Procurement		

Civilian Staff

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many civilians are employed within the armed forces; and in what capacity; [165553]

(2) how many civilians are employed by the Ministry of Defence. [165555]

Mr. Caplin: The number of civilians employed by the Ministry of Defence as at 1 January 2004 was as follows:

	Total	*Operational*	*Military Support*	*HQ, DPA and Support*	*Unallocated*
Total Staff	89,440	24,180	34,210	30,990	60
Non-Industrial Total	63,050	15,390	28,280	19,310	60
Industrial Total	15,100	8,790	5,930	380	-
Trading Funds	11,290	-	-	11,290	-

Figures are full-time equivalent figures for permanent staff, including Royal Fleet Auxiliaries and excluding staff on career breaks, long term sick leave and on secondment etc. Full time equivalent is a measure of the size of the workforce that takes account of the fact that some people work part-time. Figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

Climate Change

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff *(a)* have worked and *(b)* are working on identifying the national security implications of climate change. [165281]

Mr. Ingram: The identification of the national security implications of climate change forms part of a wider review by MOD of the impact of climate change on the Department's policies, operations and estate. Staff working on this do so as part of their wider duties and consequently it is not possible to quantify the numbers of staff involved.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether staff with responsibility for regional strategy have been asked to report on the security implications of climate change for the region for which they are responsible. [165286]

Mr. Ingram: In developing regional strategies, the MOD conducts an analysis of the contemporary strategic context and a wide-ranging assessment of future trends. As part of this strategic assessment, the potential security implications of climate change for particular regions are considered along with other environmental stress factors.

Correspondence

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he will write to the hon. Member as promised in his answer of 20 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 244W. [165487]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Clothing Integrated Project Team is undertaking an audit to establish the extent of holdings of enhanced combat body armour. It is envisaged that this will conclude shortly and I will write to the hon. Member once this work is complete and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Destroyers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many destroyers were held by the Royal Navy in 1997; how many are held now; and how many are deployed on operational duty. [165386]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Navy had 12 destroyers in 1997. There are 11 now. Six are deployed on operational duty, four are available to deploy and one is in a scheduled period of maintenance.

Eurofighter

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 853W, on the Eurofighter, what plans he has to discuss with the US Administration the potential benefits the Eurofighter could bring to the US airforce. [164969]

Mr. Ingram: There are no plans to discuss with the United States Administration the potential benefits the Eurofighter could bring to the US airforce.

Foodstuffs/Kit Purchases

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to increase the amount of UK-sourced *(a)* foodstuffs and *(b)* kit purchased for the armed services. [165461]

Mr. Ingram: Open and fair competition remains the bedrock of the Ministry of Defence's procurement policy although we are prepared to use other approaches where these offer better long-term value for money. The MOD's non-warlike acquisition requirements such as foodstuffs and equipment are subject to the EC Public Procurement Regulations that require such opportunities be advertised in the *Official Journal of the European Union.*

The MOD's contracted food supplier, '3663', is specifically required to source British products whenever they are competitive and when they meet the required quality standard. Indeed, of the 1,400 different products procured for the armed forces in the UK, including fresh, chilled and frozen commodities, over 1,100 are British. The remaining 300 include products that are not produced in this country, such as coffee and bananas.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the date of each briefing he has received on the weapons of mass destruction capabilities of Iraq since March 2002; and what the source of the briefing was in each case. [156643]

Mr. Hoon: I received briefings from a variety of sources and took part in various discussions that included reference to Iraqi capability, including assessed weapons of mass destruction capability, during the period in question. However, the exact dates and content are not recorded centrally.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the average length of a rotation in Iraq for British Service men and women has been. [165556]

Mr. Ingram: Army personnel normally serve in Iraq for six months, and RAF personnel for four months. In some cases, individuals may serve for longer or shorter tours due to the specific demands of some posts or for career management requirements.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many Territorial Army personnel have served in Iraq; [165557]

(2) for how much longer he expects that Territorial Army personnel will be required to serve in Iraq. [165617]

Mr. Ingram: As at 1 April 2004, approximately 6,170 Territorial Army personnel have been mobilised on Operation Telic, the vast majority of whom will have served in Iraq.

In line with the tenets of the Strategic Defence Review, Territorial Army personnel will be considered for Service in Iraq, for as long as a British military presence is deemed necessary.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* part-time military personnel and *(b)* Territorial Army personnel are stationed in Iraq. [165558]

Mr. Ingram: There are no part-time military personnel stationed in Iraq. However, as at 31 March 2004 there were 989 reservists stationed in Iraq, of whom 938 were members of the Territorial Army.

Logistics Budget

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of the Department's logistics budget is spent outside the Defence Logistics Organisation; and by whom. [165562]

Mr. Ingram: 'Logistics' is a term that covers a range of activities that are integral to the capability the Ministry of Defence delivers at all levels. Accordingly, it is not possible to disaggregate a 'logistics budget' for the Department.

Marine Patrol Aircraft

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many marine patrol aircraft were held in 1997; how many are held now; and how many are operational. [165382]

Mr. Ingram: In 1997 the RAF held 29 marine patrol aircraft. The RAF currently has 29 MPAs, 20 of which are operational.

Medical Services

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what medical services are available to personnel at *(a)* AAC Dishforth, *(b)* RAF Leeming, *(c)* RAF Linton on Ouse and *(d)* Alanbrooke Barracks. [165093]

Mr. Ingram: The following medical services are available to personnel at these establishments:

same-day appointments giving access to General Practice medical facilities, including on-site dispensing;

occupational health providing routine medical assessments and additional assessments as required pre-deployment, fitness for training etc;

physiotherapy, rehabilitation and remedial physical training including access to 'fast track' diagnostics and treatment if required;

community mental health team referral to secondary/tertiary medical care is available as required through Ministry of Defence Hospital Units/NHS and all disciplines have out-of-hours arrangements plus accident and emergency access through the NHS;

access to specialist services can be arranged as required.

Combined Services Caving Association

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what advance notice was provided to the Mexican authorities of the plans of the members of the Combined Services Caving Association prior to their entry into Mexico this month; and if he will set out the official response made by Her Majesty's Government to the concerns raised over the cavers' presence in Mexico by President Vicente Fox. [165160]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The British Embassy in Mexico City contacted the Mexican Ministry of Defence on 28 November 2003, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 3 February 2004, at official level by telephone. In these contacts the Embassy informed the authorities of the nature and purpose of the Combined Services Caving Association visit and the fact that those members of the group who were members of the British armed forces would be in Mexico in their civilian capacity as cavers. The contacts were designed to establish that, as in previous years, no special clearances would be required, and to ensure the Mexicans were informed of the visit. The Embassy offered further information in writing. The Mexican authorities confirmed by phone that no special clearances were required for the visit and that no further information was needed.

The UK responded to the Mexican Government's concern about the presence of the UK cavers in Mexico by Note Verbale on 26 March. In our reply we expressed our sincere gratitude to the Mexican Government for their co-operation and assistance to help ensure the safe rescue of the trapped cavers. We also set out the full facts about the nature of activities being undertaken by the cavers and our understanding of the immigration documentation necessary.

Royal Air Force

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many non-civilians are on the payroll of the RAF. [165609]

Mr. Caplin: Information on RAF Regular and Full Time Reserve personnel is given in the Tri-Service Publication 3 (TSP3), a copy of which is available in the Library of the House.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects RAF Leeming to be equipped with the Typhoon. [165089]

Mr. Ingram: The position remains as I set out in the Adjournment debate of 12 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 140WH.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many front-line aircraft were in use by the RAF in *(a)* 1992, *(b)* 1997 and *(c)* 2001; and how many are in use now. [165060]

Mr. Ingram: I assume the hon. Member is referring to RAF fast-jet front-line aircraft. The numbers in question as at 5 March for each year are:

1992—366

1997—358

2001—294

2004—310.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many RAF bases there were in the UK in 2002–03; what the costs were of maintaining each of them; and how many uniformed military personnel were based at each. [165306]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Royal Navy

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the operational status of the Royal Navy. [165546]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Navy is fully capable of meeting its current operational commitments.

Salaries

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what percentage of the armed forces budget has been spent on salaries during the last seven years for which figures are available. [165552]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Science Strategy

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he has taken to enhance science in his Department since the publication of the Government's science strategy, "Investing in Innovation". [162253]

Mr. Ingram: Science and technology has a key role to play in the UK's transition to smaller, but technically advanced, network enabled forces and the UK's war on terror. The Ministry of Defence remains committed to ensuring science feeds into both its policy-making work on future capabilities and also into the defence equipment programme. The MOD has historically

invested considerable sums in technological research for defence purposes and the science and technology budget has remained stable over the last three years.

The MOD science and technology programme has been aligned with defence policy and the capability strategies that flow from it for some considerable time. The MOD is now managing its research programme by outputs to ensure science and technology is focussed on meeting policy and its high level customer needs. Major customers for science and technology in the MOD outline their requirements, which align with MOD's priorities and high level needs, and a detailed research programme is designed to deliver these strategies. This approach is designed to draw together Government, industrial and university sectors in new partnerships, such as Defence Technology Centres, while at the same time maximising the opportunities for wider commercial exploitation from MOD investments.

Service Deployments

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British service personnel are *(a)* deployed and *(b)* stationed in (i) Germany, (ii) Northern Ireland, (iii) Bosnia-Herzegovina, (iv) Croatia, (v) Kosovo, (vi) Albania, (vii) the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, (viii) Sierra Leone, (ix) the Gulf Region, (x) Turkey, (xi) Gibraltar, (xii) Belize, (xiii) Kenya, (xiv) Canada and (xv) The Falkland Islands. [165596]

Mr. Ingram: The approximate numbers of British service personnel deployed or stationed in the locations specified are shown below:

Location	*Deployed*	*Stationed*
Germany	0	17,900
Northern Ireland	0	13,000
Bosnia-Herzegovina	990	0
Croatia	0	0
Kosovo	1,000	0
Albania	0	0
FYR of Macedonia	20	0
Sierra Leone	20	0
The Gulf Region	8,700	0
Turkey	0	0
Gibraltar	0	500
Belize	0	30
Kenya (training team only)	0	10
Canada (training team only)	0	200
The Falkland Islands	1,150	50

The above figures do not include personnel serving in loan/diplomatic posts, on temporary training or small detachments. However, significant numbers of personnel are also currently serving in the three following locations:

Location	*Deployed*	*Stationed*
Afghanistan	480	Nil
Cyprus	400	3,000
Brunei	Nil	1,100

All figures have been rounded.

Royal Military Police

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the last independent quality audit of the work of the Special Investigation Branch of the Royal Military Police was completed; when the next one is scheduled; what the main recommendations were; which recommendations have yet to be implemented; and if he will make a statement. [165762]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Military Police Special Investigation Branch (SIB) are subject to inspection in accordance with the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act. The Surveillance Commissioner undertook an inspection in 2003 and made no substantive comments. The Interception Commissioner is expected to undertake an inspection later this year. In addition, all major SIB investigations are reviewed by external civilian police forces in accordance with Home Office guidelines.

Surplus Land

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department will receive the full proceeds of the land recently agreed to be sold to Taylor Woodrow as building land surplus to that required for the renovation of the rest of the Colchester garrison site. [165697]

Mr. Caplin: The proceeds from the sale of surplus land at Colchester (net of costs incurred) will be received by RMPA (the PFI contractor), and used to reduce the cost of the unitary payments made by the Department under the PFI contract.

Tanks

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many main battle tanks are held by the Army; and how many are deployed in operational units. [165385]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many tanks are battlefield ready in the British armed forces; [165549]

(2) how many Challenger series *(a)* 1 and *(b)* 2 tanks are operational in the armed forces; [165551]

(3) what the cost in 2003–04 was of maintaining the fleet of tanks. [165550]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Warships

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 25 March, to the hon. Member for Mid Sussex (Mr. Soames), *Official Report*, column 948, on warships, what the expiry date for the reactor certificate of HMS Triumph is. [165793]

Mr. Ingram: The authorisation to operate HMS Triumph's reactor expired on 7 March 2004.

Wind Farms

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Carmichael) of 16 March

2004, *Official Report*, column 204W, on wind farms, if he will list the reasons for objection in each case; and how many formal applications were not objected to in each year. [165781]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House giving the details of the nine formal objections from my previous answer where this information is publicly available.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Human Rights and Democracy Project

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 European Initiative for Human Rights and Democracy project to deliver an information campaign on the International Crime Tribunal and the ratification of the Statute of the Tribunal in *(a)* Kazakhstan, *(b)* Kyrgyzstan, *(c)* Uzbekistan, *(d)* Tajikistan, *(e)* Turkmenistan and *(f)* Mongolia; and what assessment he has made of the results of each project; [163867]

(2) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 European Initiative for Human Rights and Democracy project on media training and reinforcing minorities in *(a)* Armenia, *(b)* Azerbaijan and *(c)* Georgia; and what assessment he has made of the results of each project. [163912]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

Decisions about the individual projects funded by the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights are made by the European Commission and local EC delegations. They are also responsible for managing and evaluating the projects. The EU Committee on Human Rights and Democracy allocates EU budget resources to projects in third countries and is responsible for evaluating the impact of the fund. The UK is represented on the committee by officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the UK permanent representation to the EU.

TREASURY

Allergies

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many deaths there were from allergic reactions in each of the last 10 years. [164929]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mrs. Iris Robinson, dated 7 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths there were from allergic reactions in each of the last 10 years. (164929)

The latest year from which data are available is 2002. Figures given in the attached table relate to deaths where one or more of the conditions mentioned on the death certificate was classified as allergic according to the International Classification of Diseases (ICD). Conditions classified to ICD codes which cover both allergic and non-allergic conditions were excluded from this analysis.

Number of deaths were the underlying or one of the contributory causes of death was classified as an allergic reaction.[1]
England and Wales, 1993 and 2002[2]

Calendar year	*Number of deaths*
1993	40
1994	59
1995	55
1996	55
1997	39
1998	46
1999	52
2000	50
2001[3]	46
2002[3]	43

[1] Causes of death were classified as allergic reactions for the years 1993 to 2000 using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes
477.0—Allergic rhinitis due to pollen
477.8—Allergic rhinitis due to other allergen
477.9—Allergic rhinitis, cause unspecified
493.0—Extrinsic asthma
693—Dermatitis due to substances taken internally
599.0—Anaphylactic shock
995.3—Allergy, unspecified
999.4—Anaphylactic shock due to serum
and for the years 2001 and 2002 using the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes
J30.1—Allergic rhinitis due to pollen
J30.2—Other seasonal allergic rhinitis
J30.3—Other allergic rhinitis
J30.4—Allergic rhinitis, unspecified
J45.0—Predominately allergic asthma
L.27—Dermatitis due to substances taken internally
T78.0—Anaphylactic shock due to adverse food reaction
T78.1—Other adverse food reactions, not elsewhere specified
T78.2—Anaphylactic shock, unspecified
T78.4—Allergy unspecified
T80.5—Anaphylactic shock due to serum
T88.6—Anaphylactic shock due to adverse effect of correct drug or medicament properly administered.
[2] Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year.
[3] The introduction of ICD-10 for coding cause of death in 2001 means that data for allergic reactions may not be completely comparable with data for years before this date. The data should therefore be interpreted with causation.

Child Tax Credit

Miss Begg: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate *(a)* how many people, broken down by income decile, would gain from and *(b)* the cost of a stand-alone child care tax credit that covered 90 per cent. of the costs of eligible child care from families with incomes below £13,480 and was reduced by 37 per cent. for families with incomes above that threshold. [165085]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not possible to estimate the impact of a "stand-alone" system, due to uncertainties around the detail of such a system. Approximate estimates for the impact of increasing the maximum percentage of child care costs paid for under the working tax credit from 70 per cent. to 90 per cent. are shown in the table.

Number of households estimated to gain, by income decile[1]

1	10,000
2	10,000
3	20,000
4	50,000
5	60,000
6	70,000
7	50,000
8	30,000
9	10,000
10	[2]—
Total	300,000
Annual cost	£0.2 billion

[1] On an equivalised household income basis; figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000.
[2] Indicates impact of less than 5,000.
Note:
Figures may not sum due to rounding.

Estimates provided are uncertain due to the need to take into account changes in other taxes and benefits when making such an assumption, and the uncertainty over future distributions of earnings.

Miss Begg: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate how many children would be lifted above 60 per cent. median income by 2004–05 by a £545 per annum increase in the per child element of the child tax credit. [165076]

Dawn Primarolo: Increasing the per child element of the child tax credit by £545 per year could reduce the number of children in households below 60 per cent. of equivalised median household income after housing costs by around 1 million.

Miss Begg: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate *(a)* how many people, broken down by income decile, would gain from and *(b)* the annual cost of an increase of £545 per year to the per child element of the child tax credit for each child under five in a family; and how many children would be lifted above 60 per cent. median incomes by 2004–05 as a result of such an increase. [165082]

Dawn Primarolo: Approximate estimates for the impact of increasing the per child element of the child tax credit by £545 per year for each child under the age of five are shown in the table.

Number of households estimated to gain, by income decile[1]

1	300,000
2	500,000
3	500,000
4	300,000
5	200,000
6	100,000
7	100,000
8	[2]—
9	[2]—
10	[2]—
Total	2,000,000
Annual cost	£0.5 billion
Reduction in number of children (of any age) in households below 60 per cent. of median income[3]	0.2 million

[1] On an equivalised household income basis; figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000.
[2] Indicates figures of less than 50,000.
[3] On an after housing costs, equivalised household income basis.
Note:
Figures may not sum due to rounding.

More households are estimated to gain from these changes in the second decile than the first, because there are more households with children in the second decile.

Estimates provided are uncertain due to the need to take into account changes in other taxes and benefits when making such an assumption, and the uncertainty over future distributions of income.

Miss Begg: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate *(a)* how many people, broken down by income decile, would gain from and *(b)* the annual cost of an increase of £1,625 per year to the per child element of the child tax credit for fourth and subsequent children; and how many children would be lifted above 60 per cent. median incomes by 2004–05 as a result of such an increase. [165083]

Dawn Primarolo: Approximate estimates for the impact of increasing the per child element of child tax credit by £1,625 per year for fourth and subsequent children are shown in the table.

Number of households estimated to gain, by income decile[1]

1	70,000
2	120,000
3	60,000
4	40,000
5	20,000
6	10,000
7	[2]—
8	[2]—
9	[2]—
10	[2]—
Total	320,000
Annual cost	£0.7 billion
Reduction in number of children in households below 60 per cent. of median income[3]	0.3 million

[1] On an equivalised household income basis; figures have been rounded to the nearest 10,000.
[2] Indicates impact of less than 5,000.
[3] On an after housing costs, equivalised household income basis.
Note:
Figures may not sum due to rounding.

More households are estimated to gain from these changes in the second decile than the first, because there are more households with children in the second decile.

Estimates provided are uncertain due to the need to take into account changes in other taxes and benefits when making such an assumption, and the uncertainty over future distributions of earnings.

Miss Begg: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate *(a)* how many people, broken down by income decile, would gain from and *(b)* the annual cost of an increase of (i) £260 per year and (ii) £545 per year to (A) the per child element of the child tax credit and (B) child benefit. [165084]

Dawn Primarolo: Approximate numbers of households estimated to gain from proposals (A) and (B) are shown in the table.

Income decile[1]	*Increased per child element of child tax credit (A)*	*Increased child benefit (B)*
1	700,000	700,000
2	1,000,000	1,000,000
3	900,000	900,000
4	600,000	800,000
5	300,000	800,000
6	200,000	700,000
7	100,000	600,000
8	100,000	600,000
9	[2]—	500,000
10	[2]—	400,000
Total	3,900,000	7,000,000

[1] On an equivalised household income basis; figures are rounded to the nearest 100,000.
[2] Indicates impact of less than 50,000.
Note:
Figures may not sum due to rounding.

More households are estimated to gain from these changes in the second decile than the first, because there are more households with children in the second decile.

Approximate estimates for the cost of increasing the per child element of the child tax credit are shown in Table 4 of the publication, "Tax ready reckoner and tax reliefs", which is available on the HM Treasury website at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/media//AAB24/pbr03_trr_revised.pdf

Approximate estimates for the cost of increasing all the 2004–05 child benefit rates by (i) £260 per year and (ii) £545 per year are, respectively, £3.4 billion and £7.1 billion.

Estimates provided are uncertain due to the need to take into account changes in other taxes and benefits when making such an assumption, and the uncertainty over future distributions of earnings.

Civil Servants (Relocation)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average cost of a workstation is, as defined by the Lyons Report, at the Office of National Statistics in *(a)* London, *(b)* Titchfield, *(c)* Southport, *(d)* Bristol, *(e)* Cardiff and *(f)* Newport. [165050]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Mark Hoban, dated 7 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what the average cost of a workstation is, as defined by the Lyons Report at the Office of National Statistics offices in *(a)* London, *(b)* Titchfield, *(c)* Southport, *(d)* Bristol, *(e)* Cardiff and *(f)* Newport. (165050)

The total property operating costs per annum for each workstation at existing ONS offices are:

London—£12,001*

Newport—£2,494

Titchfield—£2,260

Southport—£1,748

*This figure relates to the ONS office accommodation at Drummond Gate, SW1 and Bessborough Street, SW1 only. The Family Records Centre facilities at Myddelton Street, EC1, operated jointly by ONS and the National Archives, are not included.

The total property operating costs per annum for each workstation at Bristol and Cardiff would depend on the type of accommodation available.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average salary is of central Government employees in *(a)* Hampshire, *(b)* London, *(c)* Newport and *(d)* Bristol. [165290]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Mark Hoban, dated 7 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on the average salary of central government employees in *(a)* Hampshire, *(b)* London, *(c)* Newport, and *(d)* Bristol. (165290)

Estimates of the average earnings of central government employees in the areas requested (where available) are taken from the 2003 New Earnings Survey (NES) and are shown in the attached table. These are provided for full-time employees on adult rates of pay who were in the same job for the year covered by the survey. This is the standard definition used for NES tables. The NES does not collect data on the self employed and people who do unpaid work. Area figures are provided according to location of workplaces.

Owing to the small NES samples sizes for Newport and Bristol, estimates of the average earnings of central government employees cannot be provided for these areas. We have therefore provided estimates for the two Training and Enterprise Council (TEC) regions that contain Newport and Bristol. These are South East Wales TEC region and Western TEC region respectively.

The NES, carried out in April of each year, is the most comprehensive source of earnings information in Great Britain. It is a one per cent sample of all employees who are members of pay-as-you-earn (PAYE) schemes, but because of its sampling frame, it has difficulty capturing data on people with very low pay. It is therefore likely to under-represent relatively low paid staff earning below the tax threshold.

As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the NES are subject to sampling error.

Average gross annual earnings of central government employees in six areas, as shown: April 2003

£

Area	*Average annual earnings*
Hampshire	24,065
London	28,130
Newport	[1]—
City of Bristol	[1]—
South East Wales TEC	22,892
Western TEC	25,037

[1] Under the New Earnings Survey publication criteria, data cannot be shown owing to the small sample size.

Notes:

1. Estimates for South East Wales TEC and the Western TEC refer to these Training and Enterprise Council Regions. Western TEC region covers four local authorities in the Bristol area. South East Wales TEC region covers 10 local authorities in the Newport and Cardiff areas.

2. Central government employees are employees of organisations classified to central government using the Interdepartmental Business Register (IDBR). This includes Government Departments and establishments, the NHS and various Government-financed organisations.

3. Armed forces are not included in the New Earnings Survey.

Source:

New Earnings Survey, April 2003

Construction Industry

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what measures his Department has taken to clarify the legal position on the use of Local Labour in Construction; and if he will make a statement. [164856]

Dawn Primarolo: The legal position on the use of local labour clauses in public contracts is covered in the European Commission's 2001 Interpretative Communication on the Community law applicable to public procurement and the possibilities for integrating social considerations into public procurement (COM(2001)566 final). That document, which takes account of relevant European Court of Justice cases, makes it clear that social and employment clauses must be compatible with Community law—particular, such clauses must not discriminate directly or indirectly against tenderers from other Member States. It is unlikely that a clause based on "locality" would meet this requirement. It is for each Department to consider such issues on a cause by case basis, against the background of the Government procurement policy, based on value for money, and the EU requirements outlined above.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to update the 1996 Treasury advice to public bodies on using Local Labour in Construction to allow public bodies greater flexibility in using local labour. [164886]

Dawn Primarolo: Officials are unaware of any 1996 Treasury advice.

The legal position on the use of local labour clauses in public contracts is covered in the European Commission's 2001 Interpretative Communication on the Community law applicable to public procurement and the possibilities for integrating social considerations into public procurement (COM(2001)566 final). Local Labour clauses will be covered in guidance to be prepared by the interdepartmental Sustainable Procurement Group, in light of its report, published in January 2003.

Customs

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the cost, per unit, of establishing manned UK customs points at *(a)* EU, *(b)* other European and *(c)* other destinations from which freight transport travels to Britain. [165108]

John Healey: UK Customs have only one staffed customs point outside the UK at Coquelles in France dealing with Channel Tunnel traffic. Customs do not keep records of the cost of dealing with individual freight units travelling through the Tunnel.

Departmental Policies (Sustainable Development)

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what percentage of paper for printed publications used by his Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained; [165533]

(2) what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste; [165535]

(3) by what date his Department expects to reach the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165536]

Dawn Primarolo: Treasury publications produced during 2002–03 were printed on paper containing 40 per cent. post-consumer waste. Since January 2004, a recycled paper containing 75 per cent. post-consumer waste has been used for around half of Treasury publications. It is expected that at least 60 per cent. of Treasury publications will be printed on this paper by year end. The copying paper bought by the Treasury is 100 per cent. recycled with 100 per cent. post-consumer waste content.

Environmental Costs

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what general mechanisms he has identified to internalise environmental costs in the economy; and if he will list those instances where he *(a)* has implemented such a mechanism, *(b)* plans to implement such a mechanism and *(c)* plans to investigate possible mechanisms for implementation in the medium to long term. [165271]

John Healey: The Government's approach to environmental taxation was set out in the statement of intent on Environmental Taxation in 1997. This was developed further in 'Tax and the Environment: Using economic instruments' published alongside the 2002 Pre Budget Report, which also considered the role of tax alongside other economic instruments instruments such as tradable permits. Since 1997 the Government has introduced a number of economic instruments, which seek to internalise environmental costs in the economy such as the aggregates levy and UK Emission Trading Scheme. A list of fiscal measures that the Government has introduced can be found in table 7.2 of the recent Economic and Fiscal Strategy report.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what consideration is given to the cost of climate change in the determination of his economic strategy; [165272]

(2) what consideration he has given to the cost of diffuse industrial pollution in his economic strategy. [165273]

John Healey: The Chancellor considers all relevant economic, social and environmental factors, including the implications for climate change and water quality, when determining the Government's economic strategy. It is one of the Treasury's objectives to protect and improve the environment by using instruments that will deliver efficient and sustainable outcomes through evidence-based policies, as set out in "Tax and the environment: using economic instruments", published alongside the 2002 Pre-Budget Report.

Hydrofluorocarbons

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he plans to introduce economic instruments to reduce leakage of hydrofluorocarbons. [165276]

John Healey: The Government currently has no such plans. Decisions on taxation are made by the Chancellor as part of the annual budget process.

London Marathon

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will set out his policy on imposing VAT on sponsorship payments from those entering runners in the London Marathon. [162511]

John Healey: Charities and their donors in the UK will benefit from a wide range of VAT reliefs and exemptions. In accordance with the requirements of the EU directives on which UK VAT law is based, sponsorship raised by runners for organisations that have paid for a place in the London Marathon is free from VAT. However, any payment required in exchange for a place is subject to VAT; consequently, an organisation may be able to reclaim some of the VAT it incurs in providing this service.

Office of Government Commerce

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of *(a)* the effectiveness of introducing a specialist buying agency in the Office of Government Commerce and *(b)* whether better value can be obtained from smaller suppliers. [165516]

Dawn Primarolo: OGC buying solutions is an Executive Agency of the Office of Government Commerce (OGC) and operates as a trading fund. It was formed in 2001 by the amalgamation of CCTA, TBA and PACE.

It has ministerial targets based on the following four assessment areas:

1. Value for Money improvements in Central Civil Government
2. Customer satisfaction
3. Return on capital employed
4. Reduction in internal costs

For the three financial years since the Agency's inception all of these targets have either been achieved or exceeded.

In some circumstances a smaller supplier could provide better value, especially when the customer is looking for a solution that is flexible, responsive or innovative. Government is taking action to encourage public sector clients to consider the smaller supplier and to facilitate easier access for them.

Passported Benefits

Miss Begg: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate *(a)* how many people, broken down by income decile would gain from and *(b)* the annual cost of raising the threshold for eligibility for all passported benefits to £14,200. [165081]

Dawn Primarolo: The principal passported benefits with thresholds below £14,200 are free school meals and welfare foods (free milk and vitamins) which are available to families in receipt of child tax credit, but not eligible for working tax credit, and with incomes up to £13,230 in 2003–04. Increasing this threshold to £14,200 would have a negligible impact on the number of eligible families and hence on costs.

Pensioners (Tynemouth)

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Tynemouth constituency qualified for the 10 per cent. rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [165361]

Dawn Primarolo: All income tax payers benefit from the 10 pence starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 6,000 and 9,000 state retirement pension age tax payers in the Tynemouth constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02 respectively. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Premium Bonds

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the total value of premium bond prizes that are unclaimed; and if he will make a statement. [165087]

Dawn Primarolo: At the end of January, there were 397,552 prizes unclaimed to a total value of £23.5 million.

Savings

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will give the savings level for each of the last five years. [165387]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Bob Spink, dated 7 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question on savings levels in each of the last five years.

The information requested is shown in the following table.

Households sector gross saving, and the households saving ratio UK, 1999–2003

	Households sector[1] gross saving £ billion	*Households' saving ratio[2] percentage*
1999	32.9	5.3
2000	36.7	5.5
2001	47.6	6.7
2002	40.3	5.5
2003	43.7	5.7

[1] Figures shown are for the combined household and non-profit institutions serving households (NPISH) sectors. The accounts for this sector are currently combined and separate estimates are not available.
[2] This ratio represents households' saving as a percentage of total available households' resources.
Source:
UK National Accounts.

Scotch Whisky (Tax Stamps)

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what assessment he has made of how

many *(a)* producers of Scotch whisky and *(b)* other companies will benefit from the £3 million fund for assistance with capital investment to mitigate upfront costs of complying with his proposed tax stamps scheme for spirits bottles; [165231]

(2) what criteria he has used to identify those firms that will benefit from the £3 million fund for assistance with capital investment to mitigate upfront costs of complying with his proposed tax stamp scheme for spirit bottles. [165233]

John Healey: The £3 million fund for assistance with capital investment is intended to be targeted at smaller firms, and the precise design and coverage have still to be decided. It is important that grants are distributed fairly and legally and the Government are working with the industry to consider how this might best be achieved.

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the change in the volume of the business of warehouse keepers that will be caused by his proposed tax stamps scheme for spirits bottles; and if he plans to compensate them for any losses. [165234]

John Healey *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* A full Regulatory Impact Assessment will be published alongside the Finance Bill on 8 April which will identify the costs, benefits and proposed offsetting measures of the tax stamps system.

Tax Avoidance

Mr. McFall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total amount of revenue lost as a result of tax avoidance has been in each financial year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* VAT, *(b)* corporate taxation and *(c)* personal taxation. [161857]

John Healey: In "Protecting Indirect Tax Revenues", published alongside the 2003 Pre-Budget report, a copy of which is available in the Library, HM Customs and Excise published a broad estimate of the scale of VAT avoidance as part of its wider historic estimates of revenue losses arising from VAT avoidance, fraud and non-compliance over the last decade. Because of the inherently more difficult exercise of estimating revenue losses from non-consumption taxes, it has not yet been possible to produce an accurate estimate of the losses arising from avoidance of corporate or personal taxation.

Mr. McFall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer which companies are known to be selling or to have sold versions of the gilts scheme used to reduce income tax bills; how many individuals and companies are known to be using or to have used the scheme; and how much revenue is involved in each case. [161861]

Dawn Primarolo: This was a highly abusive tax avoidance scheme involving the deliberate generation of losses on the purchase and re-sale of Government gilt strips for the purpose of reducing income tax bills, which the Inland Revenue quickly identified and acted against. However, at this stage it is not possible with complete accuracy to identify all those who sold the scheme, the numbers of individuals and companies who used the scheme or the value of revenue involved.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Looked-after Children

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many looked-after children there have been in England in each year since 1994; and what proportion of children have been continuously looked after for at least 12 months. [158065]

Margaret Hodge: The number of children looked after at 31 March for each year since 1994, and the percentage looked after continuously for at least 12 months are shown in the table.

Number of children looked after at 31 March, and percentage looked after continuously for at least 12 months, England[1]

Year	Number of children looked after at 31 March[2]	Percentage looked after continuously for at least 12 months
1994	49,100	69
1995	49,500	67
1996	50,600	67
1997	51,200	69
1998	53,300	69
1999	55,500	70
2000	58,100	70
2001	58,900	73
2002	59,700	73
2003	60,800	Not available[3]

[1] Figures in this table exclude children under an agreed series of short term placements.
[2] Figures rounded to the nearest 100.
[3] The percentage of children looked after continuously for at least 12 months is derived from the SSDA 903 return. Figures for the year ending March 2003 will be available on 31 March 2004.
Source:
CLA 100 and SSDA 903 statistical returns

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of looked-after children received an annual health assessment in each year since 1994. [158070]

Margaret Hodge: Information on the percentage of looked-after children who have received an annual health assessment was not collected centrally between 1994 and 1999. The percentages since 2000 are shown as follows.

Figures for the year ending 30 September 2003 are expected to be published at national level on 29 April and, at local authority level towards the end of May 2004.

Looked after children who received an annual health assessment, 12 months ending 30 September 2000 to 2002—England

	Percentage
2000	65
2001	68
2002	71

Source:
OC2 return

Physical Education

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of children in

England spent *(a)* one hour or less, *(b)* between one and two hours and *(c)* over three hours per week on physical education in 2003. [165574]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held in the format requested. "The Impact of School Sport Partnerships" (published in March 2004 by DfES and DCMS) set out the early funding of the 2003–04 PE, School Sport and Club Links survey. Overall 61 per cent. of pupils in phase 1 school sport partnership schools spend two hours in a typical week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum. A copy of the report has been placed in the House of Commons Library. The results of the full survey will be published later this month.

Sure Start

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the level of Sure Start expenditure in the Stroud constituency was in 2003–04. [164167]

Margaret Hodge: £2.192 million has been allocated to Gloucestershire for general Sure Start grant activities in 2003–04. Gloucestershire county council does not collect information on how this funding is allocated on a district basis.

A further £646,000 has been allocated to the Mini Sure Start local programme and neighbourhood nursery in Stroud. The Mini Sure Start local programme (Cam and Dursley) received a revenue grant of £120,000 to support the delivery of outreach and health services, family support and adult education. This programme is linked to a 50 place neighbourhood nursery (Treetops Nursery) which opened on 26 March 2004. Sure Start has contributed £256,000 in capital funding towards the nursery's integrated education and care facilities. We are also providing start up revenue grant funds of £270,000, available over three years to help ensure the nursery is firmly established.

Accommodation

Kate Hoey: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what sources of public funding are available to cover the cost of accommodation while studying for a single, childless, full-time further education student, studying for a non-degree course, and living independently of parental support in local authority accommodation. [164627]

Alan Johnson: The focus of the public support that my Department provides for the accommodation costs of students in further education is on those whose course of study makes it necessary for them to live away from home. Bursaries are available for students attending six residential colleges and for those on specialist courses at colleges of agriculture, horticulture, art and design. A related scheme for students at other colleges who need to undertake courses at level 3 or above, or have a particular employment related learning need is at the pilot stage.

Students who do not qualify for a bursary may be eligible for a Career Development Loan, which can cover living expenses as well as the costs of tuition if the course is full time.

As far as those in receipt of Housing Benefit is concerned, both DfES and the Department for Work and Pensions recognise that the '16 hour rule', whereby income related benefits should only be provided for those in work, or those unable to work, can create difficulties for some people who wish to participate in full time further education. The situation is being monitored through the DWP Hardest to Help Delivery Plan, and DfES and DWP are working together to streamline the arrangements for supporting those in learning.

Adoption and Children Act

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what preparations are being made for the implementation of section 122 of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 by the end of 2004. [164114]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 30 March 2004]*: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Richmond Park (Dr. Tonge) on 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 178W.

I wish to use this opportunity to clarify something I said to the hon. Member at the Westminster Hall debate on 23 October 2003. The Department for Constitutional Affairs will be consulting on the court rules for placement and adoption this spring. The regulations, court rules and guidance should be in place by the end of 2004. Section 122 is included in this package. After a period for preparation and training, we expect the legislation to come into force in September 2005.

Asthma

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what percentage of schools have an asthma policy; [164812]

(2) what advice his Department gives to schools about dealing with children who suffer from asthma. [164813]

Margaret Hodge: The Department does not collect data on schools' asthma policies. Advice to schools on managing asthma is contained in, "Supporting pupils with medical needs: a good practice guide".

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on Government policy on the support available to unaccompanied asylum seeker children in respect of the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000; and what the implications of section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 are for unaccompanied asylum seeker children. [159192]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 8 March 2004]*: Local authorities have duties placed on them by the Children Act 1989 and the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 to continue to care for children beyond their 16th birthdays, either as 'eligible' children who remain in care or as 'relevant' children who have left care but still receive their support from the local authority. Section 55 of the Nationality Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 does not affect the support that is provided to these or any other children. There are no implications arising from section 55 for the continuing local authority care of any unaccompanied asylum seeker child.

The duties of local authorities are also extended by the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 to include planning for and where necessary supporting young people who are no longer children, having passed their 18th birthdays. Care leavers aged 18 or over (up to 21 or, in some circumstances, 24) are defined in the Children (Leaving Care) Act 2000 as "former relevant children". The access to leaving care support from responsible local authorities for "former relevant children" who were unaccompanied asylum seeking children is not affected by section 55.

In order to provide additional support to local authorities with responsibilities for former unaccompanied asylum seeking children, I have announced an additional £17 million funding for 2004/05, to be directed towards those local authorities with the greatest responsibilities for such young people. The arrangements are set out in Local Authority Circular LAC (2004) 6 (formerly numbered (2004) 1). I have placed a copy of this circular in the House of Commons Library.

When an unaccompanied asylum seeker child is approaching their 18th birthday the person may apply for support to the National Asylum Support Service (NASS), provided they are not eligible for DWP benefits and they have an outstanding asylum claim. Each case is considered on its merits, taking account of the age and other relevant circumstances of the young person. If support was refused under section 55, the person would in most cases continue to be supported by the responsible local authority. In the small minority of cases where such support is not available, NASS will provide support if it is necessary to avoid a breach of Article 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights.

Chief Scientific Adviser

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether his Department has a chief scientific adviser. [162481]

Alan Johnson: The Department for Education and Skills does not have a designated chief scientific adviser. The Department does, however, have expertise on the role of science as a subject throughout the education system. Sir Alan Wilson, who was recently appointed Director General for Higher Education in my Department, will also be an effective point of contact for all science-related matters across the education system.

Children in Care

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of children with parents who have learning disabilities were taken into care in *(a)* 1992, *(b)* 1997 and *(c)* the latest year for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [162911]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Children's Commissioner

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether children will be involved in the process for choosing a Children's Commissioner. [164194]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* Yes. The exact form that their participation will take is currently under consideration.

Citizenship

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether the citizenship curriculum includes the teaching of *(a)* the words of the National Anthem and *(b)* knowledge of the flags and patron saints of the nations of the United Kingdom; and if he will make a statement. [165334]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The flags, patron saints and the national anthem of the United Kingdom are not a separate element of the Citizenship National Curriculum. However, understanding the origins and implications of the diverse national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the United Kingdom is an important part of the Citizenship curriculum, which became statutory for 11–16 year olds in September 2002. In this context pupils have the opportunity to explore the unique qualities that are part of the shared identities of the countries of the United Kingdom. They may consider the political, religious, social and constitutional systems that affect their lives and communities.

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many advanced skills teachers for citizenship have been recruited *(a)* in total and *(b)* in St. Helens, South; [165331]

(2) how many specialist citizenship teachers have been recruited in *(a)* England and *(b)* St. Helens, South in each of the last three years; [165336]

(3) how much has been made available to *(a)* enable schools to buy resources and *(b)* train teachers for the teaching of citizenship in each of the last three years. [165337]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: There are currently 60 citizenship Advanced Skills Teachers. Eight of these are based in the North West Government Office Region, though none specifically in St. Helens, South. Around 400 individuals have completed initial teacher training for citizenship education since 2002 and this will rise to around 600 at the end of the 2003/04 academic year. The Department does not hold records on appointments of Newly Qualified Teachers.

£15 million was made available to schools to support citizenship and personal, social and health education in 2001–02. Since 2002–03 schools have decided how much to spend from their total budgets to support citizenship. Schools are able to spend this in the way that best met their needs, including spending on teachers' professional development. Since the financial year 2000–01 the Department has spent £3 million to support the development of a range of resources and activities for citizenship education, many of which have been made available to schools free of charge.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which former officials of the Department have asked for permission to join *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst and Young and *(d)* KPMG. [156909]

Alan Johnson: All civil servants are subject to the Business Appointment Rules, which set out the circumstances in which they must seek permission to accept outside appointments within two years of leaving the service. A copy of the Rules is available in the Libraries of the House. Information about appointments taken up by the most senior staff is published in the annual reports of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments. The next annual report will be published shortly.

Since 2001, my Department has received two requests for permission to take up employment with the firms listed, one for PricewaterhouseCoopers and one for KPMG. Both requests received unconditional approval in 2001.

Devon LEA

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students living in the Devon Local Education Authority area have gone into full-time higher education in each of the last seven years. [164784]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admission Services (UCAS) and covers 18-year-old applicants accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses. Figures are given in the table.

18-year-old applicants domiciled in Devon LEA[1], accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses

Year of entry	*Devon LEA*	*Plymouth LEA*	*Torbay LEA*
1996	2,264	—	—
1997	2,447	—	—
1998	1,617	478	267
1999	1,708	455	233
2000	1,676	513	264
2001	1,710	537	278
2002	1,738	547	300

[1] For figures recorded for 1998 entry onwards, Devon LEA split into Devon LEA, Plymouth LEA and Torbay LEA.

Source:
UCAS.

Domestic Violence

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support is available for children who have been victims of domestic violence. [164379]

Margaret Hodge: Local authorities with social service responsibilities have a statutory general duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of children in their area who are in need by providing a range of services appropriate to meeting those needs. The definition of such needs covers children who face the likelihood that their health or development might be impaired without such services, regardless of their cause, or whether or not they reside with their family. Children who have been the victims of domestic violence may be assessed by local authorities as being children in need.

It is the responsibility of the local social service department to assess such children according to the Framework for the Assessment of Children in Need and their Families (2000), and to decide which needs exist and how or whether they should be addressed, including through the provision of services.

More generally, through Section 64, Health Services and Public Health Act 1968, the Department supports the Women's Aid Federation of England, through a core grant (80,000 in 2004–05), and in relation to its helpline (£49,000 in 2004–05).

University Drop-out Rates

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students dropped out of *(a)* Oxford, *(b)* Cambridge, *(c)* Edinburgh, *(d)* St. Andrews, *(e)* Exeter and *(f)* Durham universities in each of the last seven years. [164801]

Alan Johnson: The available information on drop-out rates can be found in the Higher Education Council for England (HEFCE) publication, "Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK". Copies of the publication can be found at: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/learning/perfind/2003/ The non-completion rates cover UK domiciled full-time students starting first degree courses who are projected to neither transfer nor achieve an award from their study. A benchmark is calculated for each institution which allows for the entry qualification of the students and the subject mix at the institution. Figures are given in the tables. Prior to this, non-completion rates were calculated by the Department for the UK as a whole, but not at individual institution level.

Projected first degree non-completion rates, 1996/97 to 2000/01

Percentage

	Non-completion rate by those starting courses in:					
	1996/97		*1997/98*		*1998/99*	
Institution	*Rate*	*Benchmark*	*Rate*	*Benchmark*	*Rate*	*Benchmark*
University of Oxford	2	5	1	4	2	3
University of Cambridge	1	6	1	4	1	3
University of Edinburgh	6	10	9	9	10	9
University of St. Andrews	5	15	10	11	4	10
University of Exeter	7	12	7	11	7	10
University of Durham	3	8	6	9	5	8

Percentage

Institution	Non-completion rate by those starting courses in: 1999/2000 Rate	1999/2000 Benchmark	2000/01 Rate	2000/01 Benchmark
University of Oxford	2	3	2	3
University of Cambridge	1	4	1	3
University of Edinburgh	10	8	9	8
University of St. Andrews	3	9	7	9
University of Exeter	8	10	9	9
University of Durham	7	8	4	7

Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

Early Years Development

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make it his policy to ensure that funds made available to *(a)* private and *(b)* local education authority nursery education and care providers are (i) ring-fenced and (ii) passed in their entirety to providers; and if he will make a statement. [163113]

Margaret Hodge: From April 2003, all funding for free early education places was consolidated within the general education formula spending arrangements for LEAs and schools. We have no plans to make further changes. The over under-fives sub-block is currently worth some £2.6 billion. It is for individual local authorities to determine, in the light of local consultation, what proportion of the overall resources should be delegated to schools and the rate at which private, voluntary and independent providers should be funded for delivering a free nursery education place. According to the latest available (January 2003) data some 50 per cent. of three year olds and 23 per cent. of four year olds take up their free entitlement with private, voluntary and independent providers.

Education (Hemsworth)

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of the population of Hemsworth constituency engaged in *(a)* vocational education, *(b)* non-vocational further education and *(c)* higher education in 2002–03. [147453]

Alan Johnson: Data on the percentage of students participating in post-compulsory education are not calculated for areas smaller than LEAs because reliable estimates cannot be made. Hemsworth constituency is part of Wakefield LEA, the latest available figures for which are shown in the table.

People from Wakefield participating in post-compulsory education

Proportion of adults (aged 19–59) participating in:	
Vocation courses at FE colleges[1]	3.4 per cent.
Academic courses at FE colleges[1]	0.2 per cent.
Adult education courses[2]	3.8 per cent.
Undergraduate courses[3]	0.8 per cent.

[1] Based on the numbers of students enrolled on FE courses in autumn 2001 as recorded by the Learning and Skills Council.
[2] Based on the number of students on adult education courses in autumn 2001 as recorded by Wakefield LEA.
[3] Based on the number of students accepted to full-time undergraduate courses via the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) in autumn 2002.

Education (North Tyneside)

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students living in North Tyneside local education authority have gone into full-time higher education in each of the last seven years. [164371]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Services (UCAS) and covers 18-year-old applicants accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses. Figures are given in the table.

18-year-old applicants domiciled in North Tyneside LEA, accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses

Year of entry	Number
1996	367
1997	497
1998	499
1999	538
2000	474
2001	417
2002	412

Source:
UCAS

Education (Stroud)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 18 and 19-year-olds in Stroud achieved university entry in each of the last seven years. [162823]

Alan Johnson: Figures by constituency are not available. The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and covers 18-year-old applicants from Gloucestershire LEA, accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses. Figures are given in the table.

18-year-old applicants domiciled in Gloucestershire LEA, accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HND courses

Year of entry	Number	Percentage
1996	1,469	23.3
1997	1,718	24.9
1998	1,670	22.8
1999	1,601	22.8
2000	1,724	24.8
2001	1,656	23.4
2002	1,733	25.0

Source:
UCAS

Education Initatives

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been allocated to *(a)* Aimhigher, *(b)* the Children's Fund, *(c)* community champions, *(d)* early excellence centres, *(e)* education action zones, *(f)* Excellence in Cities, *(g)* extended schools, *(h)* Healthy Schools Programme, *(i)* Local Network Fund for Children and Young People, *(j)* neighbourhood learning centres, *(k)* neighbourhood nurseries, *(l)* Neighbourhood Support Fund, *(m)* new entrepreneur scholarships, *(n)* Sure Start, *(o)* Sure Start Plus and *(p)* Young Volunteer Challenge Pilot in (i) 2004–05, (ii) 2005–06 and (iii)total. [163723]

Alan Johnson: Funding allocations are shown in the table below. Information on additional local contributions, for example from LEAs, is not held centrally.

Initiative	*2004–05*	*2005–06*	*Total for initiative up to and including 2004–06*
Aimhigher[1,2]	87	89	352
Children's Fund	160	To be confirmed	600
Community Champions[3]	3	3	17
Early Excellence Centres	15	13	96
Education Action Zones	61	61	384
Excellence in Cities	306	386	1,615
Extended Schools	31	To be confirmed	56
Healthy Schools Programme[4]	8	[5]8	50
Local Network Fund for Children and Young People	40	40	50
Neighbourhood Learning Centres	30	[6]30	90
Neighbourhood nurseries	95	54	253
Neighbourhood Support Fund	10	10	80
New Entrepreneur Scholarships[7]	6	To be confirmed	18
Sure Start local programmes[8]	463	507	1,722
Sure Start Plus[9]	3	3	17
Young Volunteer Challenge Pilot[10]	3	0	5

[1] These figures exclude amounts for Opportunity Bursaries and contributions towards HEFCE's widening participation allocation
[2] These figures relate only to the DfES contribution. From August 2004, additional contributions are being made by HEFCE and the Department of Health and, subject to confirmation, from the LSC
[3] Includes £1 million per year Home Office contribution from 2001–02 to 2003–04
[4] These figures include funds from the Department of Health.
[5] This figure is indicative
[6] This figure is indicative
[7] New Entrepreneur Scholarships are funded by the Learning and Skills Council.
[8] The figures for Sure Start relate to spend/allocation for Sure Start local programmes. They do not include programmes funded by the former Early Years and Childcare Unit which now come under the remit of the Sure Start Unit as a result of decisions taken in the last spending review.
[9] Sure Start Plus was administered by the Department of Health until Monday 29 March 2004, when it transferred to DfES.
[10] The overall budget for YVC Pilot is £4.5m up to the end of March 2005.
Note:
All amounts are £ millions and rounded to the nearest million

Educational Standards

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the extent to which educational standards in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland have changed since 1997; how he reached his conclusion; and if he will make a statement. [164967]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: On the basis of measuring standards in schools in England against our PSA targets for the years 1997 and 2003 we can draw the following comparison:

Issue	*1997*	*2003*
Primary		
Percentage of 11-year-olds achieving level 4 or above in English	63	75
Percentage of 11-year-olds achieving level 5 or above in English	16	27
Percentage of 11-year-olds achieving level 4 or above in maths	62	73
Percentage of 11-year-olds achieving level 5 or above in maths	18	29
KS3		
Percentage of 14-year-olds achieving level 5 or above in English	57	69
Percentage of 14-year-olds achieving level 5 or above in maths	60	71
Percentage of 14-year-olds achieving level 5 or above in ICT	50	67
Percentage of 14-year-olds achieving level 5 or above in science	60	68
GCSE		
Percentage of 16-year-olds who get qualifications equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C	45.1	52.9
Number of schools not achieving at least 20 per cent. of pupils who get qualifications equivalent to five GCSEs at grade A* to C	361	114

This overview of improving standards across the board is confirmed by the recently published Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Schools which commented that

"over the past ten years, standards have undoubtedly risen in primary and secondary schools, as has the quality of teaching and leadership and management."

Furthermore my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced in his Budget statement on 17 March 2004 that

"UK education spending which was just 4.7 per cent. of GDP in 1997 will rise to 5.6 per cent. in 2007–8—from one of the lowest in the industrialised world to amongst the best."

Further education

As a result of the strategies we have introduced, the success rate for further education colleges has improved from 53 per cent. in 1997/98 to 65 per cent. in 2001/02.

Devolved Administrations

Standards in education in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are not the responsibility of the Department of Education and Skills. I therefore refer my hon. Friend to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Scotland, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Wales and to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for responses to parts *(b)*, *(c)* and *(d)* of his question.

Essay/Coursework Sales

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will conduct an urgent inquiry into the activities of companies who provide A level essays and coursework for UK students; [165313]

(2) what plans he has to make sure that A level students who use material supplied by commercial companies are penalised through the loss of any grade achieved in the subject for which coursework has been supplied and submitted as their own work; [165314]

(3) what plans he has to regulate companies who supply A level coursework to UK students. [165315]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* The marking and grading of examination scripts is the responsibility of the examination awarding bodies. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority as Regulator, is responsible for ensuring that the awarding bodies fulfil their obligations under the examinations Code of Practice. There are well-established procedures for dealing with instances of suspected malpractice in examinations, which are published by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and agreed by the awarding bodies.

The Guidance includes procedures for investigating alleged malpractice, including the misuse of ICT, and the sanctions and penalties to be applied to those candidates who are caught cheating. Sanctions can include the issue of a warning; the loss of all marks gained in all components in a qualification or ultimately barring the candidate from entering one or more examinations for a set period of time.

Foster Care

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has *(a)* to promote foster care, with particular reference to advertising campaigns, and *(b)* to encourage people to become foster carers. [164193]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* We will be spending £1.5m of the Choice Protects Grant in 2004–05 to develop a number of suggestions from the Green Paper to improve the status, support and training for foster carers. These include the development of a national award and a national helpline.

We have recently produced a Fostering Publicity Pack designed to help local authority fostering teams to run targeted local campaigns to recruit new foster carers for looked after children. We have also announced a three-year grant to support Foster Care Fortnight.

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will increase payments to foster carers. [164195]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 1 April 2004]*: The National Minimum Standards for fostering services clearly require that: 'Each foster carer receives an allowance and agreed expenses, which cover the full cost of caring for each child or young person placed with him or her.' Additionally some foster carers may receive a fee payment.

The Choice Protects Programme is supported by a £113 million grant over three years. In 2004–05 this amounts to £30 million for local authorities. This money can be used to improve payments for foster carers.

Free School Meals

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what studies his Department has undertaken to examine the effects of providing *(a)* free school lunches and *(b)* free school breakfasts. [165030]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills has not undertaken studies to examine the effects of providing free school lunches and free school breakfasts.

This Department, together with the Department of Health (DoH), is jointly funding a Food in Schools (FiS) programme. The DoH strand comprises eight projects which include breakfast clubs. Good practice identified through FiS will help schools promote a clear and consistent message about diet and nutrition.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children receive *(a)* free school lunches and *(b)* free school breakfasts, broken down by local education authority. [165071]

Alan Johnson: The available data on free school lunches have been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Information relating to free school breakfasts is not collected by the Department.

Graduate Employment

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action his Department takes to monitor the type of employment opportunities offered to graduates. [164468]

Alan Johnson: The Department commissions, collates and monitors a wide range of data on graduate employment and employability in general, including: monitoring surveys, research and analyses produced by a variety of organisations, including employer and graduate careers services groups and academic research, on graduate vacancies, employment and starting salaries; monitoring and analysing data on the graduate labour market from the annual First Destinations Survey of Higher Education leavers, which are collected

and published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency and the quarterly Labour Force Survey, collected and published by the Office for National Statistics; commissioning a survey of 1999 graduates to track earnings and employment outcomes and investigate their careers three and a half years following graduation, the results of which are expected to be published later this year; and maintaining a broad intelligence base on the graduate labour market, which is updated as new research and findings emerge.

Headquarters Staff

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made in reducing the number of headquarters staff since the Budget. [165022]

Alan Johnson: The reduction in the number of head office posts is due to take place over the next four years to 2008. The Department is currently planning how to take the reductions forward as part of its aim to transform the way it does its business. By the end of this April it will provide staff with more detail about these plans and the HR policies it will be putting in place to support the transition.

Healthy Eating

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much his Department spent to promote healthy eating among children aged under 16 years in each of the last five years. [165024]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: We have allocated over £5 million a year to local education authorities to promote healthy schools including healthy eating and they are free to supplement these allocations from other budgets supported by revenue support grant.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of links between a healthy diet and *(a)* educational attainment and *(b)* behaviour in schools. [165028]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills has made no assessment of the links between a healthy diet, and education attainment and behaviour, in schools. This Department works closely with the Food Standards Agency (FSA), who provide information to the public and Government on food safety, nutrition and diet. We have a formal agreement with FSA that requires them to inform us, without delay, of any information on food safety, nutrition and diet that requires us to take action.

Higher Education

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the financial impact of the proposed higher education reforms on graduates of medical courses from different socio-economic backgrounds. [165426]

Alan Johnson: During the first four years of their courses medical students have the same student support as any other eligible higher education students; and pay the same contributions to fees. The Government have made a number of proposals to safeguard access to higher education for those from low income families. Around three in ten students will receive means tested maintenance grants of £2,700, and over half will be eligible for full or partial grants, as well as bursaries and other support from universities under arrangements agreed by the Office of Fair Access.

Fees for English domiciled medical students in years 5 and 6 are currently paid by the Department of Health. These students also qualify for means tested NHS bursaries in their fifth and subsequent years of study. Department of Health Ministers have indicated that they will, if necessary, take measures to ensure that any increase in the level of tuition fees will not have an adverse impact on the supply, retention, diversity or quality of students on health professional courses, including medicine.

Under our proposals, arrangements for repayment of non means tested fee loans will, for all graduates, be heavily subsidised: graduates will repay their loans at zero real rate of interest and only when their income exceeds £15,000 per year. Repayments will then be made at a rate of 9 per cent. of income above £15,000. According to Graduate Prospects, GPs can expect to earn in excess of £46,000 a year at the start of their careers. This compares very favourably with the salaries of other newly qualified graduates.

The Gateways to the Professions Review under Sir Alan Langlands will look at how the public sector and the professions, including medicine, can sustain and improve recruitment opportunities for graduates, especially those who do not qualify for the full £3,000 grant and bursary support. It will report by mid-2005.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of school leavers in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough went on to higher education in each year since 1997. [162334]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and college Admissions service (UCAS) and covers 18 year old applicants accepted through UCAS to full time first degree and HND courses. Figures are given in the table.

Percentage of 18 year olds accepted for entry to HE through UCAS

Percentage

	Year of entry					
LEA	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Barking	10.2	9.8	9.4	10.3	11.4	13.6
Barnet	32.1	30.5	28.7	30.1	31.9	32.3
Bexley	17.3	18.8	15.9	18.1	18.3	20.3
Brent	26.5	25.6	28.4	29.2	30.7	34.2
Bromley	27.0	27.5	27.4	28.7	31.3	33.0

Percentage of 18 year olds accepted for entry to HE through UCAS

Percentage

LEA	*Year of entry*					
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Camden	18.8	16.9	18.5	19.6	18.6	20.3
City of London[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—
Croydon	22.3	22.4	22.6	24.8	25.2	24.8
Ealing	23.8	23.4	26.3	26.5	27.7	29.4
Enfield	24.9	24.1	25.7	26.8	28.4	30.9
Greenwich	13.1	11.8	13.0	12.6	14.5	14.3
Hackney	11.2	10.4	11.3	12.0	14.0	12.2
Hammersmith and Fulham	18.0	17.1	18.8	17.7	20.4	19.6
Haringey	17.6	17.5	18.3	19.2	18.0	20.4
Harrow	32.4	33.2	34.1	34.3	38.2	39.4
Havering	16.2	15.0	16.9	17.3	19.0	15.5
Hillingdon	20.2	22.0	21.4	22.1	23.5	27.0
Hounslow	22.6	23.4	21.5	25.5	25.6	27.4
Islington	12.3	13.5	12.7	16.1	16.3	16.1
Kensington and Chelsea	22.1	18.8	18.7	18.9	19.2	19.9
Kingston upon Thames	27.8	27.5	26.1	28.6	31.5	32.6
Lambeth	13.4	13.3	12.9	14.7	15.7	17.0
Lewisham	16.3	14.2	13.7	16.1	15.6	16.7
Merton	22.4	22.1	24.2	22.9	22.9	26.4
Newham	14.8	15.4	16.9	18.1	20.1	19.2
Redbridge	27.3	27.6	27.1	31.0	31.9	34.9
Richmond upon Thames	31.9	31.1	29.5	29.6	32.4	30.3
Southwark	12.6	11.2	14.1	13.5	14.8	15.7
Sutton	25.1	26.0	24.6	26.6	27.7	30.6
Tower Hamlets	9.8	10.8	11.5	13.3	14.6	14.6
Waltham Forest	18.7	17.4	18.5	20.1	21.0	21.6
Wandsworth	20.8	18.8	21.0	21.7	23.9	23.6
Westminster	17.0	16.7	16.2	14.3	16.2	17.0
Total Greater London	20.7	20.3	20.6	21.8	23.0	23.9

[1] The effect of year on year fluctuations on a small population mean this method of calculating participation rates is unreliable for the City of London.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether he has undertaken a gender impact assessment of the latest pay proposals for higher education staff. [164768]

Alan Johnson: As independent and autonomous bodies, higher education institutions are responsible for their own academic and administrative affairs, including pay for their staff. Institutions must decide for themselves the level of evaluation they wish to undertake on the impact of the new pay proposals.

Learning Disabled Children

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of learning disabled children aged *(a)* between five and 10 years, *(b)* between 11 and 15 years and *(c)* between 16 and 20 years also have a physical disability. [165539]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available centrally.

Information on special educational needs by type of special educational need was collected for the first time in January 2004 and provisional data will be available at the end of April.

Literacy Strategy

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what role phonics play in the Literacy Strategy at Key Stages *(a)* 1 and *(b)* 2. [165291]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The National Literacy Strategy puts phonics—both analytic and synthetic—at the heart of literacy teaching in Key Stages 1 and 2. It advocates a strong emphasis on word level work (particularly phonics) and guided reading in the early years, with a gradual shift to place more emphasis on sentence level work (particularly composition in writing) in Key Stage 2.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of phonics in the teaching of reading; and what guidance he has issued concerning its use in primary schools. [165322]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: From a position where many schools were teaching very little phonics, the National Literacy Strategy has transformed literacy teaching in primary schools. Its approach is soundly based on international research and best practice. The teaching of phonics has contributed to primary schools' achievement in maintaining world class standards, with tens of thousands more seven and 11-year-olds now achieving the expected level in reading for their age.

Guidance to teachers on the use of phonics is included in the strategy's framework for teaching and a supplement to the "Progression in Phonics" training material will be available for schools in the summer term.

Millennium Volunteers

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Government's policy is on the extension to secondary school pupils of millennium volunteers under the active citizens in schools initiative; how many have been recruited; what assessment has been made of the take-up of volunteers; and if he will make a statement. [165333]

Alan Johnson: The Active Citizens in Schools (ACiS) pilot aims to build on aspects of the Millennium Volunteers (MV) programme and encourage 11 to 15 year olds in schools to make a commitment to volunteering in line with the citizenship curriculum, encourage them to become Millennium Volunteers when they reach the age of 16 and help to engage them in the wider democratic process. Over 4,000 young people have been involved in ACiS. The interim evaluation suggests that ACiS has to date been encouragingly successful, particularly in terms of the number of young people involved and the diversity of opportunities that have been developed. The DfES is planning to roll out the initiative through the extended schools programme from 2004.

Music, Dance and Drama

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list each of the initiatives announced by his Department since June 1997 on *(a)* music, *(b)* dance and *(c)* drama, including (i) the month and year of the announcement and (ii) its cost. [165292]

Mr. Miliband: My Department has supported many projects in these areas since June 1997. In respect of schools and further education, the following programmes have been instigated:

The Music Standards Fund was established in 1999 to protect and expand LEA music services. Approximately £270 million will have been invested by the end of the financial year 2003–04.

13 "Wider Opportunities" pilots in music have been undertaken; in March 2004 I announced £1.5 million investment to help LEAs develop their own pilots.

The Music and Dance (Aided pupil) Scheme began in 1981. The Department has spent a total of £79.914 million on the Scheme from 1997–98 to 2003–04. A new complementary national grants scheme for exceptionally talented children will be piloted from September 2004.

181 of the 259 designated specialist arts colleges since June 1997 have a performing arts (music, dance and drama) or music focus. Specialist schools receive a one-off capital grant of £100,000 and additional recurrent funding of £126 per pupil per year for each of the four years covered by their specialist school development plans.

The Dance and Drama Awards, for post-16 students, have cost £55 million since they were announced in 1998, with a further £15 million allocated for 2004–05.

Dance is one of six areas of activity within the National Curriculum programme of study for physical education. Between April 2003 and September 2006, we are investing over £459 million to transform PE and school sport.

Overseas Students

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to apply parental income tests to students entering higher education from EU accession countries; and what estimate he has made of the proportion who will enjoy *(a)* fee rebates and *(b)* maintenance bursaries. [164080]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 26 March 2004]:* The Government is required under Article 12 of the EC Treaty to treat EU students no less favourably than UK students with regard to tuition fees. Parents of students from the EU accession countries will undergo exactly the same means-assessment as parents of students from England and Wales and existing member states.

It is estimated that the proportion of students receiving financial support towards their tuition fees will average those of students from the current EU countries. EU students are not entitled to receive bursaries or loans for maintenance.

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many overseas students *(a)* in total, *(b)* from Africa and *(c)* from each country in Africa are studying (i) non-degree, (ii) undergraduate and (iii) postgraduate courses at colleges and universities. [164151]

Alan Johnson: The available information covering HE study in English institutions is given in the table.

African HE Enrolments to English HE and FE Institutions [1]

	All HE			
Country of Domicile	*PG*	*1st Deg*	*Oth. UG*	*Total*
Algeria	128	203	23	354
Angola	22	67	12	101
Botswana	137	359	38	534
Burundi	3	6	7	16
Cameroon	96	70	43	209
Central African Republic	5	4	5	14
Chad	1	4	0	5
Zaire	3	18	3	24
Congo (People's Republic)	10	14	10	34
Benin	2	3	0	5
Ethiopia	100	35	17	152
Reunion	3	13	73	89
Gabon	7	15	0	22
Gambia	95	123	44	262
Ghana	919	454	237	1,610
Guinea	1	7	2	10
Ivory Coast	23	36	10	69
Kenya	686	1,493	170	2,349
Lesotho	30	5	2	37
Liberia	8	5	5	18
Libya	711	64	84	859
Madagascar	6	6	4	16
Malawi	136	90	33	259
Mali	4	9	0	13
Mauritania	3	6	2	11
Mauritius	302	874	288	1,464
Morocco	71	46	13	130
Mozambique	38	25	2	65
Niger	6	1	0	7
Nigeria	1,591	1,612	334	3,537
Zimbabwe	349	598	1,818	2,765
Rwanda	22	13	12	47
St. Helena Dependencies	4	7	12	23
Seychelles	28	126	6	160
Sierra Leone	71	39	69	179
Somalia	5	31	10	46
Djibouti	0	3	1	4
South Africa	619	235	138	992
Sudan	134	82	20	236
Swaziland	28	14	1	43
Tanzania	268	329	98	695
Togo	1	5	2	8
Tunisia	29	16	6	51
Uganda	352	183	89	624
Egypt	446	92	25	563
Burkina	1	1	1	3
Zambia	169	143	63	375
Senegal	21	7	1	29

African HE Enrolments to English HE and FE Institutions [1]

	All HE			
Country of Domicile	*PG*	*1st Deg*	*Oth. UG*	*Total*
Cape Verde Islands	1	1	0	2
Equatorial Guinea	2	3	1	6
Namibia	26	12	2	40
Guinea-Bissau	0	0	1	1
Sao Tome Principe	0	0	0	0
Comoros	1	0	0	1
Mayotte	1	2	0	3
Eritrea	12	2	2	16
Total African	7,737	7,611	3,839	19,187
Total Non-EU Overseas	68,217	56,412	20,696	145,325
Total EU Overseas	26,757	33,173	13,405	73,335

[1] Figures for HE study in HE institutions are taken from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and are a snapshot as at 1 December, and relate to the academic year 2002/2003. Figures for HE study in FE institutions are taken from the Learning Skills Council (LSC) and are a snapshot as at 1 November, relating to the academic year 2001/2002. Comparable figures for 2002/2003 will be available later in the year.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) and the Learning Skills Council (LSC)

Pre-schools

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assistance is available to pre-schools to enable them to *(a)* improve their premises and *(b)* move to a more appropriate location. [165715]

Margaret Hodge: Capital funding is available to support playgroups and pre-schools in extending and developing their services to provide full day care. £6 million was available for this purpose during the period 2002–04 and a further £21.45 million has been included in the General Sure Start Grant for the period 2004–06.

Pupil Referral Units

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of pupil referral units in *(a)* improving children's behaviour, *(b)* enabling children to move back to mainstream schools and *(c)* raising the level of attainment of excluded children. [165472]

Mr. Miliband: According to OFSTED most pupil referral units (PRUs) are well run. Where this is the case they offer a curriculum that has both breadth and depth which is delivered innovatively, they make a very positive contribution to their pupils' outcomes, including improving their behaviour and attendance.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many hours of education per week a child attending a pupil referral unit is required to receive; and what the average number of hours per week received is. [165474]

Mr. Miliband: A child attending a pupil referral unit (PRU) because he or she has been permanently excluded from school should receive a suitable full time education appropriate to their age and Key Stage. So too, where possible, should pupils subject to fixed term exclusions of 15 days or more. DfEE Circular 11/99 suggests that 20 hours or more constitute appropriate full time education. All local education authorities confirmed that all permanently excluded pupils were in receipt of suitable full time education in September 2002.

The average hours received could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. PRUs also provide a valuable service, with other institutions, for young people. However, the time that pupils spend at the PRU each day will vary according to their needs. Such pupils might include dual registered pupils (i.e. remaining on their school roll and attending the PRU for specific educational modules e.g. additional basic skills tuition or anger management), sick children, respite for children who have been bullied, and teenage mothers.

School Meals

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of *(a)* maintained and *(b)* grammar schools in England have introduced healthy eating options into school canteens in the past 12 months. [165575]

Alan Johnson: The Department for Education and Skills does not collect this information.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of children in *(a)* maintained and *(b)* grammar schools bring packed lunches into school. [165576]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department for Education and Skills does not collect this information.

School Playing Fields

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what land used as playing fields by schools in Cornwall have been disposed of in the last 10 years. [165713]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998 was introduced on 1 October 1998 to stop the indiscriminate sale of school playing fields that occurred in the 1980s and early to mid-1990s. Local authorities and governing bodies of all maintained schools now need the Secretary of State's consent before they can dispose of a playing field or any part of a playing field. Applications to sell school playing field are approved only where it is clear that they meet the published criteria and, in particular, that any proceeds will be used to improve school sports provision or education facilities.

There are no central records of how many school playing fields were lost before October 1998. Since October 1998, the Government have not approved any applications affecting schools in Cornwall that would result in the loss of areas of school playing fields capable of forming at least a small sports pitch of 2,000m^2.

Schools (Key Stages)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the delivery mechanisms used by the Department to implement its strategies for each of the key stages. [165304]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Department's strategic documents "Excellence and Enjoyment" and "A New Specialist System" set out a clear framework for transforming educational achievement across the key stages in primary and secondary schools.

They set out how the Department uses a broad range of delivery mechanisms to work with LEAs and schools to achieve this objective. These include the Specialist Schools programme, the Excellence in Cities programme, and the Primary and Key Stage 3 National Strategies.

The Department's non-departmental public bodies (NDPBs) which work with schools, in particular the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), the Teacher Training Agency (TTA), the British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (BECTA) and the National College for School Leadership (NCSL), all play a central role.

Special Educational Needs

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children attended severe learning disability special schools in each of the last five years. [162909]

Margaret Hodge: Information relating to special schools with approval to make provision for severe learning difficulties is shown in the following table. Schools may be approved to make provision for more than one area of special need.

Special schools[1]: Schools approved to make provision for severe learning difficulties—position as at January each year—England

	Number of schools	*Total pupils[2]*
1999	347	25,064
2000	350	25,153
2001	449	35,590
2002	445	37,302
2003	496	41,985

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.
[2] Includes all pupils in the school, not just those pupils with severe learning difficulties.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children attended moderate learning difficulty special schools in each of the last five years. [163112]

Mr. Miliband: Information relating to special schools with formal approval to make provision for moderate learning difficulties is shown in the table. Schools may be approved to make provision for more than one area of special need.

Special Schools[1]: Schools approved to make provision for moderate learning difficulties—position as at January each year—England

	Number of schools	*Total pupils[2]*
1999	354	39.071
2000	336	37,592
2001	454	47,832
2002	472	51,036
2003	489	51,273

[1] Includes maintained and non-maintained special schools.
[2] Includes all pupils in the school, not just those pupils with moderate learning difficulties.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his Answer of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 630W, on special educational needs, if he will make a statement on each of the four cases the Special Educational Needs and Disability Panel has reviewed, the reasons for each being reviewed and the subsequent outcomes. [164758]

Margaret Hodge: As stated in the previous Answer, the SEN and Disability Tribunal has identified four cases since September 2002 in which panels have reviewed decisions because they might have included obvious errors. Over the same period panels have reviewed five decisions because the interests of justice appeared to require it. In a further two cases the Tribunal reviewed decisions because there might have been an error resulting from administrative mistakes.

The following table summarises the cases reviewed and the outcomes.

Review date	*Reasons*	*Outcome*
3 December 2002	Obvious error	Decision set aside
8 January 2003	Obvious error	Decision amended
3 February 2003	Interests of justice	Decision stood
9 April 2003	Interests of justice	Decision amended
9 May 2003	Administrative error	Decision stood
19 September 2003	Obvious error/interests of justice	Decision amended
18 November 2003	Administrative error	Decision stood
24 January 2004	Obvious error/Interests of justice	Decision amended
24 February 2004	Interests of justice	Decision stood

Student Finance

Jon Trickett: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department has taken to ensure the smooth transition from the present arrangements for applications for student loans through local education authorities to the new system of Student Finance Direct; and if he will make a statement. [164633]

Alan Johnson: Student Finance Direct retains the role of LEAs, which receive and assess applications from students, and the Student Loans Company (SLC), which pays them. They will both now be supported by a new IT system to carry out those functions.

My officials and the SLC, which is in the lead in developing and implementing the new system, have taken a number of steps to help LEAs with the transition. They have sought LEA views on, and involved LEA staff directly in, the design and implementation of the new system. Most importantly, following the principles recommended in the report by Ian McCartney MP, "Successful IT: Modernising Government in Action", the system was piloted in six LEAs in 2003. The lessons learned have been fed into the system that will be used nationally this year. The SLC will have appropriate contingency arrangements in place to deal with any problems.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will extend the student loan system to British students wishing to undertake their entire undergraduate degree in another EU member state. [164849]

Alan Johnson: We have no plans to do so. It has been longstanding policy to provide student support for maintenance to British students attending designated courses wholly provided by UK educational institutions

maintained or assisted by recurrent grants out of public funds or provided by such institutions in conjunction with institutions outside the UK; and courses of higher education specifically designated by the Secretary of State.

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what discussions he has had with Scottish Ministers regarding arrangements to ensure students from England who attend higher education institutions in Scotland are not disadvantaged in terms of *(a)* fee liability and *(b)* living costs from 2006; [164891]

(2) what discussions he has had with Scottish Ministers regarding arrangements for students from Scotland to study medicine in higher education institutions in England after 2006; [164894]

(3) what discussions he has had with Scottish Ministers regarding assistance for *(a)* fee costs and *(b)* living costs for Scottish students studying in England from 2006. [164895]

Alan Johnson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and I have quarterly meetings with Scottish Ministers, in which these issues are discussed.

Sure Start (Lancashire)

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Sure Start capital programmes have been completed in Lancashire. [164115]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* There are 17 local programmes approved across Lancashire over six rounds. Four have completed some of their planned capital work—Hyndburn Church and West Accrington has completed its main building which is open for service; Burnley, Danehouse and Stoneyholme, Rossendale Bacup and Stacksteads, and Burnley Duke Bar and Burnley Wood have completed some of their capital builds and are anticipated to open in April. 12 neighbourhood nurseries all involving significant building work have also opened offering 432 places to children under the age of five. In addition, One Early Excellence Centre opened its new building in February this year.

Teachers

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the initiatives launched by the Department concerning the continuing professional development of teachers since June 1997, including *(a)* the date of their launch and *(b)* their cost. [165289]

Mr. Miliband: Most of the Department's initiatives since June 1997 have involved elements of continuing professional development for teachers. More than £1 billion has been made available in this period to support professional development through national initiatives, such as the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, Excellence in Cities, Beacon schools and the Key Stage 3 strategy, but it is not possible to disaggregate the precise amounts that have been spent on professional development as many of the initiatives allow schools to decide how the money should be spent. There have however been a number of initiatives that have been specifically for the individual professional development of teachers. A list of these is provided in the following table. In addition, the National College for School Leadership has introduced a number of programmes to transform the quality of leadership in schools.

£

Name of initiative	*Date of Launch*	*Cost*
National Professional Qualification for Headship	June 1997	18,630,000
Leadership Programme for Serving Heads	November 1998	4,009,000
New Opportunities Fund ICT Teacher Training	September 1999	230,000,000
Induction	September 1999	[1]70,536,000
Best Practice Research Scholarships	May 2000	9,000,000
Teachers' International Professional Development	May 2000	12,000,000
Sabbaticals	September 2001	24,612,000
Early Professional Development Pilot	September 2001	25,000,000
Professional Bursaries	April 2002	15,000,000
Enhancing Subject Teaching Using ICT	January 2004	8,000,000

[1] This figure covers the period from April 2001-March 2003. Support for NQT induction was part of a larger school improvement grant for 1999–2001. Separate figures cannot be disaggregated.

TRANSPORT

Cargo Movements

Mr. Barry Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what quantity of consolidated cargo landing in Europe which was transported by road or rail into the United Kingdom was transported to enhanced remote transit sheds in the last year for which figures are available; and what European regulations apply to these cargo movements. [165628]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

Neither the Department of Transport or HM Customs and Excise hold information down to the level of detain requested.

The European regulations which apply to these cargo movements are:

Council Regulation (EEC) No. 2913/92 (The Community Customs Code), in particular Articles 91–97 thereof, and

Commission Regulation (EEC) No. 2454/93 (Provisions for implementation of the Community Customs Code), in particular Articles 340a-340d, 341–442a and 450a-462a.

Roads and Pavements

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what proportion of local authorities'

roads and pavements maintenance budget was paid out for compensation against claims in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement; [165056]

(2) how many claims were received by local authorities in each of the last five years for *(a)* personal injury and *(b)* damage to motor vehicles in respect of roads and pavements. [165058]

Mr. McNulty: This information is not collated centrally, although we are looking at whether and how we could do so in the future.

A27

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the traffic flows on the A27 *(a)* through Worthing and *(b)* around Arundel were (i) in 1997 and (ii) on the latest date for which figures are available; [165699]

(2) what representations he has received *(a)* for and *(b)* against improvements for traffic on the A27 (i) through Worthing and (ii) around Arundel. [165701]

Mr. Jamieson: Traffic flows on the A27 *(a)* through Worthing and *(b)* around Arundel (i) in 1997 and (ii) 2002—the latest date for which figures are available—are given in the table:

Year	*Location*	*Two-way annual average daily traffic (AADT)*
1997	Clapham, west of Worthing	24,893
1997	North Lancing, east of Worthing	Not available
1997	Walberton, west of Arundel	24,633
1997	Poling, east of Arundel	27,609
2002	Clapham, west of Worthing	26,800
2002	North Lancing, east of Worthing	52,800
2002	Walberton, west of Arundel	26,700
2002	Poling, east of Arundel	28,400

Since the Secretary of State's announcement on 9 July 2003, Ministers have received five representations in support of improvements on the A27 through Worthing and 11 representations in support of improvements on the A27 through Arundel.

No representations for or against proposed short-term, small-scale improvements for traffic on the A27 through Worthing and around Arundel have been received.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many lanes each way are justified for the A27 *(a)* through Worthing and *(b)* around Arundel. [165700]

Mr. Jamieson: In Worthing there are four lanes—two each way—for traffic for some sections of the A27 and the remainder is one lane each way with additional lanes at junctions. There are numerous junctions with local roads and a very high proportion of local traffic uses the route.

Following the rejection of the proposals of the south coast multi-modal study the Highways Agency is working closely with West Sussex county council to develop alternative strategies for managing traffic in Worthing, and I expect their report in the summer. The justification for the number of traffic lanes required in Worthing will therefore depend on this work.

At Arundel, there is one lane each way along the existing inner Arundel bypass. The principal congestions points are, however, the main junctions at Arundel and at the nearby Crossbush junction. The agency has recently installed traffic signals to improve the operation of the Crossbush junction. It is envisaged that additional road capacity will be required in the Arundel area, but the exact nature of this provision is under consideration and the agency will report back in the summer.

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to propose relief for *(a)* traffic on the A27 and *(b)* residents in (i) Worthing and (ii) Arundel. [165702]

Mr. Jamieson: In July 2003 we rejected the proposals for a number of road improvements for the A27 as presented in the recommendations of the south coast multi-modal study. We asked the Highways Agency to review the proposals and develop less environmentally damaging options. This work is in progress and I expect the agency to report back in the summer. I will then consider the alternatives and decide on the way forward for the Arundel and Worthing lengths of the A27.

The agency is developing short-term measures to improve traffic flow and pedestrian crossing facilities in Worthing and has installed traffic signals to smooth traffic flow at Crossbush junction near Arundel.

A38

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the final cost of the remedial work undertaken on the A38 Saltash tunnel; and how the work is to be funded. [165714]

Mr. Jamieson: The estimated cost of the refurbishment works being undertaken on the A38 Saltash tunnel is £8,250,000. The work is being funded by the Highways Agency.

Some remedial works will need to be completed satisfactorily before the completion of the refurbishment contract; they will be undertaken at the contractor's expense.

Air Travel Trust Fund

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the financial status of the Air Travel Trust Fund; which types of air tickets are covered by the Air Travel Trust Fund; and how many and what value of tickets were sold in each category in each year from 1997; [164645]

(2) what the current deficit of the Air Travel Trust Fund is at present as covered by the Government guaranteed overdraft facility; and how this is projected to change over the next few years. [164646]

Mr. McNulty: The Air Travel Trust Fund (ATTF) is currently £9.6 million in deficit but has overdraft facilities guaranteed by the Government. In the event of any failure passengers would not therefore lose out. It is not possible to predict how the deficit will change over

the next few years. As soon as parliamentary time permits, we will introduce a Bill to enable the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) to levy a charge on the industry to eliminate the deficit and make provision for future calls on the fund.The Air Travel Organisers' Licensing (ATOL) scheme protects air travellers against insolvency of tour organisers. In the event of a company failure, the cost of refunds and repatriations is met by the bond, and if it is insufficient then ATTF provides the remaining funds required.

Companies holding ATOLs may sell any type of air ticket, but the CAA does not collect data on the type of ticket sold. In 2003 ATOL holders made 23 million sales of package holidays and flights on charter airlines without accommodation, and 5 million sales of flights on scheduled airlines, making a total of 28 million protected tickets.

The following table compares the number of ATOL protected tickets with total tickets for journeys originating in the UK.

UK originating return trips

	ATOL protected		*Total*
	Million trips	*£ billion*	*Million trips*
1997	23.5	9.5	30.3
1998	25.0	10.4	34.3
1999	26.4	11.1	37.5
2000	28.0	12.4	41.4
2001	29.1	13.0	43.0
2002	27.9	12.9	44.0
2003[1]	27.9	12.9	[2]—

[1] Provisional
[2] Not available
Source:
CAA, ONS

Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what resources have been made available to the British Transport Police to meet their additional responsibilities under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002, *(c)* 2003 and *(d)* 2004. [162624]

Mr. McNulty: The Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 provides officers of the British Transport Police (BTP) with jurisdiction outside the railways in certain, specified circumstances. The number of incidents where BTP officers respond in such circumstances accounts for some 1 per cent. of their activities each year. The costs are absorbed within BTP's budget and are offset by the assistance provided to BTP by local police forces for which BTP are not charged. Between 2000–01 and 2004–05 BTP's budget has increased as follows:

	£ million	*Percentage*
2000–01	120.5	—
2001–02	121.9	+1.2
2002–03	126.4	+3.7
2003–04	136.7	+8.2
2004–05	161.0	+18

Birmingham Airport

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects Birmingham International Airport to announce a scheme of compensation for Solihull constituents adversely affected by the proposed second runway. [165566]

Mr. McNulty: I understand that Birmingham Airport are currently finalising the details of their draft compensation and mitigation scheme. They intend to consult key stakeholders after Easter and begin a full public consultation before the end of May.

Computerised MOT Test

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the Answer of 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1237W, on computerised MOT test, if he will make it his policy to set a final date for the implementation of a computerised MOT test by Siemens Business Services, failing which he will appoint a new contractor. [165796]

Mr. Jamieson: No, at this stage we do not see it as appropriate to set such a date.

Cycle Lanes

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided in the Ribble Valley and Fulwood since 1997; and at what cost. [165512]

Mr. McNulty: Since 1997, 10.5 km of on-road cycle lanes and 4.3 km of off-road cycle lanes have been constructed in the Ribble Valley and Fulwood; their exact cost is not available.

Driving Licences

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether people from EU accession countries will be permitted to drive in the UK using their national licence after 1 May. [165052]

Mr. Jamieson: The UK's implementation of the second EC directive on driving licences (91/439/EEC) on 1 January 1997 brought about the mutual recognition of all Community licences. This obligation will be extended to include recognition of all licences in circulation in the new member states from their date of accession, 1 May 2004.

Department-sponsored Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the *(a)* resource budget, *(b)* administration costs and *(c)* staff numbers were for 2003 of the (i) Northern Lighthouse Board, (ii) Trinity House Lighthouse Service, (iii) Rail Passengers Committee Eastern England, (iv) Rail Passengers Committee Midlands, (v) Rail Passengers Committee North Eastern England, (vi) Rail Passengers Committee North Western England, (vii) Rail Passengers Committee Scotland, (viii) Rail Passengers Committee Southern England, (ix) Rail Passengers Committee Wales, (x) Rail Passengers Committee Western England, (xi) Rail Passengers Council and (xii) Shipping Task Force. [165124]

Mr. McNulty: The information is as follows:

For Financial Year 2003–04	*Resource Budget (£)*	*Administration Costs (£)*	*Staff Numbers*
RPC Eastern England	274,200	49,000	5
RPC Midlands	279,000	69,400	5
RPC North Eastern	275,700	89,400	5
RPC North Western	275,500	72,500	5
RPC Scotland	302,000	90,900	5
RPC Southern	287,500	106,000	5
RPC Wales	262,500	62,400	5
RPC Western	283,200	64,900	5
Rail Passengers' Council	1,446,800	758,300	22
			206 (does not include part time staff; such as commissioners (5) or
Northern Lighthouse Board	22,791	4,904	attendants/boatmen (106)
Trinity House Lighthouse Service	33,434	1,777	409
		453 (catering for	
Shipping Task Force	49,500	meetings only)	No staff

Disability Discrimination Act

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what impact he expects the provisions of the draft Disability Discrimination Bill to have on the measures contained in the Disability Discrimination Act 1992 regarding specifications of hackney carriages; and what the timetable is for consultation and implementation. [165456]

Mr. McNulty: The provisions in the draft Disability Discrimination Bill have no impact on the existing provisions of Part 5 of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) that give the Secretary of State powers to make accessibility regulations for hackney carriages (taxis). I announced on 28 October last year our policy proposals fro taking forward those provisions. We are currently working on the technical requirements and we will be consulting in due course on draft regulations that will include a proposed timeframe for implementation.

The transport provision in the draft Disability Discrimination Bill would allow us to lift the exemption for transport vehicles in Part 3 of the DDA that deals with access to goods, services and facilities. We are committed to doing so in respect of public transport services, including taxis, to ensure that in future operators of those services take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not discriminate against disabled people. We do not, however, intend to bring in the duties under Part 3 that would require physical alterations to vehicles.

Finningley Airport

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assistance was given to Peel Holdings to help with the Finningley Airport development. [165711]

Mr. McNulty: Peel Holdings have received no assistance from the Department for Transport to help with the Finningley Airport development. Our policy on Finningley is set out in the Future of Air Transport White Paper.

Freight Future

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the cost of producing the Freight Future newsletter was in the last year for which figures are available. [165149]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department issued two editions of the Freight Future newsletter in 2003–04. The cost of producing them was £69,358. This includes management, design, printing of 80,000 copies of each issue and insertion into five industry publications.

Greenhouse Gases

Mr. Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's assessment is of the likely greenhouse gas emissions from transport in 2010. [165167]

Mr. Jamieson: Forecasts of 2010 emissions of carbon dioxide (CO_2) from the transport sector, together with information on emissions of a number of other pollutants, are published in Transport Statistics Great Britain 2003, which is available via the DfT website.

Heavy Goods/Public Service Vehicles

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* heavy goods vehicle and *(b)* public service vehicle licences (i) were issued and (ii) were revoked in each of the last 10 years. [163839]

Mr. Jamieson: The number of licences issued in these categories can be obtained only at disproportionate cost. The following table shows the total number of applications processed by DVLA for licences to drive medium and large goods vehicles and passenger carrying vehicles over the last 10 years. The figures include applications for provisional entitlement, full entitlement, renewals and replacement licences.

	Applications processed
1993–94	403,854
1994–95	167,650
1995–96	167,645
1996–97	264,446
1997–98	254,244
1998–99	244,963

	Applications processed
1999–2000	155,478
2000–01	167,966
2001–02	266,242
2002–03	306,601

For revoked licences, the following table shows the number of medium and large goods vehicle licences and passenger carrying vehicle licences revoked over the last 10 years (where figures are available).

	Revoked by Traffic Commissioner	Revoked by DVLA	Total revoked
1993–94	1,520	[1]—	1,520
1994–95	555	[1]—	555
1995–96	510	12,432	12,942
1996–97	670	12,613	13,280
1997–98	925	13,092	14,017
1998–99	[1]—	[1]—	—
1999–2000	131	12,844	12,975
2000–01	94	14,500	14,594
2001–02	118	14,652	14,770
2002–03	104	14,354	14,458

[1] Figures not available

M6

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether he has received from the Highways Agency plans for widening the M6 motorway between junctions 11 and 20; and if he will make a statement. [165307]

Mr. Jamieson: In my announcement on 10 December 2002 about the outcome of a number of multi-modal studies, I asked the Highways Agency to carry out further detailed work on proposals to widen the M6 from junction 11a to junction 19. In carrying out that work it has proved necessary to undertake more detailed traffic modelling and economic evaluation work than initially expected. However, this work is nearing completion and I expect to receive a report from the Highways Agency in the next few months.

Port Security

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what training is provided to port security officers in *(a)* scanning ships and containers, *(b)* scanning of workers and *(c)* testing for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear materials; and if he will make a statement. [165106]

Mr. Jamieson: The International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) Code does not set any training standards for Port Facility Security Officers (PFSOs) and each Contracting Government is able to determine the detail of the training course to be undertaken.

Unlike the vast majority of countries the UK requires PFSOs to complete a Government approved training course. My Department's Transport Security Directorate (TRANSEC) developed training standards and course criteria for PFSOs in the UK, and approves the training providers.

The UK's implementation of the IPSPS Code does not require ports to monitor chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear (CBRN) traffic. However the Home Office and Customs are taking forward a programme to install radiation detection equipment at points of entry into the UK (including airports, seaports and the Channel Tunnel). Under this initiative Customs Officers, who are responsible for detecting and deterring illicit import and export of radioactive materials, have received specialist training in operating the equipment and the incident response procedures.

PFSOs will however work in partnership with Customs Officers when necessary, and will be aware of the detection equipment at points of entry into the UK.

As required by the ISPS code each port will detail how it is going to achieve access control to its restricted areas, and this may include subjecting vehicles (including lorries), persons and their possessions to checks and searches. In addition ports will be required to formalise pass systems to help prevent unauthorised access to these operational areas of the port. Access control and how to maintain pass systems are covered in the PFSO training courses and security instructi9ons that have been issued to industry.

Rail Compensation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 513–14W, on rail compensation, what plans he has to ensure consistency among franchisees in the compensation arrangements offered to passengers. [164227]

Mr. McNulty: Passenger's Charters are consistent in that they must meet the minimum compensation arrangements as set out in the National Conditions of Carriage. Franchisees are free to offer at their commercial discretion compensation arrangements that give more extensive rights than those in the National Rail Conditions of Carriage but they may not give less.

Rail Services (Kent)

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the investment required to allow Channel Tunnel Rail Link domestic service trains to use 700-seater trains from Rochester, Strood and Gravesend. [162503]

Mr. McNulty: The platforms at Rochester, Strood and Gravesend can only accommodate trains up to 10 cars long. The proposed 700-seater Channel Tunnel Rail Link domestic service would be 12 car trains. The cost of extending the platforms at Rochester would be £12.4 million, Strood £1.2 million and Gravesend £8.6 million. Due to the prohibitively high cost of

extending these platforms, the Strategic Rail Authority's Integrated Kent Franchise Consultation Document proposes a service of two Channel Tunnel Rail Link domestic trains per hour in each direction from Rochester, Strood and Gravesend using 350 seater six car trains.

Reduced Pollution Certificates

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the administrative charges are for a company applying for a reduced pollution certificate. [165181]

Mr. Jamieson: The current cost of a reduced pollution test carried out in conjunction with another statutory test e.g heavy goods vehicle or public service vehicle annual test or certificate of initial fitness examination of £15.50. When carried out on its own the cost if £26.00. There are supplementary fees of £5.50 payable if the test is carried out other than at one of Vehicle and Operator Service Agency's (VOSA) testing stations and £9.00 if the test is carried out outside normal working hours.

TransportEnergy Best Practice

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what percentage of transport companies used the TransportEnergy Best Practice Programme in the last year for which figures are available. [165148]

Mr. Jamieson: Five per cent. of all freight transport companies in England have used the TransportEnergy Best Practice programme since 2002.

Tyres

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his assessment of the effects of energy efficient tyres on fuel consumption for *(a)* buses and *(b)* freight trucks. [165152]

Mr. Jamieson: Through the TransportEnergy Best Practice programme, the Department has recently published a leaflet describing trials of energy efficient tyres fitted to trucks. These trials have shown some positive results, with fuel consumption reduced by an average of 7 per cent. Trials have shown that tread wear rates for current energy efficient tyres can be inferior to those of standard tyres, so they can have larger replacement costs.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Indigenous Communities (Commercial Exploitation of Traditional Knowledge)

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of the patents of medicinal plants in the last five years she estimates were based on the traditional knowledge of indigenous people. [165034]

Ms Hewitt: No patents covering the UK have been granted in the past five years for whole plants with medicinal properties. There are 24 granted patents relating to medicinal compounds extracted from plants. It is not possible to determine clearly how many of these are based on the traditional knowledge of indigenous people. However, it would appear that about 50 per cent. of these patents relate to extracts of plants with a recognised traditional medicinal use.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if her Department will take action to prohibit pharmaceutical companies from using traditional knowledge of indigenous communities without receiving prior informed consent before exploiting plants or crops for commercial gain. [165179]

Ms Hewitt: The UK Government have ratified the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) which deals among other issues with traditional knowledge and prior informed consent. The CBD also recognises the sovereign rights of states over their genetic resources and that access to them is subject to national legislation. It also requires that access to genetic resources should be subject to the prior informed consent of the providing country and to mutually agreed terms, including the fair and equitable sharing of the benefits derived from the use of genetic resources.

At the recent seventh Conference of Parties (COP7) in Kuala Lumpur, the UK Government helped to negotiate a mandate for an international benefit-sharing regime. This mandate covers traditional knowledge and recognises the need for both facilitating access to genetic resources and the subsequent sharing of benefits. The UK also takes an active part in discussions in the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO) on the intellectual property aspects of these issues.

Post Office Network

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of Post Office Limited's *(a)* support for the vulnerable and *(b)* action to maintain post offices as focal points for communities during the Network Reinvention Programme for 2003 and 2004 to date. [165339]

Mr. Timms: The Network Reinvention programme is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. There is a public consultation process agreed between the company and Postwatch and local communities are consulted before final decisions are taken. The needs of the elderly, the disabled and those on lower incomes are carefully considered. At the end of the programme, over 95 per cent. of the urban population nationally will still live within one mile of a post office and the majority within half a mile.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of Post Office Network's ability to maintain convenient access for all to post offices, as indicated on page 5, chapter 1 of the Performance and Innovation Unit Report of 2000. [165340]

Mr. Timms: The Government regards it as most important that all communities have good access to postal and Government services and it is committed to doing all it can to ensure a viable Post Office network for the future. We have appointed a dynamic management team who are committed to turning the business around and to give effect to the vision in the PIU report of a thriving network meeting changing customer needs.

The Government has placed a formal obligation on Post Office Ltd to maintain the rural network and prevent avoidable closures, in the first instance until 2006, and has made available £450 million over three years to support this. For the urban network, where rationalisation is a vital element of renewal, Post Office Ltd is required to ensure that at the end of their reinvention programme over 95 per cent. of the urban population nationally will still live within one mile of a post office and the majority will live within half a mile.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has held with *(a)* Postwatch and *(b)* Postcomm about the role of Postwatch. [165352]

Mr. Timms: The Department has a regular dialogue with Postwatch and Postcomm on a range of issues concerning the postal market and the postal market regulatory framework. As a non-departmental public body, sponsored by DTI, the Department also has regular meetings with Postwatch about its programme, performance and operations. HMT and DTI are undertaking a joint project on consumer representation in regulated industries. As part of this project they have worked closely with Postwatch.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received from Postcomm about their work with key Post Office Network stakeholders to develop a shared understanding of the role that post offices should play in the longer term. [165369]

Mr. Timms: The Postal Services Commission (Postcomm) reports annually to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on developments in the post office network. Postcomm publishes these annual reports on its website and copies have been placed in the Libraries of the House. We have also received advice on the longer term role of post offices in rural areas. We are considering that report, which we would expect to be published in due course.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment she has made of each annual report from Postcomm on the urban network since 2001; and if she will place copies of her assessments in the Library; [165370]

(2) what advice she has received from the Postal Services Commission regarding their monitoring of the size and shape of the Post Office network and its impact on local communities. [165368]

Mr. Timms: The Postal Services Commission (Postcomm) reports annually to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on developments in the post office network. Postcomm publishes these annual reports on its website and copies have been placed in the Libraries of the House.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State makes no formal assessment of the annual reports from the regulator but they are one of many sources which inform Government policy.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has received about line management in Postwatch. [165371]

Mr. Timms: None.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support her Department has offered to Post Office Limited to ensure that benefit recipients can continue to access their entitlement in cash at post offices. [165439]

Mr. Timms: The Government has ensured that those people who want to do so can continue to collect their benefits in cash at the post office. The Government invested £450 million in the Horizon project, one of the UK's largest computerisation projects, which has automated every post office in the network. That IT platform has enabled the Post Office to provide its customers with access to a range of banking services at the post office counter. People can now collect their benefits in full in cash at post offices using basic bank accounts, some 20 million current accounts or the Post Office card accounts.

Renewables

Mr. Nigel Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the efficiency of wind turbines compared to other sources of renewable energy. [165517]

Mr. Timms: The capacity factor, sometimes referred to as the load factor, is the energy generated during a given period divided by the energy generated that would have been generated had the wind turbine been operating at maximum output.

Figures for average capacity factor for individual wind farms are not available for reasons of commercial confidentiality. However, the most recent figures available show an average load factor for all UK windfarms as being 29.9 per cent. in 2002[1]. Separate figures for offshore wind farms are not yet available as UK's first major offshore wind farm at North Hoyle has only been operational since November last year. However, we would expect average load factors to be greater due to the superior offshore wind resource.

The Oxera Report[2] puts the cost of onshore wind in 2004 at £31/MWh and offshore wind at £55/MWh. This is expected to fall to £25/MWh and £37/MWh respectively by 2020.

The cost of wind compared to other forms of renewable generation can be found in table 3.7 within the report at www.dti.gov.uk.energy/renewables/policy.oxeraresults.pdf.

[1] *Source:* DUKES 2003 available on the DTI website at www.dti.gov.uk/energy/inform/energy_stats/renewables/index.shtml. (Data for 2003 will become available in June 2004).

[2] Oxford Economic Research Associates "Results of Renewables Marked Modelling" February 2004.

Accountancy Fees

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate her Department has made of the average accountancy fee for completing a company voluntary agreement as a percentage of the net value of the company in each year since 2000. [164287]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Insolvency Service, the Executive Agency of the Department for Trade and Industry that has responsibility for the policy regarding company voluntary arrangements (CVAs) does not collect statistical information regarding the fees of nominees and supervisors on a regular basis and no estimate of such fees is available. Proposals put to a company's creditors contain details of the charges of the nominee and supervisor. It is up to the creditors to decide whether to accept such proposals.

Arms Exports

Mr. Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps have been taken to ensure that components for machine guns exported to *(a)* Côte d'Ivoire, *(b)* Nigeria and *(c)* Senegal have not been exported in contravention of the Economic Council of West African States Moratorium. [163415]

Mr. MacShane: I have been asked to reply.

The United Kingdom has one of the strictest and most transparent arms export licensing systems in the world. All export licence applications are rigorously assessed on a case by case basis against the Consolidated EU and National Arms Export Licensing Criteria, taking account of the circumstances prevailing at the time and other announced Government policies. Criterion 1 specifically addresses respect for the UK's international commitments and international obligations.

The UK takes the provisions of the Economic Council of West African States Moratorium fully into account when assessing export licence applications. We would not issue an export licence if there were a clear risk that the export would be re-exported by the stated end-user in contravention of the Moratorium.

British Coal

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Department has been given Treasury approval to retain surpluses payable to it out of

the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme during the last five years to offset expenditure on liabilities inherited from British Coal. [164382]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 29 March 2004]:* No. The Government's share of any valuation surplus from the Mineworkers' Pension Scheme is released over a 10-year period and paid directly into the Consolidated Fund as Consolidated Fund Extra Receipts.

Business Support

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 56W, on Business Support, if she will list the DTI funded business support schemes that have been discontinued since January 2003. [158879]

Ms Hewitt: All DTI funded business support schemes are being replaced by a small set of more strategically focused products. Four of these new products (Small Firms Loan Guarantee, Grant for Research and Development, Grant for Investigating an Innovative Idea and Knowledge Transfer Partnerships) have been available since spring 2003. Further products will be made available from April this year.

Under current plans, the legacy schemes shown in the lists will not, from April 2004, receive any new DTI financial support over and above what has already previously been committed to them. In some cases there will be a tail of activities to which the Department has made legal commitments. The first list shows legacy schemes that have closed to new customers since January 2003. The second list shows legacy schemes that currently remain open to new customers and in some cases may continue to exist with funding from other sources.

List 1

Aeronautics Research Programme (CARAD)
Applications Technology Support
Automotive College
Biowise
Broadcast Digital Test Bed
Building Up Biomaterials
Competitiveness for the Oil and Gas Supplies Sector
CONNECT
E-Business Chemicals Facilitator
Enterprise Grant Scheme
European Interest in Minerals
Financial Advisory Services (bioscience)
Fit for the Future
Foresight LINK Awards
Harnessing Genomics
Information and Communication Technologies Carrier Scheme
Information Technology, Electronics and Communications Skills Programme
Inside UK Enterprise
International Technology Service
Manufacturing for Biotechnology
Mosaic
Next Wave Technologies and Markets
Partnership Fund
Practical Electronic Business Leadership Scheme
Regional Selective Assistance
S@tcom
Service Mission Support
Smart
TCS
UK Analytical Partnership
UK Coal Operating Aid Scheme
UK High Technology Fund
UK Online for Business
Work Life Balance Challenge Fund

List 2

Advanced Metal Technologies Initiative
Automotive Centres of Excellence
Benchmarking Index
British Geological Survey Project
Chemical Industry Sites Participation (Reputation) Project
Early Growth Funding
E-Business Programme for the UK Chemicals Sector
Electronics Design Programme
Engineering and Machinery Alliance
Envirowise
Faraday Partnerships
Industry Forum Adaptation Initiative
LINK Collaborative Research Scheme
Motorsport Development programme
NESTA Futurelab Industry Placement Scheme
Phoenix Fund
Regional Venture Capital Fund Programme
Supply Chain Groups
Waste and Resources Action Programme.

In addition to the schemes listed above, the Home Shipbuilding Credit Guarantee Scheme will close to new guarantees for support after 5 April 2005. New applications will continue to be accepted until 1 October 2004 and a further period for signature of guarantee contracts will be permitted until 5 April 2005. My Department will be in contact with stakeholders in the next few days to explain the arrangements for closure of this scheme.

Departmental Policies (Ilford, North)

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will set out, including statistical information relating as directly as possible to the constituency of Ilford, North, the effect of her Department's policies on Ilford since 1997. [164883]

Ms Hewitt: The Parliamentary Constituency Area (PCA) of Ilford, North falls entirely within the London borough of Redbridge. DTI has no area-based initiatives targeted directly on this PCA or the borough of Redbridge.

General economic and labour market information covering the borough of Redbridge can be found at http://www.dti.gov.uk/sd/bci

Downloaded Music

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what measures she proposes to take to combat the illegal downloading of music from the internet. [164840]

Ms Hewitt: The UK music industry makes a substantial contribution to our economy. The UK is the third largest market in the world for sales of music and the National Music Council estimates that the music industry generates value added in excess of £3.6 billion (2000).

Illegal downloading of music from the internet has a serious impact on our creative industries and the artist they represent. BPI research estimates that 7.4 million people in the UK have downloaded material from illegal sites.

UK copyright law does provide strong protections for those who own rights in music so that they are able to take action against any illegal use of their material. However, we believe that increasing the provision of legal downloads is the best approach to combating illegal downloading and welcome the positive steps recently taken by the music industry to promote the availability of legitimate music tracks on the internet.

Electricity Supply

Mr. Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what role Ofgem has in ensuring security of supply when regulating the electricity industry. [165166]

Mr. Timms: Ofgem's principal objective is to protect the interests of consumers. In carrying out its functions in a manner which it considers is best calculated to further the principal objective Ofgem must have regard to the need to secure that all reasonable demands for electricity are met.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer by the Minister for the Environment of 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1620W, on hazardous waste, how many of the *(a)* 100,000 special waste producers and *(b)* 750,000 future hazardous waste producers her Department has contacted to inform them of the requirements of the Landfill Directive relating to hazardous waste. [165323]

Mr. Timms: Defra lead on hazardous waste and the Landfill Directive, but the DTI is assisting in the development of a communications strategy which will raise awareness of these issues among businesses through a variety of mechanisms and media. I understand that my colleague the Minister of State at Defra will be providing the hon. Member with further details of the activities being planned over the coming months.

Libya

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of potential business and commercial opportunities for UK firms consequent on improved relations with Libya; and if she will make a statement. [164730]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The positive developments in the bilateral relationship have led to a significant increase in the level of interest from UK companies wishing to do business in Libya. We believe that opportunities exist for UK firms in a number of sectors, including oil and gas, airports, education and training, ports and logistics and tourism.

Minimum Wage

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made, for each year since the introduction of the national minimum wage, of *(a)* the number of employers not complying with the national minimum wage provisions and *(b)* the level of underpayment of the national minimum wage. [165500]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The information is as follows.

(a) Data on the number of employers not complying with the minimum wage is not available. However, from April 2003 to February 2004 the Inland Revenue have investigated nearly 5,000 cases of suspected underpayment and found nearly 2,000 cases where employers were non-compliant, identifying £2,250 million in arrears of pay.

(b) Given that the Government does not produce estimates of the number of workers not complying with the legislation the level of underpayment cannot be estimated. However, the Office for National Statistics, do however publish the number of jobs paying below the NMW (see following table), but these are not an estimate of non-compliance because they include employees who are legitimately being paid below the NMW levels (for example, those who are receiving accredited training or where the employer provides accommodation).

Number and proportion of jobs paying below the national minimum wage

	Amount £	*Percentage*
Spring 2000[1]	240,000	1.0
Spring 2001[2]	250,000	1.0
Spring 2002[3]	330,000	1.3
Spring 2003[4]	260,000	1.0

[1] Rate was £3.00 per hour (aged 18 to 21 years) or £3.60 per hour (aged 22 years and over).
[2] Rate was £3.20 per hour (aged 18 to 21 years) or £3.70 per hour (aged 22 years and over).
[3] Rate was £3.50 per hour (aged 18 to 21 years) or £4.10 per hour (aged 22 years and over).
[4] Rate was £3.60 per hour (aged 18 to 21 years) or £4.20 per hour (aged 22 years and over).
Source:
Office for National Statistics central estimates of low pay.

Nirex

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to her answer of 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 965–66, on Nirex, what the last date was on which the Department discussed the budget for Nirex prior to the Nirex board meeting of 4 March with *(a)* BNFL and *(b)* British Energy; and what the Department's input was to the discussion. [165297]

Mr. Timms: Discussions with BNFL took place on 27 February on how best to secure value for money for the shareholders from the Nirex budget.

No such discussions were held with British Energy.

Nuclear Decommissioning Authority

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority will be responsible for the long-term disposal of *(a)* intermediate level, *(b)* high level and *(c)* other types of nuclear waste. [165325]

Mr. Timms: The Energy Bill includes provisions that will enable the proposed Nuclear Decommissioning Authority (NDA) to treat, store and dispose of hazardous material, including Low Level Waste (LLW), Intermediate Level Waste (ILW) and High Level Waste (HLW), at designated sites for which it is responsible and also in designated circumstances. In carrying out its functions, the NDA will be required to have particular regard for Government policy. Radioactive waste management policy is the responsibility of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) and the devolved Administrations. The Government's independent body, the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management (CoRWM), is receiving policy options for the long-term management of higher-level radioactive wastes. CoRWM will report its recommendations to Ministers, who will decide the long-term policy and the arrangements for its implementation. The NDA could be given responsibilities in this regard. Clause 3 of the Energy Bill provides that, should Ministers so decide.

Nuclear Safeguards

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the implementation to date of Commission Regulation 3227/76 on the application of nuclear safeguards to mixed facilities. [165155]

Nigel Griffiths: Commission Regulation (Euratom) 3227/76 sets out Euratom safeguards reporting requirements. Application of the Regulation at installations that handle 'both civil nuclear material and nuclear materials assigned or liable to be assigned to meet defence requirements' (so-called 'mixed facilities') is as described in its Article 35. Accountancy reports and associated information are therefore provided for all the safeguarded nuclear material at such facilities in the UK.

Performance and Innovation Unit

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what reports she has made to the Prime Minister on progress against conclusions in the Performance and Innovation Unit report of 2000. [165438]

Mr. Timms: My right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has been kept informed on a regular basis with progress on implementation of the PIU report.

Post Office Network

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry who are the key Post Office network stakeholders. [165440]

Mr. Timms: A very wide range of organisations and individuals are stakeholders in this important national network, as clients, customers or partners.

Regional Development Agencies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the likely impact on regional businesses of incorporation of regional development agencies into future regional assemblies. [165211]

Jacqui Smith: The Government's plans for elected regional assemblies in the English regions and their relationship with the Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) are set out in the White Paper "Your Region, Your Choice". In regions which choose to have elected regional assemblies the RDA will become accountable to the assembly but will retain its present day-to-day operational independence. In appointing the RDA Board members the assembly will be required to ensure that the Chair and at least half the Board have had recent or current experience of running a business. Business will therefore continue to be at the heart of the decision-making process for regional economic development.

As now, regional business will be able to contribute to the formation and delivery of the regional economic strategy. A key role of the elected assembly will be to improve the region's sustainable economic performance by ensuring the region's economic development strategy is integrated with policies and strategies on related issues such as skills, planning, housing and transport. This will enable business to benefit from better targeted policies.

Moreover, business will be able to help shape the assembly's work on this and more generally through the arrangements that will be put in place for stakeholder involvement. Elected assemblies will be required actively to involve stakeholders in their work—which could include scrutiny, policy development, consultation and implementation. As a key stakeholder, regional business will therefore have a range of opportunities to influence issues which affect them.

A draft of the Bill to establish elected regional assemblies, including their structures, powers and functions, will be published before the first referendums are held.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 43W, on regulatory impact assessments, how many regulatory impact assessments were issued by the Small Business Service in each year since their inception, with particular reference to the Evaluation of Regulatory Impact Assessments Compendium Report 2003–04, March 2004, Pages 25–26. [165110]

Nigel Griffiths: In respect of the previous answer, I was advised that the Small Business Service had not issued any regulatory impact assessment. However, I have subsequently discovered that it has issued one assessment which related to the transposition into UK law of EC Directive 2000/35/EC on combating late payment in commercial transactions.

Sellafield

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the near-crash of an RAF Hercules transport aircraft into the cooling towers for the Calder Hall nuclear reactors at Sellafield. [165161]

Mr. Timms: My officials have discussed this matter with the site operator BNFL and with the Ministry of Defence. Both have confirmed that no such incident took place.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will place in the Library copies of the annual safeguards inspection reports prepared by Euratom on the B30 nuclear materials storage ponds at Sellafield. [165162]

Nigel Griffiths: The Commission has published reports on Euratom safeguards operations for 1999–2000, 2001 and 2002 (see Department of Trade and Industry Explanatory memoranda 11669/01 COM(2001)436 final, 13397/02 COM(2002)566 final and 16077/03 COM (2003) 764 final respectively, which are available in the Libraries of the House. Commission follow-up of its inspections at individual installations is by letter to the operator concerned. Such letters are however classified by the Commission and we cannot therefore place copies in the Libraries of the House. The reports on specific inspections from which the comments in its follow-up letters are drawn are internal to the commission—and not shared with either the facility operator or Member State authorities concerned.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what quantities of plutonium are held in the B30 nuclear materials storage silo at Sellafield; and what methods are used to verify the plutonium contents in the radioactive wastes contained. [165163]

Nigel Griffiths: For security reasons, we do not reveal information on the quantities of nuclear material held in specific locations (Exemption 1a), information whose disclosure would harm national security or defence (Code of Practice on Access to Government Information). Records exist to show the quantities of nuclear material in spent magnox fuel received at the B30 plant. Material leaving the plant is similarly recorded, and equipment to enable Euratom safeguards verification of fuel rods shipped from the plant was in operation between 1993 and 1998 when such shipments ceased. Information therefore exists on the quantities of waste materials now in the plant but the condition of these materials and the need to minimise radiation exposure means that the activities that can be performed at present to verify this information (including in the course of Euratom safeguards inspections) are limited. Appropriate measurement and verification of the material will however take place as material is removed during the decommissioning of B30.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what recent communications she has received from the European Commission in respect of the application of Euratom nuclear safeguards to the B30 nuclear waste storage plant at Sellafield; [165164]

(2) if she will place in the Library a copy of the letter by Mr. Ian Holt, UK permanent representative to the European Union to the European Commission Director-General for Transport and Energy, dated 8 December 2003, in respect of the application of safeguards verification at the B30 plant at Sellafield. [165174]

Nigel Griffiths: The Commission summarised its safeguards concerns relating to the B30 waste storage plant in a letter to the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative to the European Union dated 13 October 2003. A response to the commission's letter was sent on 8 December 2003, but a copy cannot be placed in the Libraries of the House because the issue is now the subject of legal correspondence between the Commission and the UK. There is a confidentiality agreement between the Commission and Member States that governs the release of such correspondence.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bosnia

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what work has been done to delineate tasks between the EU and NATO in Bosnia once the European Union takes over the Stabilisation Force operation; and if he will make a statement. [165561]

Mr. MacShane: Work continues on the delineation of tasks between the EU and NATO in Bosnia once the Stabilisation Force (SFOR) withdraws. We would expect the continuing but limited NATO role in Bosnia to focus on defence outreach and some operational tasks, including in support of the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, once SFOR withdraws.

European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms

Mr. David Atkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is the Government's policy *(a)* to promote and *(b)* to support the accession of the European Union to the European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms; and if he will make a statement. [165023]

Mr. Rammell: The Government believes that EU accession to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) could bring significant advantages in ensuring that the European Union institutions are externally held to account for human rights breaches, in exactly the same way as member states. But the instrument of EU accession must not detrimentally affect the position of individual EU member states under the ECHR.

European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the 2002 European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights projects to *(a)* campaign against racism in Israel, *(b)* combat discrimination against Palestinian citizens in Israel, *(c)* strengthen the Bedouin community in Israel and

(d) provide emergency legal aid for Palestinian prisoners in the Israeli military detention centres in the West Bank and Gaza Strip; and what his Department's involvement was in each project; [165206]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights *(a)* projects to sponsor masters degrees in Human Rights and Democratisation in 2002 in (i) Palestine, (ii) Lebanon, (iii) Malta, (iv) Libya, (v) Egypt, (vi) Algeria, (vii) Tunisia, (viii) Morocco, (ix) Cyprus, (x) Jordan and (xi) Israel and *(b)* 2002 projects to promote women's rights in (A) Egypt, (B) Jordan, (C) Lebanon, (D) Gaza and (E) the West Bank; and what his Department's involvement was in each project. [165207]

Mr. Rammell: Decisions about the individual projects funded by the European Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights are made by the European Commission and local EC Delegations. They are also responsible for managing and evaluating the projects. The EU Committee on Human Rights and Democracy allocated EU budget resources to projects in third countries and is responsible for evaluating the impact of the fund. The UK is represented on the Committee by officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the UK Permanent Representation to the EU.

Palestine

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect of movement restrictions in the West Bank on the effectiveness of the EU trade agreement with the territories. [161493]

Mr. MacShane: Restrictions on freedom of movement have made it more difficult for Palestinians to take advantage of the European Communities/Palestinian Liberation Organisation interim Agreement. This has contributed to a deep economic crisis. According to the World Bank, 60 per cent. of Palestinians live on less than the UN poverty threshold of US$2.10 a day. The Government and EU partners regularly call on both sides to implement their roadmap obligations, including the easing of restrictions on the movement of persons and goods.

Bali

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Indonesian authorities regarding terrorism in Bali. [165335]

Mr. MacShane: We are in regular contact with the Indonesian authorities on issues relating to terrorism, including in Bali. Through the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Global Opportunities Fund we have provided training in crisis management, aviation security and counter-terrorism legislation. We are also developing a programme of further training for the police. Richard Gozney, then our Ambassador in Jakarta, attended the Bali conference on regional approaches to counter terrorism in February 2004, at which discussions were held further to develop co-operation in counter terrorism. We will continue to work with the Indonesian government against this threat, including through capacity building.

China

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what progress has been made in persuading the Chinese Government to ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. [165264]

Mr. Rammell: At the most recent round of the UK China Human Rights Dialogue in November 2003, the Chinese delegation said that the ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) would be supported by a recently organised inter-ministerial task force.

I regularly raise ICCPR ratification with Chinese interlocutors and stress that the Government attaches great importance to progress in this area.

Correspondence

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to reply to the letter to him of 11 March from Mrs. Pamela Dix, Secretary of UK Families Flight 103, concerning the criminal investigation into the Lockerbie bombing. [164295]

Mr. MacShane: My noble Friend Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean replied on 8 April 2004.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 24 February 2004 with regard to Dr. S. Crowshaw. [164935]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary replied on 29 March.

Cyprus

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 900–01W, on Cyprus, for what reasons it was not Government policy that the ending of Turkish occupation of Cyprus territory should be a precondition for the opening of Turkey's EU accession negotiations; and if he will make a statement. [165073]

Mr. MacShane: The Copenhagen European Council in 1993 set out the criteria which candidates for EU membership need to satisfy before accession. These demanded that "the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights and respect for and protection of minorities, the existence of a functioning market economy as well as the capacity to cope with competitive pressure and market forces within the Union."

The 2003 Accession Partnership between the EU and Turkey called on Turkey to "strongly support efforts to find a comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus problem through the continuation of the United Nations Secretary General's mission of good offices and of negotiations on the basis of his proposals." This Government welcomes the Turkish Government's commitment to finding a settlement on the basis of the UN proposals.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his assessment of the implications of the recent attempted coup in the Democratic Republic of Congo. [165458]

Mr. Mullin: The fighting in Kinshasa in the early hours of 28 March is a reminder of the fragility of the situation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and the need for the international community to remain engaged. We are urging all the groups that make up the transitional government to continue to work together to make the transition a success.

Falkland Islands

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the Falkland Islands 200 mile economic zone. [164188]

Mr. Rammell: The Falkland Islands do not have a 200 mile economic zone.

Beyond the territorial sea of the Falkland Islands there is an interim fishery conservation and management zone, the limits of which are defined in a Proclamation by the Governor of 29 October 1986, and an outer fishery conservation zone, the limits of which are defined in Proclamations of 20 December 1990 and 22 August 1994.

The Falkland Islands Government have jurisdiction in respect of fisheries, conservation of living resources and the protection and preservation of the marine environment in these zones. The zones are referred to in the written statement which I made on 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 81–82WS.

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether there have been recent violations by Argentinian vessels of the Falklands Island 200 mile economic zone. [164265]

Mr. Rammell: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement that I made on this issue on 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 81–82WS.

Iraq

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of levels of *(a)* discrimination against, *(b)* rape of and *(c)* torture of Mandaeans in Iraq. [164028]

Mr. Rammell: A small community of around 500 Mandaeans live in Basra, in the UK area of responsibility. They are represented by Sheikh Raad Gubashi, a Mandaean member of the Interim Council. The CPA office in Basra has not received evidence of discrimination or ill-treatment against them. If any information could be provided we would be willing to investigate.

Discrimination against any Iraqi citizen is forbidden by Article 12 of the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), which was agreed by the Iraqi Governing Council on 8 March. A copy of the TAL has been placed in the Library of the House. The Coalition is working hard with the Iraqis to strengthen the Iraqi security and judiciary sectors, in order to provide security to all Iraqi citizens and safeguard the rights laid out in the TAL.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what evidence he has collated on the use by the former regime of Saddam Hussein of coercion to force the medical profession to conduct amputations as a form of punishment. [165254]

Mr. Rammell: The practice of the former regime of forcing medical professionals to perform punitive amputations has been well-documented by a number of independent sources including Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in Iraq and by the British Medical Journal. A recent survey of medical professionals carried out in Iraq by Physicians for Human Rights has confirmed the prevalence of such coercion. UK and other Coalition nationals working for the Coalition Provisional Authority Office of Human Rights and Transitional Justice are collecting evidence for possible criminal prosecutions of those who ordered the amputations.

Ministerial Conferences

Mr Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many conferences he and his Ministers attended *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* abroad in the year to 29 February 2004; and what the cost was of attending these conferences, broken down by (i) travel costs, (ii) food and drink, (iii) accommodation and (iv) miscellaneous costs. [160797]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 16 March 2004]:* Since 1999 the Government has published an annual list of all visits undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The list includes details of my attendance at overseas conferences. The details for the financial year 2003/04 will be published as soon as possible after 31 March 2004. All ministerial travel is undertaken in line with the rules set out in the Ministerial code and Travel by Ministers. During the period 1 March 2003–29 February 2004, I attended the following conference and meetings, including those of UN, EU or NAQTO formations:

UK

(£)

Date	*Conference*	*Location*	*Travel Costs*	*Food and Drink*	*Accommodation*	*Miscellaneous*
4 March 2003	Enlargement seminar for parliamentarians	Locarno suite, FCO	0	0	0	0
30 April 2003	Seminar with parliamentarians on the future of the Arab world	Lancaster House	0	0	0	0
17 July 2003	Seminar on the future of Europe	Locarno suite, FCO	0	0	0	0
12 July 2003	Progressive governance conference	Hilton, Metropole hotel, London	0	0	0	0
25 November 2003	Address at the IPPR conference	Thistle hotel, Victoria	0	0	0	0

Overseas

Date	*Conference*	*Location*
20–21 March 2003	Europe Council	Brussels, Belgium
16 April 2003	Informal European Council and Signature of the Accession	Athens, Greece
17 April 2003	European Conference	Athens, Greece
2–3 May 2003	Gymnich (informal meeting of EU Foreign Ministers	Rhodes, Greece
19 May 2003	General Affairs and External Relations Council	Brussels, Belgium
22–23 May 2003	G8 Foreign Ministers meeting	Paris, France
3 June 2003	NATO Foreign Ministers meeting	Madrid, Spain
16 June 2003	General Affairs and External Relations Council	Luxembourg
19–21 June 2003	European Council and EU/Western Balkans Summit	Porto Caras, Greece
21 July 2003	General Affairs and External Relations Council	Brussels, Belgium
5–6 September 2003	Gymnich (Informal meeting of EU Foreign Ministers)	Riva del Garda, Italy
13 September 2003	UN "Permanent 5" meeting	Geneva, Switzerland
22–25 September 2003	UNGA (United Nations General Assembly)	New York, USA
4 October 2003	Intergovernmental conference (IGC)	Rome, Italy
13 October 2003	General Affairs and External Relations Council	Luxembourg
16–17 October 2003	European Council	Brussels, Belgium
27 October 2003	ICG Meeting	Brussels, Belgium
17–18 November 2003	General Affairs and External Relations Council and IGC meeting	Brussels, Belgium
28–29 November 2003	Intergovernmental Conference Ministerial Conclave	Naples, Italy
8 December 2003	General and External Relations Council	Brussels, Belgium
12–13 December 2003	European Council	Brussels, Belgium
21 January 2004	Annual meeting of the World Economic Forum	Davos, Switzerland
26 January 2004	General Affairs and External Relations Council	Brussels, Belgium
23 February 2004	General Affairs and External Relations Council	Brussels, Belgium

I have placed the list of conferences or meetings attended by Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers during the period 1 March 2003—February 2004 in the Library of the House.

Ministerial Visits

Richard Burden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the ministerial visits from *(a)* his and *(b)* other Government Departments to (i) Israel and (ii) the Occupied Territories in each of the past 10 years. [163659]

Mr. Rammell: Since 2000, the year in which the second Intifada began, the following ministerial visits have taken place to Israel and the Occupied Territories (OTs):

	Ministerial visit
2000	
29 February to 1 March	Peter Mandelson, Minister for Northern Ireland—Israel
28 to 30 March	Peter Hain, FCO Minister—Israel and OTs
24 to 26 June	David Trimble, Northern Ireland Minister—Israel and OTs
29 to 31 August	Peter Hain, FCO Minister—Israel and OTs
2001	
20 to 22 July	Bed Bradshaw, FCO Minister—Israel and OTs
24 September	Jack Straw, Foreign Secretary—Israel and OTs
1 November	Prime Minister—Israel and OTs
2002	
14 to 17 January	Bed Bradshaw, FCO Minister—Israel and OTs
13–14 February	Jack Straw, Foreign Secretary—Israel and OTs
3 to 4 July	Mike O'Brien, FCO Minister—Israel and OTs
2003	
28 to 31 July	Hilary Benn, DFID Minister—OTs
30 September to 1 October	Baroness Symons, FCO Minister—Israel
2004	
21 to 23 January	Baroness Symons, FCO Minister—OTs
21 to 26 February	Stephen Twigg, DFES Minister—Israel and OTs

Records prior to 2000 are not held centrally and drawing up a comprehensive list dating back to 1994 would incur disproportionate costs.

Mr. Maajid Nawaz

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 23 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 750W, on Mr. Maajid Nawaz, what representations the Government has made to the Egyptian Government since the verdict of 25 March 2004 regarding Maajid Nawaz. [164885]

Mr. Mullin: Our ambassador in Cairo raised the case with the Egyptian Foreign Minister on 25 March. I assure the hon. Member that we will continue to make representations, where appropriate, to the Egyptian Government, about any concerns we may have about Maajid Nawaz's case.

Nigeria

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the fairness of the Nigerian local council elections; and if he will make a statement. [165427]

Mr. Mullin: Local government elections took place in Nigeria on 27 March. The elections were another important step towards enhancing democratic accountability in Nigeria. They were, however, long delayed and did not take place in all 36 states. There were consistent reports of polling irregularities, intimidation and violence. We hope that steps will be taken to rectify these incidences of malpractice using the due process of law. We are ready to offer our support to the Nigerian authorities in improving the process.

North Korea

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent

discussions he has had with the Government of North Korea concerning its alleged export of nuclear technology; and if he will make a statement. [165476]

Mr. MacShane: The Government, at both official and ministerial level, take every opportunity to raise proliferation issues with the Government of the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

The most recent such discussion was during a call on the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, my hon. Friend the Member for Harlow (Mr. Rammell), by Mr Choe Thae Bok, Chairman of the Supreme People's Assembly, during the latter's visit to the UK in March this year.

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps have been taken by the United Kingdom to encourage countries not signed up to the Non-Proliferation Treaty to reduce their nuclear arsenal. [165745]

Mr. MacShane: The United Kingdom consistently calls on Israel, India and Pakistan to join the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty as non-nuclear weapon states. The complete abandonment and dismantling of any nuclear weapon programmes would be required before their accession to the Treaty.

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps the United Kingdom plans to take over the next 12 months to facilitate global compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. [165746]

Mr. MacShane: The United Kingdom continues to stress the utmost importance of compliance with the Non-Proliferation Treaty. We will continue to work with our European partners in the framework of the EU Common Position on universality as well as with other countries and the International Atomic Energy Agency to encourage global compliance with the Treaty and the adoption of the Additional Protocol.

Passports

Mr. Davidson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many residents in each British Overseas Territory have applied for British passports since the new rules were introduced in May 2002; how many applicants have been successful; and if he will make a statement. [164968]

Mr. Mullin: The number of residents in each British Overseas Territory who have successfully applied for passports as British citizens since May 2002 are as follows:

Anguilla—3,776
British Virgin Islands—3,426
Cayman Islands—2,460
Falkland Islands—79 (since 2004)
Gibraltar—2,595
Montserrat—1,290
St. Helena—586, and its dependency Ascension Island—435
Turks and Caicos Islands—304
Tristan da Cunha—164
Bermuda—3,709
Pitcairn—8.

We do not hold statistics for unsuccessful applications and cannot provide details, though numbers will be low since most applicants produce passports confirming their status as British Overseas Territories citizens.

Saudi Arabia

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice he has given the Secretary of State for Home Affairs in relation to applications for asylum from Saudi members of the Committee for the Defence of Legitimate Rights resident in the United Kingdom. [164677]

Mr. Rammell: All asylum claims are judged on their individual merits. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office answers enquiries from the Home Office case by case.

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on peaceful democratic reform in Saudi Arabia; and if he will make a statement. [164678]

Mr. Rammell: We encourage peaceful reform and change in Saudi Arabia.

Special Advisers

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many special advisers to his Department attended conferences *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* abroad in the year to 29 February; and what the cost was of attending these conferences, broken down by (i) travel costs, (ii) food and drink, (iii) accommodation and (iv) miscellaneous costs. [160798]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 17 March 2004]:* The two special advisers have attended the following conferences:

Date	*Conference and location*	*Travel costs (£)*	*Food and drink (£)*	*Accommodation (£)*	*Miscellaneous (£)*
Michael Williams					
2003					
22–25 September	United Nations General Assembly (New York)	3,793. 40	170.00	937.40	0
27 November	Ditchley Park Seminar	48.00	n/a	n/a	0
2004					
20–21 January	World Economic Forum (Davos)	RAF flight	3.30	Not yet available	0
Ed Owen					
19–21 June	European Council/EU-Western Balkans Summit (Porto Caras, Greece)	RAF flight	80	Not yet available	0
29 August	IGC Meeting (Rome)	RAF flight	n/a	n/a	0

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent attempted coup in the Sudan; and what his assessment is of its implications for the future of the Popular Congress Party and its leader Dr Hassan al-Turabi. [165457]

Mr. Mullin: We understand that the Government of Sudan has arrested a number of military officers as well as officials of the opposition Popular Congress party, including its leader, Dr Hassan al-Turabi. The Government of Sudan has announced that the individuals were planning a coup. It appears that the offices of the Popular Congress Party have been closed.

Terrorism

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he has made *(a)* an assessment of and *(b)* a response to the recommendations of the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association Conference on Anti-terrorism held in Bangladesh in October 2003. [165159]

Mr. Mullin: The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) held its annual conference in Bangladesh in October 2003. The subjects discussed included anti-terrorism legislation and the action plan developed by the Commonwealth Ministerial Committee on Terrorism, in which the UK plays an active role. Heads of Commonwealth Governments, who met in Nigeria in December 2003, endorsed this plan and recognised the important work the Commonwealth Secretariat is carrying out in assisting member countries to comply with UN Security Council Resolution 1373.

The CPA has not sought a response from my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary to the report of its conference. We welcome all commitments that contribute to anti-terrorism, including those made by Commonwealth governments and organisations.

Uganda

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of *(a)* internally displaced persons in Teso in North East Uganda and *(b)* the number of internally displaced persons camps in Teso. [165515]

Mr. Mullin: The number of internally displaced persons in the Teso region is estimated to be 380.000. We do not have a precise figure for the number of camps as the situation is very fluid.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Israel (Bombings)

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) whether the Government has received results obtained by Israeli scientists on samples removed from the sites of the bombings on 26 July 1994 at the Israeli Embassy and Balfour House; [160930]

(2) what forensic reports he has received on *(a)* the results of tests by Israeli scientists carried out on samples removed from the sites of the bombing of the Israeli Embassy in London on 26 July 1994 and *(b)* police and forensic reports by scientists on the type and amount of explosive used, and the trigger mechanisms used, in the bombings. [160928]

Mr. Blunkett: Scientists from Israel and the Forensic Explosives Laboratory met to discuss findings following their investigations, but reports were not exchanged. The issue of forensics was subsequently covered extensively and in detail at the trial.

In answer to the most recent previous questions about this issue I refer my hon. Friend to the answers I gave my hon. Friend, Member for Islington North (Jeremy Corbyn) on 3 June 2003, *Official Report*, column 100W, and the answer given to you on 15 May 2003, *Official Report*, column 431W. I arranged for my officials to place a copy of transcripts of the original trial as are available in the Library. I apologise for the delay, but this is on order and will be available in approximately eight weeks.

Certain information was not disclosed at the trial or subsequent appeals and cannot now be divulged owing to the Public Interest Immunity certificates granted by the courts.

"Reducing Crime: Changing Lives"

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which bodies his Department consulted prior to the publication of Reducing Crime—Changing Lives. [163106]

Paul Goggins: Since the review of Correctional Services was announced in the White Paper 'Justice for all' published in July 2002 the Home Secretary has sought and continues to seek views from all stakeholders on a number of issues relating to the effective management of offenders.

Administrative Officers

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average cost in salary of employing an administrative officer in his Department for one year at current pay levels was in the last year for which figures are available; and what the equivalent cost of covering an AO post with temporary agency staff was in the same period. [163576]

Fiona Mactaggart: The average salary costs of employing an Administrative Officer for one year at current pay levels is £18,234, including employers National Insurance contributions and superannuation costs. The typical cost of covering an AO post with temporary agency staff equates to an annual cost of £14,208.

Animal Testing

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many animal experiments were conducted in connection with *(a)* household cleaning products and *(b)* ingredients used in household cleaning products in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [165436]

Caroline Flint: *(a)* In the statistics which are collected and published by the Home Office it is not possible to identify household cleaning products separately from other products which are used in the household. The numbers of procedures for testing the safety of such products, in each year since 1997, are shown in table 25 of 'Statistics of Scientific Procedures on Living Animals, Great Britain', 2002, a copy of which is in the Library.

For ease of reference the numbers of procedures for safety testing of substances used in the household are shown in the table.

Scientific procedures on living animals for the purpose of safety testing products for use in the household, 1997–2002 Great Britain

	Number of procedures
1997	2,026
1998	1,477
1999	341
2000	1,242
2001	590
2002	1,032

(b) It is not possible to identify procedures performed for the safety testing of ingredients used in household cleaning products since these substances are likely to have other uses and the procedures will be reported under the category which is most relevant to the likely use of, and exposure to, the substance in question.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the use of the LD50 test on animals for the testing of pharmaceuticals in the UK. [165449]

Caroline Flint: Guidance produced by the International Conference on Harmonisation of Technical Requirements for the registration of Pharmaceuticals for Human Use (ICH) does not recommend LD50 tests on animals, and the Home Office does not license LD50 tests for such agents.

Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what resources have been made available to the police to meet their additional responsibilities under the Anti-Terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002, *(c)* 2003 and *(d)* 2004. [162623]

Ms Blears: This information is not available in the form requested. However the Government grant to support overall police spending will be almost £10.1 billion in 2004–05 which represents an increase of £2.3 billion or a 30 per cent. increase since 2000–01. This provides for a record number of police officers with officer numbers at 138,155 in December 2003—an increase of 5,887 since December 2002.

Within this overall grant we have provided substantial additional funding to the Police Service in England and Wales to enable them to respond to the increased threat from international terrorism since September 2001:

	£ million
2002–03	63
2003–04	59
2004–05	84

The figure for 2004–05 includes an additional £15 million of funding for Police Special Branches which was announced on 19 March.

ASBOs

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many breaches of anti-social behaviour orders were subject to court enforcement in Langbaurgh police basic command unit in 2003; [164447]

(2) how many people were made the subject of anti-social behaviour orders in Langbaurgh police basic command unit in 2003. [164448]

Ms Blears: The Home Office has not received any notification of anti-social behaviour orders (ASBOs) issued, from 1 January 2003 up to 30 September 2003 (latest available), within the unitary authority area of Redcar and Cleveland, which is covered by the Langbaurgh police district.

Breach data for 2003 will be available in the autumn. Data on breaches of ASBOs successfully prosecuted are currently available for the period 1 June 2000 up to 31 December 2002. During this period in the Cleveland Magistrates Courts Committee (MCC) area, in which the local government area of Redcar and Cleveland is located, the total number of breaches successfully prosecuted is seven.

Aspect Court

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when since 1 January 2003 he *(a)* visited Aspect Court and *(b)* met officials from Aspect Court. [161128]

Mr. Blunkett: I have not visited Aspect Court since 1 January 2003. Neither have I, to the best of my knowledge, met with any officials from Aspect Court. Senior Immigration and Nationality Directorate officials do, of course, have regular meetings with staff from Aspect Court.

I did, however, open nearby Foundry House in November 2002 and met with a number of officials on that occasion.

Asylum Appeals

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much time is given to applicants for political asylum to prepare their appeal after the receipt of a letter of refusal from the Immigration and Nationality Directorate; and if he will make a statement. [164213]

Mr. Browne: If an applicant for asylum is refused the time limits for lodging appeals are contained in the Immigration and Asylum Appeals (Procedure) Rules 2003 and the Immigration and Asylum Appeals (Fast Track Procedure) Rules 2003. These time limits do not start to run until the decision from the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) has been served in accordance with the Immigration (Notices) Regulations 2003. Under these Regulations, if notice is given to the applicant's representatives, it is taken to have been given to the applicant. A summary of these limits is set out as follows.

If the asylum claim is certified by the Secretary of State as clearly unfounded within the meaning of section 94 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002, the applicant may not bring an appeal while still in the United Kingdom. He or she may appeal from outside the United Kingdom, and has 28 days from his or her departure from the UK to lodge their appeal.

If the claim is not certified as clearly unfounded, the time limits to give notice of appeal are as follows:

(a) if the person is in the United Kingdom and is in detention under the Immigration Acts, he or she has five days to give notice of appeal;

(b) if the person is in the United Kingdom, but not in detention, he or she has 10 days to give notice of appeal;

(c) if the person is subject to the Fast Track process, he or she has two days to give notice of the appeal.

The notice of appeal is lodged with the Immigration and Nationality Directorate.

The time limits relate to lodging the notice of appeal. The time the person has to prepare for the actual appeal hearing will depend on when the Immigration Appellate Authority receives the appeal and lists it for hearing.

The relevant procedural rules also make provision for cases where the notice of appeal is given outside the applicable time limit.

Asylum Applications (Burmese)

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for asylum from Burmese people were *(a)* received and *(b)* refused in 2002–03. [164451]

Mr. Browne: The number of Burmese nationals (excluding dependants) claiming asylum and initial decisions on asylum applications for 2002–03 are shown in the table. Initial decisions do not necessarily relate to applications made in the same period. 75 per cent. of initial decisions made in 2002–03 on applications from Burmese nationals were refusals.

Asylum applications[1] received in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, and initial decisions[2] on applications, April 2002 to March 2003, nationals of Burma

Burma (Myanmar)—April 2002 to March 2003	*Number*
Applications	
Total	85
Port	15
In country	70
Decisions	
Total decisions	85
Grants of asylum	20
Grants of ELR	*
Total refusals[3]	65

[1] Provisional figures rounded to nearest five, with '*' = one or two.
[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome of appeals or other subsequent decisions.
[3] May include some refusals under non compliance grounds.

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Burmese failed asylum seekers were deported to Burma in the year 2002–03. [164452]

Mr. Browne: Estimates of the number of Burmese nationals who had sought asylum at some stage and who were removed from the UK in the financial year 2002–03 are shown in the table. These figures include persons departing 'voluntarily' after the initiation of enforcement action against them, removals to a safe third country and persons leaving under Assisted Voluntary Returns Programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration.

Removals and voluntary[1] departures of principal asylum applicants (excluding dependants): April 2002 to March 2003[2,3,4]

	April 2002 to March 2003
Burma (Myanmar)	5

[1] Including persons departing "voluntarily" after enforcement action had been initiated against them.
[2] May include removals to a safe third country.
[3] Data are estimated due to data quality issues on the IND databases.
[4] Provisional figures.
Note:
Data are rounded to nearest five.

Information on the destination of these removals and whether they were forcibly removed or departed voluntarily is not available, except by examination of individual case files at disproportionate cost.

All asylum (and human rights) claims made by Burmese nationals are considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Should a claim be refused and any appeal before the independent Immigration Appellate Authority be unsuccessful, it means that for that individual it is safe to return.

In making decisions about removing failed asylum seekers, the Home Office takes full account of up to date information from a wide range of sources about the situation in the country of origin. These sources include intergovernmental organisations (such as the UN), governmental sources (including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and human rights organisations (for example Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch).

If an individual asylum seeker establishes a need for international protection they would not be returned.

Asylum Removals

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons applicants for asylum who were unsuccessful in 2003 were not removed. [164165]

Mr. Browne: There are a number of reasons to explain why some people whose asylum applications were unsuccessful in 2003 have not yet been removed. The removal of a person is complex and several factors have to be taken into account before we are able to effect removal. These factors include assessing the various factors relating to an individual's removal and overcoming various barriers to removal, such as documentation issues and a lack of co-operation from receiving countries.

Every effort is made to remove people as quickly as possible after refusal or the exhaustion of appeal rights. And we are taking action to overcome these obstacles. We have negotiated four new returns agreements in the last seven months, and are progressively extending biometrics in visas for countries where we know there is a problem. In the Asylum and Immigration Bill We are proposing penalties of up to two years for those who destroy their documents or won't cooperate with redocumentation, simplifying the appeals process to stop people lodging multiple appeals to frustrate removal, and encouraging voluntary removal by ending benefits for those whose claims have failed.

We are also expanding detention space available and increasing investment in the enforcement capability of the Immigration Service with staffing increased from 1,677 in April 2002 to 2,463 in November 2003. We remain committed to making every effort remove and detect those people who have no right to be here.

Asylum Seekers (Children)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions in the past 12 months unaccompanied child asylum seekers have been detained; and what the average length of time of detention is. [164332]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of unaccompanied asylum seeking children detained over the last 12 months is not available.

Unaccompanied minors are not normally detained and would only be so in exceptional circumstances, and then only overnight, where this was considered necessary for the safety and security of the minor while alternative care arrangements were made.

Information on the number of people detained solely under Immigration Act powers as at 27 March 2004 will be published on the Home Office website on 25 May. www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Bail Hostels (Peterborough)

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the nine sex offenders until recently housed at the Peterborough bail hostel next to St. George's School have been removed; and if he will give an undertaking that they will not be returned there. [165189]

Paul Goggins: Admissions to, and discharges from, all approved premises including at Peterborough occur on a regular basis and for a variety of reasons. I am unable to give personal details about any individual, current or past residents. Approved premises play a key role in the Government's strategy for supporting offenders after release from prison and ensuring effective public protection.

Boarding Schools

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many boarding schools with charitable status the Charity Commissioners have inspected in each of the last six financial years; and if he will estimate the cost; [164260]

(2) in how many boarding schools the Charity Commissioners have identified significant defects in each of the last six financial years. [164261]

Fiona Mactaggart: These are matters for the Charity Commission as the Government Department responsible for the regulation of charities in England and Wales. The Chief Charity Commissioner will write to the right hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

BRACE

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when the policy known as BRACE was introduced; [161130]

(2) when Ministers authorised the treatment of work permit applications under BRACE; [161131]

(3) to which categories of entry applicants BRACE originally applied; and when it was extended to applicants under European Community Association agreements. [161132]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 12 March 2004]:* BRACE was applied to backlogs of general casework applications submitted by people who were already in the United Kingdom and who had already been pre-cleared at a visa issuing office overseas or examined by an immigration officer at port. These would have included backlogs of in-country applications under the European Community Association Agreements. BRACE did not extend to work permit applications. As regards the date of introduction and the authorisation of the guidance, I refer the right hon. Member to the note entitled "Summary of longstanding practice in Managing Longstanding Immigration Backlogs" placed in the Library on 29 March.

Carter Review

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date Patrick Carter was commissioned to undertake the review of the correctional service. [164496]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 30 March 2004]* Patrick Carter was commissioned to undertake the review of Correctional Services on 17 March 2003.

Communications Directorate

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff the Communications Directorate of the Home Office had in each year from 1997–98 to 2005–06 (planned); what the running costs were in each year; and if he will make a statement. [156706]

Mr. Blunkett: The purpose of the Communication Directorate (CD) is to take a strategic overview of Home Office communication activity. This entails managing a wide range of communication roles from the strategic level to front line delivery; also included is management of the Direct Communications unit, which is responsible for answering all public and ministerial inquiries by telephone, mail and email.

CD unit organisation and staffing at 1 March 2004

	Number
Directors office	2
Direct communications	88
Marketing and strategic communications	55
Information services	38
Internal communications	23
Press office	51
Total	257

The requested breakdown of expenditure is as follows:

	Staff numbers	*Communication directorate running costs (£)*
1997–98	88	4,102,943
1998–99	92	3,960,185
1999–2000	90	5,580,806
2000–01	117	7,699,620
2001–02	153	9,242,712
2002–03	226.5	9,086,614
2003–04	260	11,682,504
2004–05	[1]260	[1]11,098,376
2005–06	[1]260	[1]11,098,376

[1] Provisional figures.

Direct Communications Unit has absorbed functions from other parts of the Home Office, including telephones, front of house, ministerial correspondence and public inquiries.

A review of the press office in 2000 agreed an expansion to meet the growing demands of a 24 hour 365 day media. At the same time there was development of the Home Office Internet site and the internal Intranet to communicate with 18,000 staff who have access. The function of internal communications did not exist pre 1999.

Coroners

Mr. Fabian Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether coroners have the power to delay the release of bodies because no funeral arrangements have been made. [159970]

Paul Goggins: Coroners are not empowered to delay releasing the body of a deceased person solely because no funeral arrangements have been made. However, if the persons to whom the body should be released cannot agree on the mode of disposal or who should arrange the funeral the coroner will be entitled to retain the body pending resolution of the dispute.

Correspondence

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the letter sent to him by the hon. Member for Torbay on 29 August 2003 with regard to Mr. Wyman of Preston Down Road, Paignton. [164039]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 26 March 2004]:* I wrote to the hon. Member on 7 April 2004.

CPS

Mr. Grieve: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Attorney General about the renaming of the Crown Prosecution Service; and if he will make a statement. [159299]

Mr. Blunkett: The Home Secretary and the Attorney General have regular meetings to discuss joint policy matters.

The idea of renaming the Crown Prosecution Service was initially put forward by the Attorney General last year.

Criminal Record Checks

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for criminal records checks have been outstanding for more than three weeks, broken down by sector. [163336]

Ms Blears: As at 29 February 2004, there are 30,933 applications that are over three weeks old and are currently being processed by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). This represents approximately four days' work for the Bureau. Approximately 60,000 other applications are over three weeks old and with the customer. This figure is not included in the total because the Bureau is unable to process these applications on the basis that it is awaiting further information from the applicant. In many cases, the Bureau will not receive information from the applicant and the application is suspended, pending withdrawal.

Information is not available to provide the breakdown by sector sought by the hon Member for Winchester. Disclosure applications are processed in the order in which they are received and no sector is given priority over any other. The CRB computer system was not designed to capture information in the format requested, because there was no anticipated need to do so. Although the business sector of the Registered Body that countersigns the application is recorded on receipt, this is to enable the Bureau to undertake trend analysis. Any conclusions based on this would not be expected to provide the hon. Member for Winchester with the information he seeks, because it would not evaluate the performance of one sector against another during processing.

Overall, the Criminal Records Bureau has been achieving and in some cases exceeding its public service standards since last June. The Agency is issuing 83.76 per cent. of allDisclosures within three weeks and 91–92 per cent. within public service standards.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions applicant details supplied by the Criminal Records Bureau to the police have led to conviction details being matched mistakenly with an applicant. [163337]

Ms Blears: The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) does not provide applicant details to the police during the matching process and the answer to the hon. Member for Winchester's question is none. The Bureau uses an extract of the Police National Computer (PNC) to compare the personal details that have been provided by the applicant against existing PNC records. From 1 January 2003 to 29 February 2004, the CRB has matched 193 Disclosure applicants to conviction information held on PNC, which have subsequently

been found to be incorrect. The total number of applications processed by CRB during the same period is 2.66 million.

In some circumstances, applicants' details are similar and sometimes identical to people who have a criminal record. There are cases where an individual has given an applicant's personal details to police following criminal activity in an effort to avoid having a police record. The Disclosure itself informs applicants of a process whereby they can challenge or "dispute" the information presented on their Disclosure. The CRB will then liaise with the police to ensure the correct details are recorded. In some circumstances, where it is impossible to dissociate a person from a conviction record, the applicant is asked to undergo fingerprinting for elimination purposes.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how many applications for *(a)* standard disclosures and *(b)* enhanced disclosures are currently unissued six weeks after the original application; and what the reasons are for delays; [163904]

(2) what the latest performance figures are for the Criminal Records Bureau with regard to applications for *(a)* standard disclosures and *(b)* enhanced disclosures. [163905]

Ms Blears: As at 20 March 2004, the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) has a total of 1,196 applications awaiting completion after six weeks. I am unable to provide a breakdown by Disclosure type as requested because the information is not available from the CRB systems.

The performance figures for February 2004 are as follows:

205,000 Disclosures have been issued during the month;

90 per cent. of Standard Disclosures were issued within two weeks;

90 per cent. of enhanced Disclosures were issued within four weeks;

Over 3.4 million Disclosures have now been issued since the start of the service.

Each application that is received by the CRB is progressed individually through the system and delays can occur at any point in the process. The CRB does not record centrally the reasons why individual applications have been delayed and to provide the hon. Member with the information as requested, would require a manual inspection of each of the 1,196 applications. However, the most common causes for an application being delayed are:

Applications delayed due to a high volume of cases awaiting checks at Local Police Forces.

Applications involving complex casework and checks from numerous Police Forces;

Application forms being submitted to the CRB containing incomplete or inconsistent information;

Applications stalling within the CRB automated systems due to technical errors.

Deed Poll Name Changes

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures are in place to ensure that, when an individual changes his or her name by deed poll, the individual's original name is retained in criminal records data; and if he will make a statement. [146231]

Ms Blears: Details of convictions for recordable offences are recorded on the Police National Computer (PNC).

Criminal records on PNC are retained under the name by which they were first entered on the system, together with information about other names which the subject of a record is known to use or to have used.

Drug Testing

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his statement of 14 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 277WH, on drug testing, what plans he has to market the national workplace initiative; and what budget has been set aside for the campaign. [161180]

Caroline Flint: Marketing the National Workplace Initiative has been a priority for the last six months within phase 2 (September 2003 to March 2004) of the workplace initiative. Phase 2 has focused on providing key business tools to help employers develop robust drug and alcohol workplace policies based on best practice, and to raise awareness on substance misuse. The key tools have been employer guidelines, employee leaflets and providing marketing and substance misuse training to DAT nominated business trainers to enhance the way they engage with businesses. Other marketing tools include rolling out the West Sussex DAT 'E-online training tool' as a National Initiative and creating a business focused website at www.businessengagement.com. Overall these marketing initiatives will lead to greater awareness of the National Workplace Initiative and will encourage more employers to write a workplace policy. The budget set aside for marketing was £100,000 and this has covered all the printing and production costs of 15,000 employer guidelines, plus the costs of building a website and rolling out the West Sussex DAT training tool.

Electoral Fraud

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* prosecutions and *(b)* convictions there were for electoral fraud in ea[illegible] year since 1994. [165100]

Paul Goggins: The information collected centrally by the Home Office is limited to various fraud-related offences under the Representation of the People Act 1983 and is shown in the table. Similar offences, under other fraud and forgery provisions, cannot be separately identified.

Persons[1] proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts of various fraud related offences under the Representation of the People Act 1983, England and Wales 1994 to 2002

	Tampering with nomination and ballot papers etc., making false declarations as to election expenses, bribery, treating, undue influence and personation offences	
	Persons proceeded against	*Persons found guilty*
1994	1	2
1995	12	14
1996	—	—
1997	9	5

Persons[1] proceeded against at magistrates courts and found guilty at all courts of various fraud related offences under the Representation of the People Act 1983, England and Wales 1994 to 2002

	Tampering with nomination and ballot papers etc., making false declarations as to election expenses, bribery, treating, undue influence and personation offences	
	Persons proceeded against	*Persons found guilty*
1998	7	6
1999	3	5
2000[2]	2	1
2001	16	10
2002	1	1

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis.
[2] Excluding any cases in Staffordshire.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

European Community Action Programme

Mr. Cash: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much each body funded under the European Community Action Programme received in grants in each of the last five years; how much was received by branches of each body in the UK in each year; and on what criteria decisions on making grants are based. [161396]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 17 March 2004]:* This is not a question any Government Department can answer fully at this time.

Unfortunately, the Commission will not undertake an evaluation of the programme up until the end of 2003, as this was not built into the funding until now. It was impractical to carry out an evaluation because this was Commission funding, which member states have no involvement in or oversight of and the information needed to carry out such an evaluation is unavailable.

A list of bodies that received past funding from the programme and the amounts these bodies received are in the letter of 3 March from myself to the Chairman of European Scrutiny Committee and attached spreadsheet which has been placed in the Library.

There will be a full evaluation of the grants starting in 2004.

The grant process and criteria for decision making are described in the proposal for the establishment of the European Community Action Programme which has been placed in the Library.

Focus Groups/Polls

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of total expenditure by his Department on *(a)* focus groups and *(b)* opinion polls in each year from 1995–96 to 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [162751]

Fiona Mactaggart: Detailed information in the form requested is not held centrally in the finance system of the Core Home Office. It could be provided only at a disproportion cost.

The Home Office is committed to obtaining best value for money and wants to hear what people have to say about new policies and ideas. Contracts for research through focus groups and opinions polls are let in accordance with agreed procurement procedures.

The Home Office makes extensive use of research to inform the development, delivery and evaluation of policy.

Girl Prisoners

Claire Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many girls aged *(a)* 15 years, *(b)* 16 years and *(c)* 17 years are being held in prison. [163038]

Paul Goggins: On 31 January 2004 there were no girls aged 15 or 16 years and 55 girls aged 17 years being held in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales.

Guilty Pleas

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will bring section 144 of the Criminal Justice Act 2003 into force as a matter of urgency. [162984]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 23 March 2004]:* Section 144, which provides for timely guilty pleas to be recognised by a reduction in sentence, re-enacts section 152 of the Powers of Criminal Courts (Sentencing) Act 2000, which was itself a re-enactment of section 48 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994. No date has yet been set for section 144 to be brought into force.

On a related subject, Sir Robin Auld recommended that there should be a clearer tariff of discounts for early guilty please, backed up by a system of advance indication of likely sentence. The tariff question is being taken forward by the Sentencing Advisory Panel, which issued a consultation paper last year, and sentence indication will be dealt with non-legislatively.

Home Detention Curfews

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether risk of re-offending is a criterion for not granting release under the Home Detention Curfew Scheme. [165188]

Paul Goggins: Yes. Prisoners must not be released on Home Detention Curfew (HDC) if there is a pattern of offending which indicates a likelihood of re-offending during the HDC period.

Howard League

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the benefits to the Prison Service are of its joint project with the Howard League. [164351]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service supports the Howard League's proposal to open a printing workshop at HMP the Mount. If the plan is successful the workshop will be self-financing and employ up to 11 prisoners on the minimum wage.

The workshop will benefit the Prison Service in helping develop the resettlement agenda; provide constructive activity for prisoners; and, provide an excellent opportunity to combine voluntary sector ideals with production workshop activity.

Illegal Immigration

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons are on duty on a full-time basis to stop and search vehicles for suspected illegal immigrants at the port of Immingham. [162824]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 23 March 2004]:* There are no dedicated Immigration Service staff on full-time duty at the port of Immingham. Staff from Humberside International Airport and Hull port attend incidents at Immingham port as required.

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are in place to prevent the entry of illegal immigrants through the port of Immingham. [162825]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 23 March 2004]:* The United Kingdom Immigration Service is working in close co-operation with both Her Majesty's Customs and Excise and Humberside Police to combat illegal immigration through Immingham docks. The Immigration Service's Mobile Freight Search Team (MFST) is regularly deployed at Immingham when intelligence analysis suggests that this is necessary.

Such operations are undertaken by a team of four or five immigration officers from the MFST who are specialists in freight search techniques and who are assisted by one or more Humberside officers who have local intelligence and operational knowledge. MFST and Humberside immigration staff continue to work closely with Immingham carriers to improve checking systems in Belgium and Holland and so reduce the risk of the port being targeted by potential illegal immigrants. The programme to install freight screening and detection equipment overseas provides for deployment at feeder ports serving UK Channel and North Sea ports including Immingham.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted for employing illegal immigrants in each year since 1997. [163140]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number employers in the UK who were prosecuted for employing illegal immigrants is not available and therefore information on the numbers of these employers successfully prosecuted is not available.

However, information on persons proceeded against for employing a person subject to immigration control is shown in the table.

Number of persons proceeded against and those found guilty of offences under section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, England and Wales 1997 to 2002

Offence description/ Statute	*[1]Person proceeded against*	*Number of offences involved*	*[2]Persons found guilty*
Employing a person subject to immigration control/Asylum and Immigration Act 1996 section 8			
1997[3]	—	—	—
1998[3]	1	1	1
1999[3]	4	23	1
2000[3]	10	32	4
2001[3]	5	65	1
2002	2	22	1

[1] Principal immigration offence basis.
[2] Indicates that a substantive penalty has been imposed on a non-immigration offence dealt with at the same time.
[3] Data have been revised since they were published in the command paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2001".

Information on those people proceeded against under the Immigration Acts between 1997 and 2002 was published on 27 November 2003 in the command paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2002" (Cm 6053), a copy of which can be found in the Library of the House. Comparable statistics for 2003 will be published later this year in the command paper "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom 2003".

The government is taking action to tackle the employment of illegal workers. It has increased the number of enforcement operations, enhanced powers for immigration officers and expanded opportunities for people to work legally in the UK, paying taxes and contributing.

But business must also play its part in tackling this problem—by making rigorous checks on the documentation of potential employees, and these changes to the Section 8 regulations will make it easier for business to comply.

Most employers want to comply with the law, but in order to deter to those who may not, we are currently considering raising the penalty that complicit employers may face.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the results from the research into data collection methods for assessing the size of the UK's illegal population will be available. [164333]

Mr. Browne: The research commissioned is a review of the methods used in other countries to estimate their illegally resident populations. It is not restricted to data collection methods but also encompasses a review of data sources, an explanation and appraisal of the methods of calculation of estimates, and an appraisal of the applicability of these methods for use in the UK.

This work is still on-going. Data sources and availability are currently being investigated in the light of one of the possible methods the review is uncovering.

It is therefore not possible at this stage to estimate when this work will be completed though we will aim to publish the results as soon as practicable.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the number of failed asylum seekers remaining in the UK. [164334]

Mr. Browne: Information on the total number of failed asylum seekers currently in the UK is not available. Some applicants may leave the United Kingdom without informing the Immigration Service.

The Government have commissioned research into the methods used in other countries to estimate the overall size of the illegal population including failed asylum seeker, in order to define methods appropriate for the UK.

The work required is challenging because, by definition, illegal migrants fall outside of official statistics and are therefore difficult to measure. People illegally present in the UK are also motivated to ensure they remain hidden, which is a challenge to conducting research.

IND Correspondence

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Immigration and Nationality Directorate will re-send correspondence relating to case T27 1597 that was sent, and returned, on 5 March. [164212]

Mr. Browne: In relation to case T27 1597, a decision notice was sent to the applicant's last notified representatives by recorded delivery on 4 March 2004. On 12 March, the Immigration and Nationality Directorate was advised that the representatives no longer represented the applicant and they would return the notice and related documents. By 26 March, the original notice not having been returned, a further decision notice was sent recorded delivery to the applicant at her home address.

Juveniles

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many children with an open F2052SH have been placed in *(a)* segregation and *(b)* special cells in each juvenile prison in the last five years. [165401]

Paul Goggins: This information is not held centrally and could not be obtained without disproportionate cost.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many adjudications involving juvenile girls in Bullwood Hall prison in each month since January 2003 have found them guilty of a misdemeanour. [165402]

Paul Goggins: The information is set out in the table.

Month	*Number*
2003	
January	9
February	44
March	24
April	17
May	25
June	24
July	17
August	21
September	34
October	35
November	16
December	9
2004	
January	14
February	7
March	11

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many juvenile girls in Bullwood Hall prison have been adjudicated on for incidents of violence in each month since January 2002. [165403]

Paul Goggins: The information is given in the table.

	Number
2002	
January	5
February	4
March	4
April	0
May	3
June	7
July	2
August	0
September	2
October	7
November	0
December	1
2003	
January	1
February	2
March	10
April	0
May	9
June	8
July	2
August	6
September	8
October	1
November	2
December	1
2004	
January	4
February	4
March	5

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many juvenile girls and women prisoners have had their babies taken from them at birth in each of the last five years. [165405]

Paul Goggins: The decision on whether it is necessary to take a baby away from its mother at birth is made by Social Services in the light of their assessment of what is in the best interest of the child.

The Prison Service does not keep statistics on these decisions.

Kurdish Asylum Seekers

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the treatment of Kurdish asylum seekers returned to Iran. [163131]

Mr. Browne: If an individual is unsuccessful in his application and in any appeal they make to the independent Immigration Appellate Authority we consider that it is safe for that individual to be removed to Iran.

In considering claims the Home Office takes full account of up to date information from a wide range of sources about the situation in the country of origin. These sources include intergovernmental organisations (such as the UN), governmental sources (including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and human rights organisations (for example Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch).

Life Tariffs

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in England and Wales were *(a)* serving a natural life tariff and *(b)* designated not for release in each of the last 10 years. [163280]

Paul Goggins: The number of prisoners in England and Wales who were serving a whole life tariff in each of the last 10 years is given as follows:

Number of persons serving a whole life:

1994—31
1995—32
1996—32
1997—31
1998—23
1999—23
2000—23
2001—22
2002—22
2003—21
2004—20

The number of determinate cases considered by the Parole Board and the number recommended for parole is given in table 10.1 of the publication 'Prison Statistics England and Wales', a copy of which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Maxine Carr

Mr. Paice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what contacts have been allowed between Maxine Carr and representatives of the media while she is in prison. [155865]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 23 February 2004]:* It is not Prison Service policy to comment publicly on individual prisoners. I will write to the hon. Member.

Ministerial Speeches

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many speeches he made between 9 June 2003 and 1 February 2004; and where a copy of each speech can be obtained. [156146]

Mr. Blunkett: During the period 9 June 2003 and 1 February 2004, I made 16 keynote speeches outside Parliament and various other informal speeches. Copies of some speeches are published on the Home Office web site http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/inside/speeches/index/html and all parliamentary speeches are available in Hansard.

In addition, speeches are occasionally published in pamphlet form such as 'Civil Renewal: A New Agenda' based on The CSV Edith Kahn Memorial Lecture, I delivered on 11 June 2003 and 'Active Citizens, Strong Communities: Progressing Civil Renewal' based on the Scarman Lecture I delivered at the Citizens' Convention on 11 December 2003.

National Identity Register

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been spent so far on the development of the National Identity Register. [163329]

Mr. Browne: No funds have been spent so far on the development of the National Identity Register.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many meetings he and his officials have held with private sector prison operating companies regarding the new National Offender Management Service *(a)* prior to the publication of and *(b)* since the publication of "Reducing Crime—Changing Lives". [163939]

Paul Goggins: Home Office officials meet regularly with the operators of the contracted prisons at operational and senior management level, both individually and as a group. Progress with the Review of Correctional Services, and subsequently the Government's proposals set out in "Reducing Crime—Changing Lives", have been discussed at a number of these meetings. I met informally with senior directors from the four companies concerned on 23 March and was interested to hear their views on how they might help to deliver better outcomes for offenders and reduce re-offending.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service and his implementation team will be in a position to submit a full report regarding its funding requirements up to 2007–08 for the 2004 spending review. [163941]

Paul Goggins: The funding requirements for the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) up to 2007–08 will be set out as part of the Home Office Spending Review 2004 proposal. The NOMS implementation team has been closely involved in developing a full supporting analysis of those requirements.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Prison Service Pay Review Body will continue to set rates of pay for the staff currently within its remit under the National Offender Management Service. [163986]

Paul Goggins: There are no immediate plans to alter the position of the Prison Service Pay Review Body, but terms and conditions for National Offender Management Service staff will be considered as part of the transition process.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the effect of the creation of the National Offender Management Service upon the size of the prison population over the next five years. [160898]

Paul Goggins: By 2009, as a result of the National Offender Management Reforms and other measures, the intention is that prison population should match

prison capacity and remain at a figure of less than 80,000. The population may increase in the intervening period.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what responses he has received to the consultation on the setting up of the National Offender Management Service. [162817]

Paul Goggins: As of 26 March 2004 the Home Office has received 262 responses to the proposals in 'Reducing Crime—Changing Lives'. The National Offender Management Service Implementation Team is currently analysing the responses, which will inform the process of implementation.

Mr. David Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Association of Chief Police Officers, *(b)* the NHS, *(c)* local authorities and *(d)* the Local Government Association on the setting up of the National Offender Management Service. [162818]

Paul Goggins: We are working closely with a range of organisations on the implementation of the National Offender Management Service. The implementation team has already held initial discussions with the Department of Health and the Local Government Association and will continue to discuss NOMS with all key stakeholders.

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether Patrick Carter received advice from accountancy firms in preparing his report on managing offenders. [162842]

Paul Goggins: I understand that the team based in the Cabinet Office, who conducted the independent review of correctional services led by Patrick Carter, sought expertise from a range of sources, including commissioning one piece of work from external consultants.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will place in the Library the business case for the introduction of the National Offender Management Service. [163023]

Paul Goggins: We have already published Patrick Carter's independent report "Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime", which sets out the case for a National Offender Management Service, and the Government's response "Reducing crime—Changing Lives" which accepts that case. A separate business case for the National Offender Management Service is currently being prepared.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what factors were taken into account when formulating the timetable for the introduction of the National Offender Management Service. [163024]

Paul Goggins: The formation of the National Offender Management Service (NOMS) is a key part of the Government's public sector reform programme. It will make a substantial contribution to reducing reoffending and overall levels of crime. We aim to achieve these benefits as quickly as possible and will formally launch NOMS on 1 June. Full implementation will continue over several years under the direction of the NOMS Board.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether there will be a Gateway Review during the development of the National Offender Management Service. [163025]

Paul Goggins: A Gateway Review process will be carried out during the implementation of the National Offender Management Service.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons there was no three month consultation period prior to the announcement of plans to introduce the National Offender Management Service. [163026]

Paul Goggins: The Government published its proposals for the reform of correctional services in its paper Reducing Crime—Changes Lives. In that paper the Home Secretary set out the initial views of the Government to Patrick Carter's Report and sought the views of stakeholders on a number of issues.

The reform of correctional services and the creation of the National Offender Management Service is a significant undertaking. There is no suggestion that the entire reform will be carried out after a single consultation exercise. The questions for stakeholders posed in Reducing Crimes -Changing Lives represents the start of a consultation process. I have already undertaken to ensure that consultation is ongoing with staff and stakeholders over the period of up to five years that we expect the full roll out of the new service to take.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact the National Offender Management Service is likely to have on cooperation between the prison and probation services. [163028]

Paul Goggins: The government recognises the progress made in the development of joint working between the prison and probation services. But, as Patrick Carter's review of Correctional Services makes clear there are still gaps in the service through which offenders can fall back into crime. The creation of the National Offender Management Service, joining the two services together, will provide a seamless, more effective service with a clear remit to reduce re-offending.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact of the creation of the National Offender Management Service on the employment status of staff; and what steps his Department has taken to inform staff of proposed changes. [163109]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service (NOMS) implementation team will work closely with staff and unions to get the structure of NOMS right. Assessments are being made on changes to staff numbers, terms of service and work locations. Staff are being kept updated of developments with regular newsletters and there will be full consultation on any proposed changes to the employment status of staff.

Naturalisation Applications

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the current estimated time for processing a naturalisation application is. [164271]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 29 March 2004]:* At the end of December 2003 the average waiting time for naturalisation applications was 5.45 months.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date those who participated in the first British citizenship naturalisation ceremony made their applications for naturalisation; and how long processing took. [164272]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 29 March 2004]:* All those who participated in the first ceremony applied from various dates after 1 January 2004 and their applications were decided in time for the ceremony on 26 February 2004.

Offender Statistics/Supervision

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men aged over 65 years and *(b)* women aged over 60 years are in prison (i) on remand and (ii) after sentence. [165389]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is given in the table.

Prison population by age and type of custody, 31 January 2004

	Remand	*Sentenced*
Men aged 65 and over	53	712
Women aged 60 and over	5	21

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether information on those deemed high or very high risk, who are covered by multi-agency public protection panels, is routinely passed on by mental health authorities. [165185]

Paul Goggins: The multi-agency public protection arrangements (the MAPPA), have helped promote the sharing of information between health professionals, police and probation. To strengthen these arrangements, and to ensure that appropriate information sharing takes place, a duty to co-operate with the MAPPA authorities has been placed on various health bodies including mental health trusts.

Open Prisons

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many of the prisoners held in *(a)* Sudbury open prison and *(b)* other open prisons in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04 were originally classified as (A) Category A, (B) Category B, (C) Category C and (D) Category D prisoners. [148876]

Paul Goggins: The number of prisoners in *(a)* Sudbury and *(b)* other adult male open prisons at 30 June 2002 and 2003, by their original classification on entry into the prison estate, is given in the table.

Population at 30 June

	Sudbury open prison		*Other adult male open prisons*	
	2002	*2003*	*2002*	*2003*
A	12	9	44	51
B	118	136	424	482
C	269	278	1.15	1.59
D	48	33	1.31	1.21

Paedophilia

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women are serving sentences for paedophilia convictions. [164044]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 26 March 2004]:* Child sex offenders can be included in a number of different Prison Service offence codes. The Prison Service does not have a specific offence code to cover paedophiles, and hence information on the number of persons who are serving sentences having been convicted of child sex offences is unavailable.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women of Afro-Caribbean origin are in jail for paedophilia. [164045]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 26 March 2004]:* Child sex offenders can be included in a number of different Prison Service offence codes. The Prison Service does not have a specific offence code to cover paedophiles, and hence information on the number of persons who are serving sentences having been convicted of child sex offences is unavailable.

Parental Imprisonment

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what efforts his Department is making to reduce the impact of parental imprisonment on children aged under 16 years. [165138]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* The Prison Service recognises that the imprisonment of a parent can have a significant impact on their children. The training programme for new prison officers includes a module to raise awareness of the needs of such children. The Prison Service is also developing a pilot partnership programme with the Lankelly Foundation and the Ormiston Children and Families Trust, to offer a comprehensive package of services and support to the families of prisoners. This work will take place in prisons, as well as in the wider community, and will include work with other agencies such as education, health and social services.

Specific projects include: development of and improvements to visitors' centres; creation of family liaison officer posts within prisons; training for local staff who come into contact with families; community support services; enhanced children's visits programmes; support for alternative contact for children who do not visit; family awareness programmes; parenting from prison courses; post-release support; information to families; and research.

Police

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what additional funding is made

available to North Yorkshire Police for policing *(a)* in Menwith Hills, *(b)* in Fylingdales and *(c)* during royal visits. [163557]

Ms Blears: Since September 11, all police forces have been able to bid for additional funding for various counter terrorist activities, including the protection of vulnerable sites. Given the nature of the funding, publicity is not being given to the activities it covers or what has been allocated to individual forces. The hon. Member can be assured that North Yorkshire have been receiving financial assistance for the Government for security policing at RAF Fylingdales and Menwith Hill.

In addition to this the force has been provided with special grants totalling £1.1 million between 2001 and 2004, as a contribution to the extra cost of policing protests at Menwith Hill and Fylingdales.

Most police forces will have to police royal visits. We would therefore normally expect that they meet the extra cost from their own budget and general reserves.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers per 1,000 population there are *(a)* on establishment and *(b)* available for 24 hour duty without restriction in the Essex Constabulary. [164336]

Ms Blears: Information is not available in the form requested. As at 31 March 2003 the full time equivalent police officer strength per 100,000 population in the Essex Constabulary was 186 and the available for duty full time equivalent strength 183 per 100,000 population.

"Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime"

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what date his Department received the report, "Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime". [163984]

Paul Goggins: The Prime Minister, Home Secretary and Chief Secretary to the Treasury received the report, "Managing Offenders—Reducing Crime", from Patrick Carter on 11 December 2003.

Prison Spaces

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many additional prison spaces he estimates will be needed beyond the summer of 2004; and what plans he has to build additional jails. [165187]

Paul Goggins: The Government expect to have around 79,500 places available by the end of 2005–06.

The reforms outlined in Reducing Crime Changing Lives aim to improve the management of offenders and reduce re-offending. As a result of these reforms, and other measures, it is intended that the prison population should remain at a figure of less than 80,000 by 2009.

Two new private sector prisons providing 1,290 places are currently under construction and due to open at Ashford (near Heathrow) and Peterborough on 17 June 2004 and 28 March 2005 respectively.

We continue to investigate options for providing further increases in capacity over the coming years and as part of the Government's modernisation strategy. This is based on a combination of expanding capacity in existing prisons and a programme to build new large multi-functional prisons.

Prisoner Pay

Dr. Vis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which prisons pay prisoners who attend full-time education the same rates as those who work. [165399]

Paul Goggins: There are various forms of work available within establishments, all with different pay scales. Pay schemes and rates of pay that operate within establishments are a matter for local management, subject to certain centrally prescribed minimum rates of pay which are set out in Prison Service Order 4460. Prisoners who are employed in work, induction, education, training or offending behaviour programs will receive at least the minimum weekly rate of pay for employed prisoners.

The Prison Service does not hold the rates of pay for prisoners centrally. Therefore it would be possible to obtain this information only at disproportionate cost.

Prisoner Statistics

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* women and *(b)* men were being held in prison on 9 March. [160978]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 12 March 2004]:* On 9 March 2004 there were 4,559 females and 70,431 males being held in Prison Service establishments in England and Wales.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were released from prison in each of the last five years. [164347]

Paul Goggins: The number of persons discharged from determinate sentences in each of the last five years is given in the table.

Persons discharged from determinate sentences[1], 1999–2003

	Number
1999	89,765
2000	89,154
2001	85,290
2002	88,330
2003	86,995

[1] Excludes discharges following recall after release on licence, non-criminals and fine defaulters.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of prisoners obtained employment following release in each of the last five years; and how these figures are calculated. [164348]

Paul Goggins: The available information is from large-scale resettlement surveys of sentenced prisoners nearing release, conducted for the Prison Service by an external survey company. In a survey conducted in November to December 2001, 24 per cent. of prisoners had a paid job arranged after release, and a further six per cent. had a training or education place arranged. In a survey conducted in March to April 2003, 25 per cent.

of prisoners had a paid job arranged after release, and a further five per cent. had a training or education place arranged. A further survey is currently being undertaken.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners aged 65 years and over re-offended once released from prison in each of the last three years. [157378]

Paul Goggins: Of the 432 prisoners aged 65 and over at time of discharge from custody in 1997, 126 were reconvicted of a standard list offence within two years. In 1998, there were 398 prisoners discharged, of which 114 were reconvicted within two years. In 1999, there were 597 prisoners discharged, of which 177 were reconvicted within two years.

Prisons

Mr. Stinchcombe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what dates since 1999 prison service officials have accompanied representations from government departments of the Republic of Ireland on visits to private prisons in England and Wales; and if he will make a statement. [164302]

Paul Goggins: There is no record of any visit to privately managed prisons by representatives from Government Departments of the Republic of Ireland accompanied by Prison Service officials since 1999.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures have been proposed by the Prison Service to integrate vocational training into prison work to give prisoners the opportunity to gain recognized qualifications. [164393]

Paul Goggins: Work-based learning takes place throughout prison establishments, in dedicated workshops, industries workshops, kitchens, laundries, wing cleaning, estate maintenance and physical education departments.

Work-based training is planned as part of a cohesive strategy for learning and skills. Through the newly appointed Heads of Learning and Skills, links are made between dedicated training workshops, work areas and the education department in order to integrate Skills for Life and key skills into practical training. Learners are acquiring skills and achieving nationally recognised qualifications which will improve their chances of finding employment on release.

All establishments are set an annual key performance for work skills and between 2003 and January 2004 prisoners achieved 89,104 work-based qualifications against an annual target of 60,800.

In addition £40 million is being invested over three years through the Youth Justice Board to provide a range of academic and vocational training opportunities for juvenile offenders. The Specification for Learning and Skills includes programmes that allow young people to attain specific vocational and employment skills.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the Prison Service strategy is regarding the closure of workshops. [164395]

Paul Goggins: The closure of a workshop can have a significant impact on the internal market and on supplies and services available to other prisons. The Prison Service will ensure that any decisions on workshop closure are properly considered and made in a structured way, with regard to the system as a whole.

A policy on the closure or re-designation of workshops is currently being developed. This will ensure that any plans for closure are supported by a business case. Factors that will be included in such an appraisal include:

The reason for closure or re-designation;

What activities are planned to take place within the building that housed the workshop;

How the same or increased number of working hours for prisoners will be provided; and.

What plans there are for the machinery or other capital investment already made in the workshop.

Where a decision is proposed that might result in a reduction in prisoner industry places, adversely effect the internal supply chain, and/or increase costs to the Prison Service it is proposed that this decision would need to be endorsed by the recently created Industries Management Board—which has a brief to govern the operation of industries within the Prison Service.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what factors influence the location of a workshop at a particular prison establishment. [164396]

Paul Goggins: Prison Service industry have tended to be developed in particular establishments as a result of local initiatives. Other factors that influence the location of a workshop at a particular prison establishment include the physical space available as well as the type of prisoner held and the purpose of the establishment.

Following the internal review on the strategic oversight and management of the public sector prison industries in England and Wales (2003) the Prison Service has a clear strategic direction for prison industries that combines the complementary aims of increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of industries while also increasing the resettlement and training opportunities possible for prisoners within workshops. This strategic direction will increasingly drive decisions made about the particular type and location of industrial workshops while, at the same time, making best use of current workshops.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how prisoners are assessed for vocational training and workshop placements. [164397]

Paul Goggins: Prisoners are assessed for their general suitability for vocational training. Prisoners also undergo a risk assessment for health and safety reasons prior to starting their training in a workshop environment.

All establishments provide an induction programme and initial assessment of each offender's basic skills and the results inform the creation of an individual learning plan. Initial assessments should also be shared with teachers, trainers and workshop staff.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what response he has made to the recommendation in the Internal Review Report 2003 that the prison working day should be increased. [164398]

Paul Goggins: The internal review of the strategic oversight and management of the public sector prison industries in England and Wales (2003) was fully accepted by the Prison Service Management Board. While none of the review's 44 recommendations contained a specific recommendation that the prison working day should be increased the text did note that ideally industrial workshops should operate standard working hours of around 36 hours per week. The review also noted that operational demands and restrictions precluded this from being achieved across the prison estate.

There are currently over 300 industry workshops which operate for an average 26 hours per week. This contributes nearly 13,000,000 hours of purposeful activity for prisoners a year.

The Prison Service is committed, wherever possible, to extending the working day for prisoners. For example a plastics workshop at HMP Ranby operates for 96 hours per week, employing prisoners on three shifts (including a night shift). The Prison Service has to strike a balance between allowing more prisoners to access places and enabling individual prisoners to work a longer day.

The Prison Service are exploring the possibility of developing Service Level Agreements with prisons that will stipulate the number of operating hours a workshop will open, the number of prisoners employed and the qualifications offered alongside a target for achievement. This will help both to establish a minimum period each workshop should open and improve performance.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what response he has made to the recommendation in the Internal Review Report 2003 that prison work should reflect the working week outside prison. [164399]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service Management Board fully accepted the recommendations contained in the internal review of the strategic oversight and management of the public sector prison industries in England and Wales (2003). While none of the reviews 44 recommendations contained a specific recommendation that prison work should try and reflect the same kind of working week as outside the review did note that wherever possible the prison regime should try and reflect the same kind of working week as that found outside.

There are several aspects to reflecting the working week on the outside including not only extending the working day where possible but also setting and maintaining reasonable production levels. In addition it is important to have part-time working to accommodate prisoner learning. In addition there are other models for bridging the gap between prisons and the community—the work with National Grid Transco is a good example of using the time prisoners spend in prison essentially for training followed by actual work in the community.

It is not practical, as the review acknowledged, to fix a figure on the number of hours a workshop should be open—as different categories of establishment have different operational demands. However the Prison Service is committed, wherever possible and subject to operational constraints, to extending the working day for prisoners. There are examples in the Prison Service where this has been achieved. As part of implementing the review's recommendations the Prison Service is also seeking to improve production levels where needed as well as encouraging more demanding and creative work where it is possible to do so.

Linking work and education for the large number of unskilled prisoners with numeracy and literacy difficulties as well as with poor or non-existent work histories is a key part of enhancing the working week. In many instances key skills have been embedded into practical training courses in prisons' workshops. Using £7.36 million of the Offenders Learning and Skills Unit's recent Capital Modernisation Fund, from Learning to Earning, 77 classrooms adjacent to workshops have been constructed to support the integration of key skills into training programmes. Additionally these classrooms are increasingly able to support the wider key skills—Working with Others, Problem Solving, Improving Own Learning and Performance. All three wider key skills relate to the work ethic. The value placed on these skills by employers is evident from their inclusion in Modern Apprenticeship frameworks in mainstream vocational training.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the outcome was of the Prison Service's meeting with the Correctional Service Accreditation Panel on the Focus on Resettlement. [164403]

Paul Goggins: The Correctional Service Accreditation Panel encouraged the programme's further development and outlined some general comments that need to be considered in any future application for accreditation. Another meeting will be held later this year.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures the Prison Service is putting in place to meet the demand for new work places. [164405]

Paul Goggins: Since 1994–95 the prisoner population has increased by 50 per cent. and prisons are delivering an additional 30 per cent. more purposeful hours, despite pressure on workshop and classroom capacity.

Where possible the Prison Service constructs additional workshops to meet the needs of the increasing population. A number of workshops have opened or are planned to be opened in the near future. These include workshops at HMPs Garth (an additional 180 prisoner work places), Wymott (an additional 24 prisoner work places), Whatton (an additional 200 work places) and Ranby (an additional 40 prisoners on a split-shift system). HMP Haverigg are currently planning to bring some old workshops back into operation as part of the Performance Improvement Plan process which should realise an additional 100 new prisoner work places. The plans at Haverigg include the conversion of

a contract services workshop to an appropriate office environment providing 15 prison work places in which national industries data can be managed.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what co-operation there is between the Prison Service and the Learning and Skills Council in order to identify local labour market needs. [164406]

Paul Goggins: In April 2003 all local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) initiated strategic area reviews of post-16 LSC-funded provision. These reviews assess the extent to which the current pattern of post-16 learning in each local area meets the needs of learners, employers and the community—including the needs of offenders.

The Offenders' Learning and Skills Unit is working with the Learning and Skills Council to develop a coherent information, advice and guidance strategy that meets the needs of all offenders both in prison and in the community.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated into the link between prison work and prisoners' attitudes towards work. [164407]

Paul Goggins: Three studies have been commissioned on this subject:

Home Office Research Study 208 'Women Prisoners: a Survey of their Work and Training Experiences in Custody and on Release' in 2000

Home Office Research Study 226 'Building Bridges to Employment for Prisoners' in 2001 and

'Prison Work and Training: an Evaluation' Simon and Corbett, Brunel University, 1994, 1997

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the Prison Service has refocused prison industry production on the internal market. [164408]

Paul Goggins: The aim of prison industries is to occupy prisoners in out of cell activity and wherever possible to help them gain skills, qualifications and work experience to improve their employment prospects on release.

At the same time the Prison Service is a significant consumer of a large range of products and there are sound economic reasons for producing for internal consumption. In producing for the internal market there are significant opportunities for industrial workshops to provide both specific and generic work skills for prisoners. Additionally there are opportunities for growth within a number of the internal industries. There will be an increasing demand for items such as cell furniture, clothing items and other engineering work. As long as industries meets the standards that are required externally there will also be opportunities to manufacture and supply to other organisations items such as office furniture.

Producing efficiently and effectively for consumption within the Prison Service does not mean an exclusive focus on the internal market and where possible prisons should build relationships with local employers to meet specific skills shortages. The Prison Service is also working with a number of partners, in both the voluntary and private sectors to develop work opportunities within prisons and for prisoners after release.

Project Funding

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* solely state-financed and *(b)* public-private partnership and private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible have been launched in each region in each of the last 10 years. [160961]

Fiona Mactaggart: The information is as follows.

(a) The number of major projects that are recorded as being solely state financed based on central information held since July 2002 is 24. Major projects are considered to be those projects with a whole life cost greater than £40 million or which are considered to be novel, contentious or high risk. These are considered to be national projects and not specific to regions.

(b) I would refer my hon. Friend to the Signed PFI Projects List, which can be found on the HM Treasury website www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/public_private_partnerships/ppp_pfi_stats. In addition, the following projects are classed as public-private partnerships:

	Project	*Region*
2000	Airwave	National
2000	Criminal Records Bureau	North West

Promotion

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much the introduction of assessment centres for promotion to HEO and G7 grades cost his Department in each year since its introduction. [163630]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 31 March 2004]:* Assessment Centres were introduced in February 2002 for two key grades: Higher Executive/Chief Immigration Officer (HEO/CIO) and Grade 7. Estimated total resource costs for running the Assessment Centres were as follows:

Grade	*Numbers assessed*	*Estimated resource cost (£)*
2002		
Grade 7	288	365,000
HEO/CIO	1,208	865,000
2003		
Grade 7	939	1,078,000
HEO/CIO	2,342	1,159,000

School Buses (Sex Offenders)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answers of 17 March, *Official Report*, columns 350–1W, on school buses (sex offenders), if he will list the instances in which

Criminal Records Bureau checks have been made mandatory under legislation other than the Police Act 1997. [163243]

Ms Blears: The principal provisions currently in force in England as regards those working with children include:

the Protection of Children Act 1999 (all persons applying for a childcare position with a childcare organisation—as defined);

the Children's Homes Regulations 2001 (all providers, managers and employees);

the Fostering Services Regulations 2002 (all providers, managers and employees); and

the Voluntary Adoption Agencies and the Adoption Agencies (Miscellaneous Amendments) Regulations 2003 (all providers, managers and employees).

Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will consolidate the obligation to register with the new scheme for accession countries by those nationals admitted to the UK to work with the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme. [164036]

Mr. Browne: Nationals from the eight Accession States who join the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme (SAWS) scheme before 1 May will not be required to register with the Worker Registration Scheme. The SAWS card will be valid as a registration certificate until 31 December 2004. If a SAWS participant wishes to take any additional work or new employment, he or she will be required to register with the Home Office.

Sentencing (Women)

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Department's plans to review sentencing for women. [165137]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* While it is for the courts to decide the appropriate sentence in individual cases, custodial sentences should be reserved for serious, dangerous and persistent offenders.

The Home Office is taking forward the Women's Offending Reduction Programme over the next three years which seeks to address the range of factors that have an impact on women who offend. A primary focus will be on encouraging greater use of community-based interventions that are better tailored to the needs of women. The Judicial Studies Board will be invited to review training and guidance for sentencers to ensure that it includes gender specific issues; and the Sentencing Guidelines Council will consider the impact of the new Criminal Justice Act 2003 sentencing powers on female as well as male offenders.

Sex Abuse Guidelines

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the terms are of the code of practice on unhelpful or intrusive reporting on cases of historical sex abuse; [148883]

(2) what discussions he has held with media representatives to assess how unhelpful or intrusive reporting of historical sex abuse cases can be avoided; and what the outcome of these meetings was; [148884]

(3) what meetings he plans to hold with media representatives to assess how unhelpful or intrusive reporting of historical sex abuse cases can be avoided; and when these discussions will take place. [148885]

Paul Goggins: I have held discussions with representatives of the Press Complaints Commission (PCC) with regard to the anonymity of suspects in sexual offence cases.

The Government believes that self regulation through the effective use of media codes is the best way to ensure pre-charge anonymity and the PCC is examining its code of conduct to see how it can be strengthened.

Shopkeepers (Harassment)

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persistent offenders of violence against and intimidation of shop workers have been convicted in each year since 1997. [163607]

Paul Goggins: Data are not readily available at this level of detail.

Substance Abuse

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have taken place under the Cigarette Lighter Refill (Safety) Regulations 1999; and what the resultant penalties were in each case. [165760]

Paul Goggins: Information collected centrally by the Home Office does not separately identify offences under the Cigarette Lighter Refill (Safety) Regulations 1999.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the legislation relating to substance abuse; and what plans he has to amend the legislation. [165761]

Caroline Flint: Volatile Substance Abuse is controlled by the Intoxicating Substances (Supply) Act 1985, which regulates the general sale of abusable products by making it an offence for any such substance to be knowingly supplied for the purpose of intoxication to someone under 18. The Cigarette Lighter Refill (Safety) Regulations 1999, banned the sale of butane gas lighter refills to under 18s.

The Government continues to be concerned about the level of misuse of volatile substances by young people. However, it thinks that at present enforcement of current provisions is sufficient and has no plans to amend the legislation.

Sudbury Prison

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the maximum capacity of HMP Sudbury is; and how many inmates are being held at Sudbury. [163746]

Paul Goggins: As at 26 March 2004, the operational capacity of HMP Sudbury was 559 and the prisoner population was 554.

Temporary Promotions

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many staff in his Department are on temporary promotion; and how many of these have been on temporary promotion for more than *(a)* 12 months and *(b)* two years. [163629]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 31 March 2004]:* Figures for (i) less than 12 months (ii) between one and two years, and (iii) more than two years are to be found in the table.

Staff on temporary promotion

	Less than 12 months	*More than 12 months (between one-two years)*	*More than two years*	*Total*
Forensic Science Service (FSS)	13	13	2	28
Central Home Office (excluding Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND), including Merseyside Office)	359	184	155	698
IND	684	393	210	1,287
Prison Service Agency (PSA)	897	326	194	1,417
United Kingdom Passport Service (UKPS)	95	29	4	128
Total Home Office Staff	2,048	945	565	3,558

Contributions have been received above from the Agencies (FSS, UKPS and PSA); figures for the Central Home Office and Immigration and Nationality Directorate are provided centrally.

Ticket Touting

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have been made in each of the last three years for ticket touting *(a)* in person, *(b)* through published advertisements, *(c)* via internet auction sites and *(d)* through other means; how many were successful in each case; what the average length of custodial sentence was in each case; and if he will make a statement. [164487]

Paul Goggins: Defendants proceeded against and those convicted of offences of ticket touting under section 166 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 in England and Wales, 2000 to 2002, are shown in the table. No information is held centrally on the circumstances of each case. The offence is not one that attracts a custodial penalty.

Number of defendants[1] proceeded against and found guilty under section 116 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (ticket touting), England and Wales 2000 to 2002

	Defendants proceeded against	*Defendants found guilty*
2000	163	140
2001	126	94
2002	127	91

[1] These data are on the principal offence basis

Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Transco

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will make a statement on the roll-out of the Transco model; and which other industries are training prisoners with a view to employing them on release; [164349]

(2) what the benefits to the Prison Service from the roll-out of the Transco model are. [164350]

Paul Goggins: The training provided by National Grid Transco is linked to job vacancies in the gas industry. The project is a good example of how employers and the Prison Service are able to collaborate to meet some of the staffing needs of business, while at the same time contributing to reduced re-offending by released prisoners.

National Grid Transco, with its main contractors, is training prisoners for employment as Gas Network Operatives. The programme is currently operating at Reading Young Offender Institution and Wymott prison. Prisoners from Rochester and Glen Parva Young Offender Institutions are being transferred to Reading to participate in the training.

By the end of 2003, 27 prisoners had completed National Vocational Qualifications to qualify as Gas Network Operatives. All 27 were offered jobs with National Grid Transco or one of its contractors and 24 are still in employment. Three have since re-offended and have returned to prison.

National Grid Transco is planning to expand the project to include a number of other establishments. They aim to train and assist into employment up to 250 prisoners a year from 2006. National Grid Transco is also encouraging other companies in the electricity, water, engineering and logistics sectors to adopt the same approach in working with the Prison Service.

Other industries involved in training prisoners with a view to employing them on release include construction, catering, car mechanics, sport and leisure, and transport.

Victim Support

Mr. Bacon: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the latest situation in relation to the funding of Victim Support. [164567]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* Since the start of the financial year 1997–98 the Home Office's funding of Victim Support has more than doubled, from £11.7 million to £30 million in 2003–04.

No final decision has yet been made with regard to the level of Home Office funding for Victim Support for 2004–05.

Violence Against Women

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to commit resources to a UK national strategy as agreed in the Beijing Platform for Action to eliminate all forms of violence against women. [160913]

Paul Goggins: There are currently no plans to create a National Strategy on Violence Against Women and there is no requirement within the Beijing Platform for Action for us to do so. We are, however, developing a range of policies in this area:In June last year we published the consultation paper, "Safety and Justice", which set out the Government's strategy to tackle domestic violence in England and Wales. It set out proposals under three key headings: prevention; protection; and justice and support. And it included proposals for non-legislative as well as legislative measures, which now form part of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Bill, which was introduced into the House of Lords in December last year.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) is investing £18.9 million this year in refuges in England, which will mean 273 units of new or improved accommodation over the next three years. There will be a further £7 to £9 million in each of the next two years.

The ODPM contributed £1 million over three years, matched by £1 million from Comic Relief, towards the development of a single national 24-hour freephone helpline for victims of domestic violence and the UK 'refuges online system', which provides immediate access to information on refuge accommodation and specialist services across the UK. These were launched in December last year. The Home Office is contributing £1 million towards promoting the new helpline.

On sexual offences, the Government are concerned about the low rate of convictions for reported rape. Issues surrounding consent are central to establishing whether a sexual offence has taken place. The Sexual Offences Act 2003 introduces a test of reasonableness into the law on consent. It applies largely to England and Wales.

We are also supporting the development of Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCS) throughout England and Wales. SARCs are 'one stop' locations where victims of sexual assault can receive care and counselling while, at the same time, having the opportunity to assist the police investigation into alleged offences. SARCs will be considered as part of a wider strategy to improve services for victims of sexual offences. The Government are also considering options for the development of a national rape helpline. We are in discussion with the Scottish Executive, Welsh Assembly and Northern Ireland Office to consider how this will best serve victims of sexual offences nationally.

And finally, The Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003, implemented on 3 March this year, reinforces existing legislation criminalising the offence and increases the maximum penalty for performing and procuring female genital mutilation from five to 14 years imprisonment. It applies to England, Wales and Northern Ireland.

Women Offenders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Women Offending Reduction Programme. [164372]

Paul Goggins: The significant increase in the female prison population, and the wider consequences of this in terms of disruption to their families, particularly their children, supports the need to respond specifically to the needs and characteristics of women offenders.

The Women's Offending Reduction Programme (The Programme), published on 11 March 2004, is a three-year programme of work that aims to promote a more specific and joined up response to the range of factors that have an impact on why women offend.

In order to reduce the number of women in custody and increase the potential for diversion the Programme will focus on improving sentencers' confidence in community disposals that offer appropriate packages and interventions and are better tailored to meet the particular needs of women offenders. The Programme includes, for example, the development of women specific community-based interventions such as the 'Real Women' offending behaviour programme.

Two key target groups are women with mental health problems and women with substance misuse problems. The Programme will operate in tandem with the Department of Health's Women's Mental Health Strategy and the National Drugs Strategy so that women offenders can access appropriate treatment in the community.

For women who do need to be held in custody, resettlement is a vital element of the Programme. More effective re-integration into the community for women prisoners on release should have a positive impact on re-offending rates. The implementation of the Women's Estate resettlement strategy will ensure that good family ties are maintained to minimise the impact on children separated from their mothers, and necessary local community links are made to meet the range of women's resettlement needs.

The Programme's priorities contribute to the wider Home Office aims of reducing offending and re-offending and will also reflect and support the objectives of the new National Offender Management Service that will come into operation in June 2004.

Work Permits

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what targets have been set for numbers of applications for work permits processed by Home Office officials in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004; and how targets are allocated among departmental offices. [161127]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 12 March 2004]:* There are no targets for the number of work permits issued by the Home Office, although the Sectors Based Scheme within these arrangements is subject to a quota. The work permit system is designed to be flexible and

responsive to the needs of employers and the economy. The overall number of work permits issued will depend on the number of applications made by employers and whether individual applications meet the criteria for the issuing of permits.

Work Permits (UK) does make internal planning assumptions about expected volumes of applications (on a financial, not calendar, year basis), in order to allocate resources to process applications. Work Permits (UK)'s planning assumption for 2003–04 is that it will receive 175,000 work permit applications (including extension applications). The current planning assumption for 2004–05 is 183,000. These figures do not include applications under the Highly Skilled Migrant Programme and Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme applications, which Work Permits (UK) also administers.

These planning assumptions are informed by monitoring trends in volumes of applications and consultation with stakeholders, including other Government Departments on labour market conditions.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many work permits have been granted to education workers since January 2003 broken down by *(a)* Government office region, *(b)* type of education work and *(c)* nationality. [163854]

Mr. Browne: The tables provide figures for the numbers of work permits that have been granted to education workers since January 2003.

All work permits applications, including extensions, approved for education workers since 1 January 2003, broken down by the type of education work:

Occupation	*Number of permits issued*
Teacher	5,720
Lecturer	792
Research Associate	763
Research Fellow	705
Research Assistant	530
Professor	158
Research Officer	100
Tutors	90
Research Technician	19
Others	3,041
Total	11,918

All work permits applications, including extensions, approved for education workers since 1 January 2003, broken down by nationality:

Nationality	*Number of permits issued*
Australia	1,549
Canada	676
India	760
Jamaica	481
New Zealand	736
Peoples Republic of China	948
Russia	261
South Africa	1,577
United States of America	1,318
Zimbabwe	304
Others	3,308
Total	11,918

A breakdown of all work permits applications approved for education workers since January 2003 by Government Office region is not available.

Workers Registration Scheme

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress made on introducing a workers' registration scheme for EU Nationals after 1 May. [164337]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 29 March 2004]:* On 25 March we laid draft regulations which will establish a workers' registration scheme for nationals from eight of the states acceding to the European Union on 1 May.

The draft regulations are laid under paragraph 2(2) of Schedule 2 to the European Communities Act 1972 and Section 2 (6) of the European Union (Accessions) Act 2003 and will be subject to the affirmative resolution procedure. The draft regulations and an Explanatory Memorandum can be viewed at http://www.legislation.hmso.gov.uk/si/dsis2004.htm

Young Offenders

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to streamline the inspection regime for secure units for juvenile offenders. [162314]

Paul Goggins: From 1 April 2004 the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI), which replaces the Social Services Inspectorate, will inspect local authority secure children's homes and secure training centres. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Prisons will continue to inspect Young Offender Institutions holding juveniles, with support from CSCI.

Within those arrangements, there will be greater harmonisation of the approach to education inspections through use of the same methodology and a consistent pool of inspectors.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1262W, on juvenile prisoners, if he will provide a brief description of *(a)* the fixtures and facilities in the unfurnished cell in each establishment, *(b)* its location within the prison and *(c)* the items of clothing and personal possessions which the prisoner is allowed to have with him. [162438]

Paul Goggins: Every special or unfurnished cell ("special accommodation"), when used for the temporary confinement of juveniles under Rule 51 of the Young Offender Institution Rules 2000 (or Rule 48 of the Prison Rules 1999) is heated, ventilated, has a window or other natural light, and an intercom or other means of allowing the young person to communicate with an officer. There is access to toilet and sanitary facilities.

The Prison Service does not provide other fixtures or facilities in special accommodation when used for the temporary confinement of juveniles, having regard to the fact that the young person's refractory or violent behaviour may result in damage to themselves or property; and the fact that the confinement is only temporary and must cease as soon as the refractory or violent behaviour has ended.

Special or unfurnished cells are located in the establishment's segregation unit, which in some cases is known as the "separation and care unit" or "intensive support unit". The only exception is at HMYOI Wetherby, where the unfurnished cell is located temporarily near the administrative unit due to structural works in progress.

When a young person is placed in special accommodation a risk assessment will be conducted. This determines whether the young person is at risk of self-injury and whether normal clothing presents a hazard to his/her health. If in exceptional circumstances it is necessary to remove normal clothing, the young person is provided with protective clothing so that he/she can be decently dressed and their normal clothing is returned to them at the earliest opportunity.

Personal possessions are not normally allowed in special accommodation given that the young people must only be kept there for the shortest possible time; and may often be in a volatile state, with the result that personal possessions may present the risk of self-injury or harm. However, permission may be granted on a case-by-case basis, if the risk assessment demonstrates the benefits would outweigh the risks.

Young Offenders Institutes

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many juveniles in each young offenders' institution were injured by other inmates in each month from June 2003 to the most recent month for which figures are available. [163216]

Paul Goggins: In April 2003 a new measure of violence was introduced based on the number of reported serious assaults. An assault is classified as 'serious' if it:

is a sexual assault, or

results in detention in outside hospital as an inpatient, or

requires medical treatment for concussion or internal injuries, or

is a fracture, scald or burn, stabbing, crushing, extensive or multiple bruising, black eye, broken nose, lost or broken tooth, cuts requiring suturing, bites, temporary or permanent blindness.

Information on juveniles seriously assaulted by other trainees in custody is given in the table:

Number of serious assaults—Year 2003–04

	June	July	August	September
Brinsford	—	—	—	—
Brockhill	—	—	—	—
Bullwood Hall	—	1	—	—
Castington	—	—	—	—
Eastwood Park	—	—	—	—
Feltham	—	—	—	—
Hindley	—	—	—	—
Huntercombe	1	—	—	—
Lancaster Farms	2	3	—	—
New Hall	—	—	—	—
Onley	7	2	3	2
Stoke Heath	—	—	—	1
Thorn Cross	—	—	—	—
Warren Hill	—	—	—	—
Werrington	1	—	3	1
Wetherby	—	—	1	—

	October	November	December	January 2004	February 2004
Brinsford	—	—	—	—	—
Brockhill	—	—	—	—	—
Bullwood Hall	—	—	—	—	—
Castington	—	—	—	—	—
Eastwood Park	—	—	—	—	—
Feltham	—	—	—	—	—
Hindley	—	—	—	—	—
Huntercombe	—	—	—	—	—
Lancaster Farms	—	—	—	—	—
New Hall	—	—	—	—	—
Onley	—	—	—	—	—
Stoke Heath	—	1	—	—	—
Thorn Cross	—	—	—	—	—
Warren Hill	1	—	—	1	—
Werrington	—	—	—	—	—
Wetherby	—	—	—	—	—

The number of positive adjudication's for assaults on juveniles is given in the table. Most of the injuries in these incidents would be classified as minor (grazes, scratches, abrasions, minor bruises, swellings, superficial cuts) or none at all.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

GM Crops

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what consultations she has held with businesses affected by adding GM maize to the National Seed List. [164023]

Mr. Morley: Under National List legislation, before any variety is added to the list any person who would be affected by the proposed decision is given the opportunity to make written representations or request a hearing on the matter.

Details of the proposal to add the only GM variety to date, the forage maize Chardon LL, to the National List were published in the Plant Varieties and Seeds Gazette No. 423 (March 2000).

227 individuals/organisations submitted written representations of which 60 also requested a hearing. Three further individuals/organisations requested a hearing only.

The public hearing opened on 2 October 2000 and a digest of the matters raised at the hearing was published in December 2002.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what results she has received from the Chardon LL cattle feeding studies completed at the Reading University Centre for Dairy Research in 2002. [164956]

Mr. Morley: I have not seen the results of this cattle feeding study, which was privately funded research undertaken by Reading University. Publication of the results of studies carried out by the university is a matter for them and those funding the work. However, I understand that the researchers intend to submit their study and the results to a peer-reviewed journal for publication.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made *(a)* of the extent to which the 1998–99 National List Trials for Chardon LL were (i) independent and (ii) impartial and *(b)* of their value in determining whether to place the variety on the National Seeds Register. [164957]

Mr. Morley: The National List trial programme for maize in 1998–9 comprised four trial sites in each year, plus a reserve site.

A thorough evaluation of all the data used for the assessment of Chardon LL in National List trials was conducted by the independent experts on the Herbage Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) group. The group recommended that data from one site in 1999 should be excluded because of substandard plant populations. This was done and data from the reserve site used instead.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the Chardon LL cattle feeding studies at Reading University have cost public funds. [164959]

Mr. Morley: There has been no cost to public funds. I understand the study carried out at Reading University was privately funded.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what provision she has made to ensure that Chardon LL maize will not be added to the National Seed List before arrangements have been made to restrict herbicide use to the regime used for the farmscale evaluation programme. [164960]

Mr. Morley: In her statement of 9 March my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for the Environment Food and Rural Affairs made it clear that Chardon LL would not be added to the UK National List until the Part C release consent had been amended in accordance with ACRE's advice. Officials have written to the French Competent Authority, which issued the relevant consent on behalf of all EU member states, seeking amendments to the consent for Bayer T25 GM maize (Chardon LL) to limit herbicide use with the crop in line with ACRE's advice on the FSE results.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she was informed of the recommendation of Professor David Beever that no new maize variety should be placed upon the National Seeds Register unless it achieves a whole-plant target of 32 per cent. [164961]

Mr. Morley: The dry matter content achieved for maize crops depends on location, climate and variety. Views on the optimum value vary and the realistic situation is that it falls within a range of around 28–32 per cent., depending on local factors. The importance of dry matter content is taken into account in the National List system, but it is only one of a number of factors which are assessed.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the involvement of Grainseed in the conduct of the National List trials for Chardon LL in 1998 and 1999 on behalf of the British Plant Breeders Society and the impact on their research findings. [164962]

Mr. Morley: A thorough evaluation of all the data used for the assessment of Chardon LL in National List trials was conducted by the independent experts on the Herbage Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) group. The group recommended that the 1998 Grainseed data were acceptable as part of a valid assessment of the performance of Chardon LL. However, the group recommended that the 1999 Grainseed data should be excluded because of substandard plant populations. This was done and data from a reserve site used instead.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the new Norwegian research on the safety of the CaMV promoter used in the Chardon LL transgenic insert. [164963]

Mr. Morley: The reported new scientific evidence from Norway on the cauliflower mosaic virus promoter has yet to be published. When the details of this research do become available, the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment (ACRE), which advises the Government on the risks posed by the intentional release of GMOs, will be asked to evaluate these data and advise on their implications for existing consents and future applications.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what evidence she has collated, in the absence of ruminant feeding studies, that Chardon LL has added value for cultivation and use in the United Kingdom. [164964]

Mr. Morley: The criterion for adding a variety to the UK National List is that it should, taking its qualities as a whole, represent a clear improvement compared with other forage maize varieties already on the UK List. Chardon has been assessed on this basis and found to meet the performance standards set to indicate a clear improvement in value for cultivation and use. The evidence for this is that in National List trials, Chardon's results met the improvement standards for several important characteristics. Animal feeding studies are not required for this assessment.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she has taken to ensure that the Reading University cattle feeding studies involving Chardon LL fodder maize will be scientifically robust and independent of *(a)* Government and *(b)* GM crop technology companies. [164965]

Mr. Morley: The cattle feeding study carried out by the Reading University was privately funded research. It is therefore not a matter for Government. I understand that the researchers intend to submit their study to a peer reviewed journal for publication so others will be able to assess the data when the peer review process is complete.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she was informed that *(a)* Liberty on its own had proved ineffective as a herbicide used with GMHT fodder maize crops in the United States and *(b)* to overcome this problem Bayer has been promoting the use of Liberty/atrazine mix since the spring of 2001. [164966]

Mr. Morley: I refer my right hon. Friend to the answer given on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 997W.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has held with scientists who oppose the commercial growing of GM crops in the United Kingdom. [165284]

Mr. Morley: The Secretary of State has not held any direct discussion with scientists who oppose the commercial growing of GM crops. However, scientists across the range of opinions were involved in the Science Review strand of the GM public dialogue carried out last year. The GM Science Review Panel itself consisted of leading scientists across a range of disciplines and perspectives. Other scientists opposed to the growing of GM crops also attended the open meetings held during the review and contributed written submissions, which are published on the review website. Their views are reflected in the two reports published by the GM Science Review.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment was made during the GM Farm Scale Evaluations of the environmental impact of treating Chardon LL maize with more than six litres per hectare of glufosinate ammonium. [165374]

Mr. Morley: In the farm-scale evaluations the terms of the pesticide approval for the use of glufosinate ammonium on GM maize Chardon LL permitted a maximum individual (single-dose) application rate of 4 litres per hectare and the maximum total rate permitted was 8 litres per hectare.

The results of the evaluations, including those where the total application rate was more than 6 litres per hectare, are given in the paper by G T Champion et al published in the Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society, series B, volume 358, number 1439, last autumn. Defra officials sent the hon. Member a copy of these papers on 24 October 2003 and a copy is also available in the Library.

Sellafield

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will place in the Library copies of the letters received since 1 January 2003 from the European Commission in respect of the application of Euratom Treaty Article 35 at Sellafield; [165156]

(2) if she will place in the Library a copy of the report of the Euratom verification visit to Sellafield on 8 to 12 March. [165157]

Mr. Morley: The UK's Permanent Representative to the European Union has received two letters from the European Commission since 1 January 2003 regarding the application of Article 35 Euratom at Sellafield. Copies have been placed in the Library. I shall also place in the Library the final report of the Commission on its Article 35 verification visit to Sellafield, as soon as this becomes available.

ACRE

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what advice she has received from the Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment regarding the environmental impact of growing Chardon LL maize under a bromoxynil management regime. [165373]

Mr. Morley: The advisory committee has not given any specific advice on the use of bromoxynil.

Agricultural Subsidies

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total amount of money paid in subsidies to farmers on Exmoor was in *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2002–03. [161882]

Alun Michael: The following table represents the total amounts of subsidy money paid to farmers on Exmoor in 2001–02 and 2002–03. These are European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) financial years which run from 16 October to 15 October.

EAGGF Year	*Value (£)*
2001–02	3,568,470.50
2002–03	3,889,458.00

Air Quality Strategy

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Department of Transport on the implications of the Ten Year Transport Plan for the Government's air quality strategy; and if she will make a statement. [162957]

Margaret Beckett: Officials in my Department and the Department for Transport are in regular contacts on the implications of a range of transport policies including the Government Ten Year Plan for Transport, on the Government air quality strategy and the two Departments' shared Air Quality Public Service Agreement.

Animal Fodder

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much animal fodder has been imported into *(a)* the UK and *(b)* the EU from developing countries in each of the last three years for which information is available. [164222]

Alun Michael: The following table shows imports into the UK and the EU of animal feeding stuffs from developing countries (as defined by the World Bank website) for 2000–02.

There are also imports of cereals from developing countries. However, with the data available, it is impossible to say what proportion of the cereals are for human consumption or to be used as animal feeding stuffs. Imports of cereals are excluded from the table for that reason.

UK and EU 15 imports of animal feeding stuffs from developing countries as classified by the World Bank 2000–02

Thousand tonnes

Countries	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
UK	1,778	1,932	1,862
EU 15	21,750	24,199	25,019

UK data source: HM Customs and Excise

EU 15 data: Eurostat Comext Database, CD-Rom 2/2004 and 2/2003

Biodiversity

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to meet *(a)* the UK Biodiversity Action Plan targets and *(b)* the target adopted by EU Ministers in Gothenburg to halve biodiversity loss by 2010. [165067]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* Work to meet the targets set for habitats and species as part of the UK Biodiversity Action Plan (UKBAP) is being undertaken at national, regional and local levels by a wide ranging partnership including Government, statutory agencies, conservation organisations and the private sector. Lead partners for the action plans will report on progress towards the targets in 2005.

In October 2002 the Government published "Working with the grain of nature": a biodiversity strategy for England[1]. The strategy aims to facilitate implementation of the UKBAP in England and to ensure that the implications for biodiversity as a whole are considered as an integral part of other key policies. It sets out a series of actions that will be undertaken by Government and their partners to make biodiversity a fundamental consideration in agriculture, water, woodlands, urban and the marine and coastal environment and in people's everyday lives.

Action undertaken as part of the strategy and the UKBAP will contribute to achieving the target adopted by EU Ministers to halt biodiversity loss by 2010. In addition, we have put in place a range of other biodiversity and sustainable development measures including our extensive network of protected sites and the development of agri-environment schemes. We have set challenging PSA targets to bring into favourable condition by 2010 95 per cent. of all nationally important wildlife sites; and to reverse the long term decline in the number of farmland birds by 2020.

[1] The Biodiversity Strategy for England can be found at http://www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/ewd/biostrat/index.htm.

Biofuels Directive

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what contribution her Department has made to the forthcoming Biofuels Directive consultation paper. [162958]

Margaret Beckett: The Department has had a number of discussions with the Department for Transport and other Departments about the consultation paper on the implementation of the Biofuels Directive.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Department for Transport on the development of a biofuels obligation for the transport sector. [162959]

Margaret Beckett: The Department has had a number of discussions with the Department for Transport about the development of a biofuels obligation for the transport sector. In the recent Budget Report, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer committed the Government to including this as one of the options in the consultation on the implementation of the Biofuels Directive in the UK.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what differences there are in the *(a)* epidemiological pattern and *(b)* success of control measures in respect of bovine TB in cattle between Scotland and England. [158340]

Mr. Bradshaw: TB incidents in Scotland occur sporadically and tend to be geographically scattered across the country. They are generally associated with the introduction of infected cattle from Ireland or parts of England and Wales where TB is endemic. In contrast, most TB incidents in England occur in a number of traditional "TB hotspots" or endemic areas, thus showing a high degree of geographical clustering. Reactor numbers per incident and the proportion of confirmed incidents in Scotland are lower than in the endemic TB areas of England. This tends to make TB incidents in Scotland quicker to resolve by testing and removal of infected animals. Recurrent and chronic TB incidents are much more common in the endemically affected areas of England.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to integrate cattle health data into the British Cattle Movement Service database to assist in tracking the TB test status of cattle. [158667]

Mr. Bradshaw: This is an option being considered in the development of our delivery plan for the implementation of the short term measures proposed in the consultation document published on 9 February, "Preparing for a new GB strategy on bovine tuberculosis."

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to what factors she attributes the 20 per cent. annual increase in bovine TB. [158809]

Mr. Bradshaw: The 20 per cent. figure is the average annual increase in the number of TB reactors slaughtered for the period 1990 to 2001. The average number of herd breakdowns over the same period is 18 per cent.

In countries where there is no significant wildlife reservoir, cattle controls based on regular tuberculin testing, culling, movement restrictions (including tracing and contiguous testing) and slaughterhouse checks have been effective in controlling the disease. In many European Union countries, TB incidents in cattle herds are at a very low level.

In some parts of Great Britain, however, current cattle control measures are not proving effective in controlling the disease. It is not possible at present to quantify those elements of local disease spread that are due to wildlife as opposed to cattle spread, or to other factors.

The randomised badger culling trial, together with the related road traffic accident survey of badger carcases, and spoligotyping of Mycobacterium bovis strains, will provide further data on how the disease is spread. The TB99 epidemiological questionnaire has been designed to assess factors that might predispose herds to a TB breakdown, and their relative importance. The results of analyses of data collected up to 2002 should be published later this year.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the potential value of additional trade to the farming community if the United Kingdom regained its status as a TB-free area. [159056]

Mr. Bradshaw: The United Kingdom has never held officially tuberculosis free (OFT) status, as defined in EU Directive 64/432/EEC, and no estimate has been made of the potential value to the farming community of additional trade if OFT status were to be achieved.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has sold beef carcases derived from animals purchased as a result of positive TB tests. [159293]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra will sell any beef carcases that are passed fit for human consumption. Meat Hygiene Service officials will inspect all carcases and associated offals at licensed slaughterhouses, including reactor animals.

Carcases of TB reactors without visible lesions will be passed fit for human consumption, provided they otherwise meet the standard for post-mortem inspection.

In cases where there are localised lesions the officials will remove any TB affected organ or part of a carcase and the rest of the carcase will normally pass as fit for human consumption, unless another problem is found which makes it unfit.

Where TB lesions have been discovered in more than one organ or parts of the carcase, the whole carcase, offals and blood are rejected as being unfit for human consumption.

Cattle over 30 months old are not used for food.

Carbon Dioxide

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list carbon dioxide levels in the earth's atmosphere for each of the last 10 years. [165256]

Mr. Morley: The table shows atmospheric carbon dioxide (CO_2) concentrations in parts per million (ppm) from 1993 to 2002. Average annual data for 2003 are not yet available.

The data presented are from air samples collected at the Mauna Loa Observatory, Hawaii, which is considered one of the most favourable locations in the world for measuring representative concentrations of atmospheric CO_2.

	Annual atmospheric CO_2 (ppm)
1993	357.10
1994	358.86
1995	360.90
1996	362.58
1997	363.84
1998	366.58
1999	368.30
2000	369.47
2001	371.03
2002	373.07

Climate Change

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which *(a)* research on climate change and *(b)* climate change models her Department has used in the development of policy on climate change. [165282]

Mr. Morley: The Department draws on a wide body of research in developing policy on climate change, including primarily the assessments of research by the intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the results of research commissioned by my Department. It also draws on research undertaken by the Research Councils and commissioned by other Government departments for their own requirements. The development and use of climate prediction models by the Met Office's Hadley Centre forms a significant component of the Department's commissioned research programme and such models contribute to the development of policy on climate change.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of climate change on the yield of the principal crops grown in the United Kingdom over the next 50 years. [165283]

Mr. Morley: Over the past 15 years a considerable amount of research has been funded, through both MAFF and Defra, on Climate Impacts on Agriculture—including effects on crop yields.

A summary of the research was published in February 2000 entitled: "Climate Change and Agriculture in the United Kingdom" which is available online at http://www.defra.gov.uk/environ/climate/climatechange/index.htm.

Research in this area is ongoing and further information is available on both the Farming and Science pages of the Defra website.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her Answer of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1532W, on climate change, when she expects the process of departmental reporting on the implications of climate change to be completed; and if she will place copies of the reports in the Library. [165288]

Mr. Morley: A report on the outcome of the process is expected to be published later in 2004, and copies will then be placed in both Libraries.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average length of the growing season was in *(a)* 1974, *(b)* 1984, *(c)* 1994 and *(d)* 2003 (i) in England and (ii) broken down by county. [165751]

Alun Michael: In responding, we are using the definition of the growing season in England to be the longest period within a year which:

Starts—the first day in a period of five consecutive days during the spring when the daily average temperature was greater than 5.5°C, and

Ends—the day before a period of five consecutive days in the autumn/winter when the daily average air temperature was less than 5.5°C.

The 20th century warming over central England has resulted in a lengthening of what is known as the thermal growing season by about one month.

Most of the increase took place in two distinct phases. The first took place between 1920 and 1960, and the second between 1980 and 2000.

The longest thermal growing season occurred in 2000 when it extended for 328 days. The thermal growing season is now longer than at any time since the start of the daily temperature series in 1772.

Accurate data by county are not available.

For further information please refer to the UKCIP02 Scientific Report (specifically page 10, Figure 7), available online: http://www.ukcip.org.uk/scenarios/sci_report/sci_report.html.

Coastal Defence

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much and what percentage of revenue received from aggregate dredging has been *(a)* put back into the coastal defence budget and *(b)* made available for coastal defence compensation in each of the last five years. [163573]

Mr. Morley: The Crown Estate receives revenue from dredging companies for all the marine aggregates that they extract from the seabed that the Crown Estate owns or over which it has mineral rights. All surplus revenue raised by The Crown Estate is passed directly to the Exchequer for the benefit of all UK taxpayers.

There is no direct link between surplus revenues and the Government's budget for coastal defence. Defra does not allocate funds to be spent on coastal damage compensation.

In addition, all producers of aggregates, both onshore and offshore are liable to the aggregates levy. A proportion of this levy is disposed to the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund, which finances research to improve the sustainability of aggregate production, including a substantial programme of marine environmental studies to reduce the impacts of dredging.

Coastal Erosion

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the effects of *(a)* managed retreat and *(b)* managed realignment in the Suffolk, Coastal constituency. [163752]

Mr. Morley: I have made no such estimates.

The relevant operating authorities, the Environment Agency (EA), Suffolk Coastal District Council and Waveney District Council, produced a Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) in 1998 for the coastline between Lowestoft and Harwich setting out recommended coastal defence policies. It is due to be reviewed later this year.

There were four strategic options included in the SMP: "Do Nothing", "Hold the Existing Line", "Advance the Existing Line" and "Retreat the Existing Line".

There are two main stretches of coastline in the Suffolk, Coastal constituency where the recommended policy is to retreat the existing line. They are:

(i) from Benacre to Easton Bavents, and

(ii) from Walberswick to north of Sizewell Power Station.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the *(a)* speed and *(b)* extent of coastal erosion in the Suffolk Coastal constituency at (i) Covehithe, (ii) Dunwich and (iii) Bawdsey. [163754]

Mr. Morley: I have made no such estimates. This Department has policy responsibility for flood and coastal defence but local operating authorities are responsible for monitoring the coastline and considering what measures to take. However the Department has provided grant aid to the operating authorities for studies on coastal processes which will inform the review of the Shoreline Management Plan for this frontage which will commence later this year.

The current SMP shows the predicted coastline in the year 2073 and gives the estimated value of the total land at risk through projected erosion as £6.26 million.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what estimate she has made of the value of the land and buildings in the Suffolk Coastal constituency that will be lost in the next *(a)* 10, *(b)* 25 and *(c)* 50 years under current sea defence policies; [163755]

(2) what information and advice she has given to the owners and occupiers of homes and farmland at East Lane, Bawdsey, about the protection she will afford them by way of coastal defences. [163756]

Mr. Morley: Defra officials have replied to correspondence about East Lane, Bawdsey, by explaining the relative responsibilities of the Department and local operating authorities, and the arrangements for funding improved defences within a national priority system.

I understand that the Environment Agency (EA) have also corresponded with and met local residents, including landowners, Internal Drainage Board members and the Parish Council. The EA has provided advice on the short term and longer term options for the management of sea defences at East Lane, Bawdsey.

The EA and Suffolk Coastal District Council jointly held a public meeting on 17 June 2003 when the situation at East Lane was explained to local residents.

Residents of properties at risk in areas of flooding have been offered the opportunity to receive a direct warning of flooding from the EA.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) at what point between the sea and the village of Bawdsey she intends to protect the coastline; how much land she expects to lose before that point is reached; and what time scale she envisages for that erosion; [163757]

(2) when she expects to define the shoreline in Bawdsey, Suffolk, that she will defend. [163758]

Mr. Morley: These are primarily matters for the local operating authorities.

The Shoreline Management Plan (SMP) published in 1998 showed the predicted coastline position in the year 2073 (ie 75 years from the date the plan was prepared).

For the coastal frontage at Bawdsey the SMP recommended policy was to hold the existing line in the short term. I understand that the subsequent studies undertaken since have confirmed this policy but this will no doubt be considered again this year's review of the SMP. However consideration of Defra funding for any improved defences is dependent on those defences meeting the technical, economic and environmental criteria and achieving an appropriate priority score.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions her Department has held with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on the historic importance of Martello towers. [164250]

Mr. Morley: Defra has had no direct discussion with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport on the specific issue of Martello towers. English Heritage (EH) is the Government's statutory adviser on matters concerning the conservation of England's historic built environment and is represented on Defra's Stakeholder Forum to inform the Government's new Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management. Defra consults EH as necessary and did so for example during development of guidance on environmental appraisal of flood and coastal defence projects and of the priority scoring system for flood and coastal defence projects for Defra grant aid.

Economic justification for proposed defences should take benefits arising from protection of such assets into account as far as possible. A small specific allowance is made for protection of heritage assets in the priority scoring system.

I understand the Environment Agency has consulted EH as part of the consultation process for the development of proposals to protect assets, including a Martello tower, at East Lane, Bawdsey in the right hon. Member's constituency.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what value she places on the preservation of the line of Martello towers from Felixstowe to Aldeburgh. [165488]

Mr. Morley: Defra has not found it necessary to allocate a specific value to these particular assets as part of general policy development or implementation. In the context of reducing the risk of flooding or coastal erosion to such assets, it would fall to the relevant operating authorities—Environment Agency or local authority—to decide upon appropriate measures and the extent to which the benefits to be gained from investing in defences would justify the cost.

Proposals to use Defra grant aid for the purpose must meet the Department's economic, technical and environmental criteria and achieve the threshold priority score for the year in which the works start. Economic justification for proposed defences should take benefits arising from protection of assets into account as far as possible. The Department has recognised the need to preserve national heritage and a small specific allowance is made for protection of heritage assets in the priority scoring system.

Conferences/Seminars

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans have been made in the last three months for conferences and seminars by agencies of her Department; what the total cost was of organising each of those events; and how many people attended in each case. [161391]

Alun Michael: Records of conferences and seminars held by the Defra Agencies are not available centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans have been made in the last three months for internal conferences and seminars to be attended by staff of her Department; what the total cost was of organising each of those events; and how many people attended in each case. [161392]

Alun Michael: The following conferences and seminars for internal staff for which records are held centrally are as follows:

Flood management. Number attended, approximately 64. Total cost £2,038, including audio and video for webcasting.

Lessons of the Foot and Mouth outbreak. Number attended, approximately 100. Total cost £2,232 including audio and video for webcasting.

Support for rural businesses. Number attended approximately 35, cost about £500. These three are part of a programme of seminars hosted by the Permanent Secretary covering a variety of subjects of relevance to Defra policy and its change programme, to which all staff are invited.

A conference for Defra's Senior Civil Service. Number attended, approximately 200. Cost £22,696.98 (including VAT).

Five science seminars. Number attended ranged from 50 to 120, average 81, total cost about £200. These are part of a continuing programme of science seminars hosted by Defra's Chief Scientific Adviser, which are held once a month.

Pre-retirement two-day seminars in London and Lowestoft. Total number attended, 49. Total cost approximately £1,770. These are part of an on-going programme of seminars to help Defra staff prepare for retirement.

Sustainable development seminars, one held already, another two planned. There were 23 attendees at the first, cost (for food) £242.58. The second is expected to have the same number of attendees and roughly the same cost. A third, larger seminar in May is expected to attract 54 people and to cost £585.50.

Seminar on public procurement. Number attended, approximately 120. No costs other than staff costs.

Two state aids seminars, to explain the Block Exemption Regulations. Number attended, approximately 90. Total cost, for refreshments, about £60.

An agriculture, food and fisheries Forward Look EU seminar, important for Defra, UKRep and UK attaches overseas. Number attended, 80. Cost approximately £900.

The costs above do not include staff costs.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which former officials of the Department have asked for permission to join *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst & Young and *(d)* KPMG. [156890]

Alun Michael: Since Defra was created in 2001 there have been no requests made by Defra officials for permission to join *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst & Young or *(d)* KPMG.

All civil servants are subject to the Business Appointment Rules as detailed in the Civil Service Management Code, which set out the circumstances in which they must seek permission to accept outside appointments within two years of leaving the Service. A copy of the Rules is available in the Libraries of the House. Information about appointments taken up by the most senior staff are published in the annual reports of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments. The next annual report will be published shortly.

Ducks

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to adopt the recommendation from the Council of Europe Standing Committee for the Protection of Animals Kept for Farming Purposes concerning domestic ducks. [164184]

Mr. Bradshaw: A revised Code of Recommendations for the Welfare of Livestock: Ducks, is due to go out for public consultation shortly. The draft takes account of Council of Europe recommendations on Domestic Ducks and Muscovy Ducks (1999).

Energy Efficiency

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Scottish Executive about the pledge made in Building a Better Scotland: Spending Proposals 2003–06, to reduce the number of homes with poor energy efficiency standards by 20 per cent. by 2006; and if she will adopt a similar policy for English homes. [161201]

Mr. Morley: The Government set out their goals for improving energy efficiency in the Energy White Paper and will publish their Energy Efficiency Implementation Plan shortly. This will set out the policies and programmes for delivering energy efficiency, including in the household sector, where a key element includes the Government's target to ensure all social homes reach set standards of decency by 2010. Ministers have had no discussions with the Scottish Executive about their pledge.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what energy rating is necessary to enable a household to be removed from fuel poverty. [165279]

Mr. Morley: This will depend on the characteristics of an individual household. However, research has shown that bringing homes to a SAP rating of 65 is a level at which there is minimal risk of a household being in fuel poverty.

Exmoor Deer

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions

she has had with the Exmoor Deer Management Society about the condition of deer at the Baronsdown sanctuary. [165178]

Mr. Bradshaw: I am not aware of any discussions between the Department and the Exmoor Deer Management Society on this matter.

Farm Subsidies (West Derbyshire)

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total amount of money paid in subsidies to farmers in West Derbyshire was in *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2002–03; and what the estimated total amount paid in subsidies to farmers in West Derbyshire will be in 2012. [163747]

Alun Michael: The following table shows the total amount of money paid in subsidies to farmers in South and West Derbyshire in 2001–02 and 2002–03. The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is unable to provide figures solely for West Derbyshire as the NUTS (Nomenclature of Territorial Units for Statistics) coding structure used for regional analysis does not contain a code for West Derbyshire. The nearest regional code is for South and West Derbyshire to which the figures in the table refer.

Due to the on-going changes resulting from the Common Agricultural Policy Mid Term Review, it is not possible for RPA to estimate a figure for subsidies that will be paid to farmers in West Derbyshire in 2012.

The European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) financial year runs from 16 October to 15 October.

EAGGF year	*Amount (£)*
2001–02	2,615,536
2002–03	3,293,758

Fertilisers

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what account is taken in the procedures for assessing the risks to public health from agricultural spraying of *(a)* long-term exposure to pesticides in the air, excluding spraydrift, *(b)* exposure to pesticides via precipitation, *(c)* exposure to pesticides transported from outdoor applications and redistributed into an indoor air environment, *(d)* exposure to mixtures of pesticides and other hazardous chemicals per spraying application, *(e)* the effect on vulnerable groups with particular reference to (i) babies, (ii) children, (iii) pregnant women, (iv) the elderly and (v) those with pre-existing medical problems and chemical sensitivity and *(f)* the effect of exposure to pesticides in the (A) short and (B) long term for domestic animals situated in or near sprayed fields. [165694]

Alun Michael: The UK's pesticide approval system provides robust safeguards to protect the public against health risks—a view that is endorsed by independent scientists on the Advisory Committee on Pesticides. Before any pesticide can be used it must first be proved that it is safe to humans, wildlife and the environment. Companies wishing to obtain approval for the marketing and sale of pesticide products are required to submit substantial data dossiers, covering, among other things, their effects on the environment and non-target species, safety in use and any residues they may leave in food.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Minister for Rural Affairs has seen in full the video evidence and written documentation submitted by Georgina Downs to the recent departmental consultation on proposals for the introduction of no-spray buffer zones between spraying areas and residential properties in England and Wales. [165707]

Alun Michael: I have watched both of the videos that Georgina Downs submitted as part of her response to this consultation. I shall also consider fully the written submission provided by Ms Downs once I have received the Pesticide Safety Directorate's analysis of all of the responses to the consultation.

Green Landlord Scheme

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions her Department has had with HM Treasury on the elements of a green landlord scheme; and if she will make a statement. [162955]

Margaret Beckett: Defra and HM Treasury officials have been working together closely on a consultation on the use of economic instruments to promote household energy efficiency. As part of this process, the green landlord scheme was discussed at Ministerial level prior to the Budget.

Green Minister

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what work her Department's Green Minister has undertaken in an official capacity in the last three months. [165654]

Mr. Morley: My noble Friend, the Lord Whitty, is Defra's Green Minister and, as part of this role, is a member of the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. I chair the Sub-Committee. However, it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Sustainable development is the overarching aim of Defra. Therefore, the work of all Defra's Ministers, including the Green Minister, contributes to this aim. Consequently, it is not possible to separate the role of the Green Minister from Lord Whitty's other work over the last three months.

An important piece of work within the Department over the last year has been the review of the 1999 UK Strategy on Sustainable Development. This work is culminating in a consultation on a new strategy which is to be launched at an event on 21 April 2004.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what meetings her Department's Green Minister has attended in an official capacity in the last 12 months. [165655]

Mr. Morley: My noble Friend, the Lord Whitty, is Defra's Green Minister and, as part of this role, is a member of the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. I chair the Sub-Committee. However, it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

With regard to other meetings attended over the last 12 months, sustainable development is the overarching aim of Defra. Meetings attended by Lord Whitty over the last 12 months, whether or in his capacity as Green Minister, contribute to this aim. Therefore, it is not possible to differentiate from meetings attended in the official capacity as Green Minister or in other roles.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the meetings at which a representative of her Department was present regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [165656]

Mr. Morley: My noble Friend, the Lord Whitty, is a member of the Ministerial Sub-Committee of Green Ministers. However, it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

There are many meetings held to take forward the business of sustainable development at which officials are present. It would take disproportionate resources to gather this information from across the Department.

Greenhouse Gases

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with her international counterparts on the use of contraction and convergence to reduce global levels of greenhouse gas emissions; and if she will make a statement. [165270]

Mr. Morley: At the UN climate change negotiations in Milan last December the UK, as part of the EU, sought to open a technical dialogue on Contraction and Convergence and other approaches. The purpose was to start technical discussions on different methodologies to promote better understanding and build capacity. Unfortunately, we were not able to secure the necessary support to take this forward. In bilateral discussions, the UK continues to exchange views with other countries on how to promote further action post-2012, when the first commitment period of the Kyoto Protocol ends.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimates she has made of the emissions of greenhouse gases in million tonnes of carbon equivalent from UK coal-fired power generation in the last three years for which figures are available; and what estimate she has made of emissions for the next three years. [165453]

Mr. Morley: Greenhouse gas emissions from UK coal fired power stations were 26.6, 29.3 and 27.4 million tonnes of carbon equivalent in 2000, 2001 and 2002 respectively. These data include emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide weighted together using global warming potentials. Provisional data suggest that emissions from coal fired power stations were 30.6 million tonnes of carbon equivalent in 2003. Emissions projections are not available by individual year and are currently being revised. Initial results made available in July 2003 suggest that emissions from coal powered power stations will be about 26 million tonnes of carbon equivalent in 2005. Further results will be available soon.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1620W, on hazardous waste, how the predicted number of 750,000 active producers of hazardous waste following the implementation of the revised European hazardous waste list was reached; and how she will alert the newly included producers to the inclusion of their waste arisings on the new list. [164078]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency commissioned work from consultants to inform work on the transition from the current Special Waste regime to the Hazardous Waste regime. The predicted number of 750,000 active producers of hazardous waste was derived from an analysis of the available data on the expected types of newly hazardous wastes correlated with an assessment of the numbers of those businesses likely to produce such waste.

The Department is working with key stakeholders in the Hazardous Waste Forum including the Environment Agency the Department for Trade and Industry and Federation of Small Businesses to ensure that awareness of these changes will be brought to the attention of affected businesses.

HFCs

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the effect of the voluntary policy of reducing leakage of hydrofluorocarbons. [165274]

Mr. Morley: The voluntary policy on reducing leakage of hydrofluorocarbons has had a positive impact in terms of raising awareness. Industry stakeholders are now much more aware of the environmental threat posed by these gases, and they are actively pursuing a strategy of emission reduction.

A recent study commissioned by Defra, (AEAT/ED50090/R01) calculated projected hydroflurocarbon emissions for the period 2005–25. The study estimated that the voluntary leakage reduction policy could reduce emissions of fluorinated gases, including hydrofluorocarbons, by approximately 3 millions tonnes of carbon equivalent over this period.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proposals she has to reduce leakage of hydrofluorocarbons. [165275]

Mr. Morley: The UK is currently negotiating with other European Union Member States a proposal for a Regulation of the European Parliament and of the Council on certain fluorinated greenhouse gases. This Regulation is a key part of the first phase of the European Climate Change Programme. It will put in place a legislative framework to reduce emissions of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF6), which are powerful greenhouse gases covered by the Kyoto Protocol.

The Regulation will introduce specific measures related to the containment, use and recovery of fluorinated gases, together with a general obligation to take all abatement measures that are technically feasible and cost-effective. In addition the Regulation will provide for restrictions on the placing on the market of some products and equipment that contain fluorinated gases, and a reporting regime for producers, importers and exporters.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the emissions of hydrofluorocarbons in each year since 1995 from mobile and vehicle air conditioning; and what the forecasts are for future years. [165452]

Mr. Morley: A 2003 report commissioned by Defra indicated that emissions of hydrocarbons (MFC 134a) rose steadily from 1995–2000, from approximately 140 tonnes in 1995 to approximately 600 tonnes in 2000. This rise was due to the rapid growth of MFC-based mobile air conditioning (MAC) systems in new passenger vehicles from 10 per cent. in 1990 to 50 per cent. in 2000.

The report forecast that MFC based MAC systems would be fitted to approximately 75 per cent. of new cars by 2010, and associated emissions would continue to rise to a peak of approximately 1,270 tonnes of MFC 134a in 2010.

The proposed new EC Regulation on certain fluorinated greenhouse gases includes provisions which would lead to a phase out from 2009 of air conditioning systems with fluorinated gases with a global warming potential higher than 150.

The Government have made it clear that they welcome the overall aim of the draft Regulation to reduce emissions of the powerful greenhouse gases that it covers and the environmental benefits that will be delivered. These reductions in emissions will form part of the wider efforts being taken to combat climate change.

Hunting Trophies

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what investigations are conducted to ascertain whether hunting trophies have been obtained illegally. [164401]

Mr. Morley: All applications for permits are referred to the UK's Authority for advice on the conservation status of the species concerned. An applicant wishing to import a hunting trophy from an endangered species would need to provide a copy of the export permit issued by the exporting country. This is regarded as proof of legal acquisition and without this an import permit would not be authorised.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many times in the last five years the import of hunted trophies has been refused where there was evidence that the animals had been taken illegally. [164402]

Mr. Morley: I am not aware of any applications in the last five years to import hunting trophies which were acquired illegally.

Ice Caps

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what change there has been in the percentage of ice cap cover in *(a)* Antarctica and *(b)* the Arctic in each year since 1974; and what total (i) area and (ii) volume the change between 1974 and 2003 represents. [165747]

Mr. Morley: The following tables show:

Percentage change in sea ice area for the southern and northern hemispheres from 1975 to 2003, relative to 1974.

Change in sea ice area in million square kilometers for the southern and northern hemispheres from 1975 to 2003, relative to 1974.

There is no significant trend in area coverage of Antarctic sea ice. Arctic sea ice shows a downward trend of approximately 2.9 per cent. per decade.

Observations of ice thickness are not routinely available, and consequently it is not possible to construct a description of the annual volume change. From the limited data available there are indications that there is a downward trend in Arctic sea ice volume of 4 per cent. per decade.

Graphs showing the change in sea ice area have been placed in the Library of the House. Note that reliable satellite measurements of sea ice area have been available only since 1978. The apparent rapid change in sea ice in the 1970s is partly due to the change from the previous sparse ship observations to the routine satellite measurements.

Percentage change in sea ice area relative to 1974

Year	*Antarctica*	*Arctic*
1975	-4.2	-0.6
1976	-8.9	1.2
1977	-11.2	0.3
1978	-8.9	1.1
1979	-8.6	-1.9
1980	-12.3	-2.2
1981	-10.4	-4.6
1982	-8.5	-1.1
1983	-11.1	-2.5
1984	-9.6	-5.8
1985	-8.4	-5
1986	-13.7	-3
1987	-10.1	-2.6
1988	-9	-3.3
1989	-9.3	-4.9
1990	-9.4	-7.5
1991	-9.5	-6.5
1992	-10.6	-3.7
1993	-9.9	-6
1994	-6	-4.2

Percentage change in sea ice area relative to 1974

Year	Antarctica	Arctic
1995	-6.9	-9.9
1996	-7.4	-6.3
1997	-8.5	-5.3
1998	-6.9	-4.5
1999	-7.9	-4.1
2000	-6.7	-6.6
2001	-8.9	-5.1
2002	-1.6	-6.7
2003	-5.9	-6.9

Absolute change in sea ice area (million square km) relative to 1974

Year	Antarctica	Arctic
1975	-0.432	-0.06
1976	-0.915	0.14
1977	-1.154	0.04
1978	-0.911	0.13
1979	-0.882	-0.21
1980	-1.268	-0.26
1981	-1.07	-0.53
1982	-0.868	-0.13
1983	-1.145	-0.29
1984	-0.991	-0.66
1985	-0.865	-0.57
1986	-1.408	-0.35
1987	-1.042	-0.3
1988	-0.928	-0.37
1989	-1.005	-0.57
1990	-0.971	-0.86
1991	-0.977	-0.74
1992	-1.085	-0.43
1993	-1.015	-0.68
1994	-0.618	-0.48
1995	-0.707	-1.14
1996	-0.765	-0.72
1997	-0.869	-0.61
1998	-0.714	-0.51
1999	-0.815	-0.47
2000	-0.684	-0.75
2001	-0.91	-0.58
2002	-1.192	-0.76
2003	-0.604	-0.79

Ivory Sales

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the decision under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species to demand that all African states ban domestic ivory sales. [165252]

Mr. Morley: While the CITES Secretariat did call for a ban on domestic ivory sales in African states, the CITES Standing Committee decided that this matter required further consideration by the range states and that the final decision should be referred to the 13th Conference of CITES Parties, which is to take place in Bangkok in October.

The fact that there are unregulated internal markets for ivory in certain parts of Africa is a matter of major concern and I await with interest the Secretariat's proposals for dealing with this matter.

Kyoto

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made in the last year towards meeting the Kyoto targets; and if she will make a statement. [163595]

Mr. Morley: The UK's target under the Kyoto Protocol is to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to 12.5 per cent. below base year levels by 2008–12. (The base year is 1990 for carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, and 1995 for fluorinated compounds.)

UK emissions in 2002, the most recent year for which final data are available, were 15.3 per cent. below the base year level. Provisional estimates made by my Department suggest that in 2003 UK emissions were between 14 and 15 per cent. below those in the base year. The increase on the previous year was linked to greater consumption of coal relative to natural gas for electricity generation. We believe on the basis of projections, including the effects of policies under the UK Climate Change programme, that the downward trend in emissions will be resumed, and that the Kyoto target will be met.

The European Community's target under the Kyoto Protocol is to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions by 8 per cent. below the base year level. In 2001, the last year for which data is available, EC emissions had decreased by 2.3 per cent. from the base year level.

Marine/Coastal Pollution

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many incidents in the last year for which figures are available of *(a)* marine pollution and *(b)* coastal pollution have resulted in (i) court actions and (ii) fines; and what the nature and level of conviction and financial penalty was in each case. [162899]

Mr. Morley: Several Departments and Agencies are responsible for incidents of coastal and marine pollution in English and Welsh waters depending on the source of the pollution. In 2003 the Maritime and Coastguard Agency took one successful court action which resulted in a £30,000 fine. Information about marine pollution from land based sources is available from the Environment Agency.

Nappies

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what estimate she has made of the average annual cost to a waste disposal authority of the disposal in landfill sites of disposable nappies; what discussions she has had with local authorities about ways of reducing those costs; what steps she takes to promote best practice in such matters; and if she will make a statement; [161854]

(2) what estimate she has made of the tonnage of disposable nappies that was disposed of in landfill sites in the last five years; what percentage of that tonnage is represented by *(a)* faeces and urine and *(b)* the original weight of the nappy; and what assessment she has made of the public health implications of the disposal in landfill sites of the untreated raw sewage in disposable nappies; [161855]

(3) what steps her Department takes to promote the uptake of reusable nappies; [161856]

(4) what initiatives she plans to reduce the impact upon the environment of the use of disposable nappies. [161911]

Mr. Morley: West Sussex County Council's scheme promoting re-usable nappies was included in the Municipal Waste Management Strategies Guidance published by the then DETR in 2001. West Sussex estimated that the cost of disposing of nappies to them was between £280,000 and £430,000 per annum.

The Strategy Unit in its report "Waste Not Want Not" estimated that in 2000–01 nappies comprised around 2 per cent. of household waste, equivalent to 350,000 tonnes.

Medical and related scientific studies show a wide range for the production of urine and faeces from children of different ages and these figures are currently being investigated as part of the Environment Agency study on the life cycle impacts of disposable and reusable nappy systems which will report in the summer.

Properly regulated landfill is a proven method of dealing with waste safely and can be relied on if alternative methods of dealing with waste are not provided. Our view is that good waste management practice adequately regulated can and does cope with disposable nappies.

Following the publication of the Strategy Unit report "Waste Not Want Not" the Government accepted the recommendation that the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) should take forward (as part of an overall waste minimisation initiative) work on supporting re-usable nappies through the provision of support for new businesses and information to parents. The details of the programme are still being worked up.

The aim of the WRAP programme is to achieve an average diversion of 225 kg/yr per participating household. WRAP'S target is to convert 155,000 households to re-usable nappies by end of fiscal year 2006. This is an ambitious target and if achieved would create a reduction in household waste of 35,000 tonnes.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the merits of including disposable nappies in the criteria for hazardous waste. [164491]

Mr. Morley: For a waste to be classified as "hazardous", it must normally be listed as such in the European Waste Catalogue. Nappies are not listed as hazardous. It is open to member states to determine that other wastes are hazardous where these display one or more of the hazardous properties specified in the Hazardous Waste Directive at above the thresholds the directive specifies. Waste such as nappies would be considered under property H9 (infectious). However, to be considered hazardous there would need to be a high risk that infectious substances were present in the waste at a concentration above that naturally encountered. Since the source population for household waste is healthy, the risk of infection is very low and nappies do not therefore meet the criteria necessary for a "hazardous" classification.

Organic Farming

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will increase support for farmers to grow an increased *(a)* range and *(b)* quantity of organic produce. [164225]

Mr. Bradshaw: Aid for organic farmers was extended in May last year with the introduction of ongoing payments under the Organic Farming Scheme. It is proposed to further develop aid through the organic strand of the Entry Level Agri-Environment Scheme which will shortly be submitted for approval by the European Commission and which is expected to be launched in 2005.

Over-thirty-month Scheme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what response she has made to the recent Food Standards Agency proposal to end the Over-Thirty-Month Scheme. [164466]

Mr. Bradshaw: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State, has welcomed the recommendation by the Food Standards Agency that the Over Thirty Month (OTM) rule could be replaced with a system of testing OTM animals for the food chain. UK Rural Affairs Ministers have decided that animals born before August 1996 should not be allowed back into the food chain because of difficulties associated with tracing and culling the cohorts of cases born before this date.

Peat

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the *(a)* funding and *(b)* resources provided for the peat replacement section of her Department. [163893]

Mr. Bradshaw: Since April 2002 the Department has provided some £15.97 million, and over the next two years will make available a further £3.01 million to English Nature, to support the conservation of peat resources by bringing to an end commercial peat extraction which was threatening three important nature conservation sites in the north of England.

We have also provided funding to the Waste Resources Action Programme (WRAP) to enable them to carry out work to develop markets for composted materials, which can be used as alternative growing media. The total budget for WRAP's Kerbside Collection and Organics Market Development Programme is £14.9 million spread over the financial years 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Staff resources involved in work on peat replacement issues represent a proportion of a single staff year, linked to broader biodiversity aims as set out in Working with the Grain of Nature—a Biodiversity Strategy for England. The team concerned will have some increase in administration resource in 2004–05 and we are considering how best to apply this.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the figures for progress on peat replacement for 2003 will be published. [164248]

Mr. Bradshaw: The latest information on monitoring of peat and alternative products for growing media and soil improvers in the UK was published by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2003. My Department now has responsibility for this issue. We are considering arrangements for a further monitoring exercise later this year with a view to publishing the data in 2005.

In the meantime we have commissioned ADAS to produce a report this summer which will provide details of the current use of peat and growing media alternatives in the commercial horticulture sector in England.

Prittle Brook Sewerage

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will investigate the operation of the Prittle Brook sewerage system; and if she will instruct Ofwat to bring forward its repair. [165381]

Mr. Morley: I understand that the current foul water sewerage system has on several occasions resulted in discharges to Prittle Brook. The situation has been further exacerbated by heavy rainfall and surface water infiltration.

We are aware that Anglian Water has increased its investment in the local network and initiated a number of operational changes and studies e.g. the installation of non-return valves and the removal of tree roots, damaging the sewers.

Each of the water and sewerage companies, including Anglian Water, will be submitting their business plans later this month setting out their investment proposals for the period 2005–10. These plans incorporate the repair and maintenance of sewers. In the light of these plans, the Director General of Water Services, the independent economic regulator, will make his draft determinations of price limits in August and his final determinations in December 2004.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to which Minister the Radioactive Waste Policy Group is responsible and reports. [165257]

Mr. Morley: The Radioactive Waste Policy Group (RWPG) is chaired and managed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). It is made up of UK Government, devolved Administration and regulatory body representatives. Its terms of reference are:

> "To review and make recommendations on issues which arise in relation to UK radioactive waste management policy, radioactive discharges, and corresponding regulatory processes and arrangements".

The group meets several times a year and functions in the interim through correspondence.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the members of the Radioactive Waste Policy Group. [165258]

Mr. Morley: The Radioactive Waste Policy Group (RWPG) is made up of representatives from: the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra); the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI); Department of Health, (DH); Department for Transport (DfT); the Department for Education and Science (DfES); the Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS); the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP); the Ministry of Defence (MOD); the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM); Treasury, the Cabinet Office; the Scottish Executive (SE); the National Assembly for Wales (NAW); the Department of the Environment Northern Ireland (DoENI); the Health and Safety Executive (HSE); the Environment Agency (EA); the Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA); the Office for Civil Nuclear Security (OCNS); and the Foods Standards Agency (FSA). Some of these representatives are full participating members. Others are corresponding members, not normally attending meetings but doing so on occasion in light of the agenda. The identities of organisational representatives change over time. I have arranged for the current list of full and corresponding RWPG members to be placed in the Library.

Rights of Way

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what powers she has to implement policy arising from her Department's consultation on the use of mechanically powered vehicles on rights of way. [165153]

Alun Michael: The proposals in the consultation paper on better enforcement of existing legislation and the regulation of vehicles on rights of way could be implemented through departmental circulars and other guidance. Primary legislation would be needed to implement the proposals on how future and historic rights might be claimed and on statutory easements.

Rural Payments Agency

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the role of the Rural Payments Agency. [164598]

Alun Michael: The Rural Payments Agency (RPA) is an Executive Agency of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra). It is the accredited Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) paying agency responsible for CAP schemes in England and for certain schemes throughout the UK. In addition, it is the UK Funding Body, and as such is responsible for the receipt and administration of moneys from the Guarantee Section of the European Agriculture Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF) for funding the CAP schemes administered by all the UK Paying Agencies.

RPA is a major delivery arm of Defra and provides delivery experience and advice to policy divisions within Defra. It currently delivers over £2 billion of CAP payments to farmers and traders under existing

schemes. On 1 April 2003, RPA assumed responsibility for the British Cattle Movement Service (BCMS) which is Defra's centre of expertise and service delivery on animal health and identification. RPA is responsible, through BCMS, for the Cattle Tracing System, including issuing of cattle passports and recording of cattle movements.

Secondments

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the secondees from outside organisations presently working in her Department, stating in each case *(a)* the name of the person, *(b)* the name of the organisation, *(c)* the post held and *(d)* the start and finish dates of the secondment, and indicating which are involved in drafting parliamentary answers. [158051]

Alun Michael: The following table details the secondees currently working in this Department and the other information requested.

The term "secondee" refers to a person "borrowed" from an organisation outside the Civil Service for a period of between three months and three years (exceptionally five years), without affecting employment status. During the secondment period the secondee remains an employee of the parent organisation but is expected to abide by the Defra Staff Handbook and the Official Secrets Act. Secondees are expected to undertake the full range of duties attached to the post, including the provision of drafts for PQs if required.

At the end of the secondment the secondee would return to the parent organisation.

Name	*Parent organisation*	*Defra job title*	*Involved in drafting parliamentary answers*	*Secondment dates*
Nader Bahri	Powergen	Industrial Adviser	Yes	28 April 2003–28 April 2004
Alison Barnes	English Nature	England Local Biodiversity Action Co-ordinator	Yes	16 January 2001–31 March 2006
Fay Blair	Global to Local	Environment Quality Team Consultant	No	2 January 2003–31 March 2004
Tony Bray	East Sussex County Council	Account Manager, Regional and Local Delivery	No	8 March 2004–7 March 2006
Rob Cathcart	English Nature	Environmental Adviser	No	5 January 2004–25 June 2004
Richard Chalk	Royal Bank of Scotland	Head of Organisation and Leadership Development	No	12 January 2004–31 December 2005
David Coleman	Countryside Agency	Head of Rural Services	Yes	2 December 2002–30 November 2004 DA
David Cooper	Cambridgeshire County Council	Policy Adviser	No	22 September 2003–22 September 2004
Stephen Crisp	British Telecommunications	Business and Environment Adviser	No	21 October 2003–21 October 2004
GianMarco Currado	Environment Agency	EU Chemical Safety Adviser	Yes	1 July 2003–30 March 2005
Howard Dalton	Warwick University	Chief Science Adviser and Head of Science Directorate	Yes	4 March 2002–3 March 2007
Alan Darcy	Environment Agency	Waste Policy Adviser	No	8 January 2004–8 July 2004
Ged Duckworth	Environment Agency	Waste Permitting Review Policy Adviser	Yes	4 November 2002–31 July 2004
Duncan Eggar	British Petroleum	Climate Adviser	No	1 February 2002–30 April 2004
Joanna Enright	Ashursts	Policy Adviser	Yes	3 October 2003–8 April 2004
John Enright	London Remade	Head of Local Authority Support	No	4 August 2003–4 August 2005
Richard Findon	English Nature	Head of Sustainable Agriculture Unit	Yes	15 September 1999–5 September 2005
John Galvin	Environment Agency	Waste Policy Adviser	Yes	5 February 2001–30 October 2004
Alun James	Environment Agency	Sustainable Development Strategy Adviser	Yes	1 December 2002–30 April 2003
Chris Lee	Association of London Government	Market Development Manager	Yes	5 January 2004–2 January 2005
Fiona Lickerish	Countryside Agency	Senior Research Officer	Yes	11 November 2002–31 March 2005
Esther Maughan	Strong Language	Sustainable Development Commission Adviser	Yes	14 April 2001–13 May 2005
Ben Metz	London Community Recycling Network	Waste Implementation Programme Adviser	No	3 November 2003–31 March 2004
John Powell	Gloucester University	Senior Policy Officer Commons Legislation	No	20 October 2003–31 May 2005
Geoff Radley	English Nature	Head of Agri-Env Scheme Review Team	Yes	1 January 2002–31 May 2005

Name	Parent organisation	Defra job title	Involved in drafting parliamentary answers	Secondment dates
Mike Rich	Environmental Campaigns	Local Environment Quality Team Adviser	No	10 November 2003–9 November 2004
Diane Roberts	SW Regional Development Agency	Regional Development Liaison Officer	Yes	19 May 2003–21 May 2004
Sandy Shattock	Countryside Agency	Head Rural Community Unit	Yes	15 January 2002–13 January 2005
Nick Starkey	National Farmers Union	Secretary to the Government-Industry Forum on Non Food uses of crops	No	1 October 2003–30 September 2005

Sewerage

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the population in England and Wales has access to *(a)* mains sewage systems, *(b)* unadopted sewers, *(c)* private sewers and *(d)* septic tanks, broken down by local authority. [162895]

Mr. Morley: Estimates of the number of properties served by various types of sewerage system vary. The W.S. Atkins research found that:

(a) Approximately 90 per cent. of the properties in England and Wales have access to mains sewerage.

(b) Assuming 'unadopted sewers' mean all private sewers i.e. they are not adopted by the relevant sewerage undertaker then 40 per cent. of properties connect to public sewers via unadopted sewers.

(c) Assuming 'private sewers' means sewers which connect to a private treatment facility i.e. not part of the public system—then 10 per cent. of properties are estimated to be connected to completely private systems. This includes those connected to private treatment facilities, septic tanks and cesspools.

(d) No data are available on the number of properties with septic tank.

Information expressed as a proportion of the population is not available and neither is information available broken down by local authority areas.

Sturgeon

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations her Department made to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species with regard to the spring hunt for sturgeon in the Caspian Sea. [165251]

Mr. Morley: The Department did not make any direct representations on this issue when it was discussed at the 50th meeting of the CITES Standing Committee, held in Geneva on 15–19 March. However, we did support the recommendation that the CITES Secretariat should continue to monitor permits issued for the export or re-export of caviar to ensure that any frauds or forgeries were identified quickly. This view was fully supported by the other EU member states and duly conveyed to the Standing Committee by Germany on their behalf.

Thames Barrier

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the occasions on which the Thames Barrier has been closed in each of the last 10 years; and what estimate she has made of the number of occasions when it will be closed in *(a)* 2010, *(b)* 2020, *(c)* 2050 and *(d)* 2100. [165740]

Mr. Morley: The Thames Barrier is closed to protect London from high water levels in the River Thames resulting from tidal surge conditions in combination with high freshwater flows in the river following rainfall over the Thames catchment. The Barrier closures may be characterised as predominantly tidal-influenced (T) or predominantly rainfall/fluvial-influenced (F). Over the last 10 years the Thames Barrier has been closed to prevent flooding during the winter flood season (generally October to April) on 67 occasions as follows:

1994–95: 4 (T = 2, F = 2)

1995–96: 4 (T = 4, F = 0)

1996–97: 1 (T = 1, F = 0)

1997–98: 1 (T = 1, F = 0)

1998–99: 2 (T = 2, F = 0)

1999–2000: 6 (T = 3, F = 3)

2000–01: 24 (T = 16, F = 8)

2001–02: 4 (T = 3,F = 1)

2002–03: 20 (T = 8, F = 12)

2003–04: 1 (T = 1, F = 0)

Forecasting the frequency of closure of the Thames Barrier in the future depends on two principal factors:

(a) The impacts of climate change on sea and river levels—based on the climate change scenarios currently available; and

(b) The extent to which these levels may be reduced by other flood risk management measures used within the Thames Estuary in conjunction with operation of the Thames Barrier.

Depending on the balance of factors described above, The Environment Agency's early studies indicate estimated frequency of closures as follows:

2010: 10—20 closures per year

2020: 20—35 closures per year

2050: 6*—75 closures per year

2100: 30*—325 closures per year

The lower figure for each year indicates the best predicted outcome based on lowest climate change scenario impacts and maximum use of flood management mitigation measures implemented from 2030 (shown by *). The higher figure for each year indicates the worst potential outcome based on

maximum climate change predicted impacts with no additional flood management mitigation measures implemented from 2030.

The Environment Agency is currently planning for the future of flood risk management within the Thames Estuary and has for this purpose established a project called Thames Estuary 2100 based at the Thames Barrier. The purpose of the project is to produce a flood risk management plan for the tidal part of the Thames Estuary covering the next 100 years.

UN Environment Programme

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the outcome of the visit of the Environment Minister to the United Nations Environment Programme session in Korea. [165263]

Mr. Morley: The Global Ministerial Environment Forum (GMEF) met in Jeju, Republic of Korea, to discuss the action needed to factor environmental considerations more fully into the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) Commitments on water, sanitation and human settlements. I represented the UK. Together with Lesotho's Minister of Natural Resources, Mr.Monyane Moleleki, I co-chaired an interactive session on how integrated water resource management (IWRM) plans can make a key contribution to the sustainable provision of water and sanitation.

The output from this session and two following ones were summarised in the Jeju Initiative, adopted by the GMEF on 31 March. This sets out what contribution Governments and UNEP, with other multilateral institutions, can make in these areas. The Initiative will be reported to the Twelfth Meeting of the UN Commission for Sustainable Development.

While in Korea, I also took part in a meeting of Commonwealth Environment Ministers and had useful bilateral discussions, notably with the Environment Minister of Korea, Kyul-ho Kwak, and with UNEP Executive Director Klaus Toepfer. I also met with a number of international NGOs.

Village Halls (Stroud)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list those village halls in the Stroud constituency that have applied for *(a)* her Department's and *(b)* Lottery grants for refurbishment purposes; and which have been successful. [164211]

Alun Michael: The information that would be needed to provide a comprehensive answer on successful applications is not held centrally, and information on unsuccessful applications is generally not collated on a geographical basis. Such information as we have is as follows:

Defra

Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund—in its first two years of operation (2002–04) there have been no successful applications for schemes in Stroud.

Rural Enterprise Scheme—no applications relating to village halls have been received from the Stroud constituency.

Countryside Agency Vital Villages programme, Community Services Grants—two village halls have applied for, and successfully obtained, a grant for projects: Woodchester Village Community Hall—£9,750—and Oakridge Village Hall Trust-£5,404.

Lottery

Community Fund and other Lottery distributors—the Department for Culture, Media and Sport do not collect information on either the number or value of applications for Lottery grants for village halls received by the Distributing Bodies. Information about unsuccessful applications is treated in confidence and is retained by the Distributing Bodies.

Stroud has received 265 Lottery awards in total since 1995 worth £10.8 million. Stroud may also have received Lottery funding from umbrella schemes.

£328,762 Lottery awards have been made to refurbishment projects to 28 village halls, parish and community centres in Stroud. This figure includes halls that have widened their use for other members of the community, e.g. scout halls and youth clubs. The information is as follows:

£

Recipient	Project title/description long	Award date	Award amount
Awards for all			
St. Swithuns Scout Group, Leonard Stanley	Improvements to toilets and showers to improve usage and access by other groups such as the playgroup and over 50s exercise classes	20 May 2003	4,935
Nailsworth Youth Club	Disabled toilets and access will be installed at this community centre	18 March 2004	5,000
Whiteshill and Ruscombe Youth Club	Purchase of utensils and recreation equipment, heating system and decoration	11 June 1996	7,190
Community fund			
1st Minchinhampton Scout Group	Essential repairs. HQ building also used by playgroup and other community groups	16 May 1997	2,300
1st Stonehouse Scout Group	Essential refurbishment work for scout group HQ building which is also used by a variety of community groups	16 May 1997	3,830
Chalford Village Hall	Refurbishment and furnishing of the group's premises	19 September 1997	3,634
Dursley Parish Centre Committee	Essential kitchen refurbishment in the parish centre	21 April 1998	4,945
Ashmead Village Hall	External renovation	22 June 1998	4,208
Amberley Parish Rooms and Playgroup Management Committee	Refurbish and upgrade a community room beneath Amberley Parish Church	30 October 1998	37,053
Woodchester Village Community Hall	Specialised cleaning equipment and a feasibility study to upgrade the building	5 November 1998	1,906
Chalford Village Hall	New kitchen equipment and improve storage space	4 March 1999	1,302

£

Recipient	Project title/description long	Award date	Award amount
Harescombe Parish Hall	A new porch and replace two windows	4 March 1999	4,730
Uley Village Hall Management Committee	Extensive refurbishment including new drainage and building work	4 March 1999	4,935
Pitchcombe Village Hall Committee	Provision of a car park	27 April 1999	44,654
Miserden Village Hall	Carry out necessary repairs	17 June 1999	4,230
Horsley Village Hall	New furniture including a portable stage with disabled ramp	7 October 1999	5,000
Drusely and District Community Association	Central heating and double glazing installation	2 December 1999	22,725
Coaley Village Hall Management Committee	Replacement windows and doors	8 December 1999	5,000
Sheepscombe Village Hall	Fees for development plan for the hall to proceed to planning	3 February 2000	4,803
Elmore Village Hall Management Committee	Replacement windows in the hall with double glazed high security window units	3 February 2000	5,000
Box Village all Management Committee	New toilets with disabled access, a new kitchen and an enlarged community meeting room	5 May 2000	56,000
St. James Parish Centre Dursley	Centre is an ex-church school. Replacement of hall and kitchen floors and installation of fly screens	29 June 2000	4,908
Stone and District Village Hall	Replacement of the rear porch and tarmacking to rear of the car park	6 September 2000	2,411
Nailsworth Youth Club	Replacing of the roof and refurbishment of the kitchen	15 May 2001	2,500
Stone and District Village Hall	Installation of an induction loop facility	20 December 2001	1,360
Frith Youth Centre Bussage	Replacement flooring and fitting disabled toilets	31 January 2002	4,943
Frith Youth Centre Bussage	Replacement roof and other improvements to the games hut	25 November 2002	74,260
New opportunities fund			
Woodchester Village Community Hall	Provision of an IT suite and learning resource centre	31 January 2002	5,000

Warm Front Scheme

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what instructions her Department issued to Warm Front scheme managers on the publication on their websites of monthly statistical data relating to works carried out under the scheme; what assessment she has made of compliance with these instructions; and what action she proposes to take to ensure future compliance. [161638]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 29 March 2004]:* As part of the continuous development of Warm Front, the optimum reporting mechanisms for publishing Warm Front data were discussed between the Department and the scheme managers. Following these discussions it was agreed that data would be published annually.

Following a recent review of the delivery of the scheme, the Department has asked the scheme managers to publish data on a quarterly basis.

Historic annual data are also available on the scheme managers' websites.

Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what resources she has provided to the Environment Agency to *(a)* detect and *(b)* prosecute the illegal disposal of hazardous waste. [156429]

Mr. Morley: In 2003–04 Defra provided over £130 million grant-in-aid to the Environment Agency. Approximately £ 39 million of this will be used carrying out its waste duties which include the detecting and prosecuting of those responsible for the illegal disposal of hazardous waste. The agency agrees its priorities with the Department during the annual corporate planning process and allocates its funds accordingly.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what consultations have been launched in the last five years into *(a)* the reuse and *(b)* disposal of waste plastics. [162297]

Mr. Morley: There have been no consultations specifically on the reuse or disposal of waste plastic. However the following consultations, launched in the last five years, had implications for the reuse and disposal of waste plastic.

Consultation on changes to the Packaging Regulations, July 2003

Consultation on Packaging Regulations—Raising the targets in 2002–November 2001

Consultation Paper on Recovery and Recycling Targets for Packaging Waste in 2001, August 2000

UK Management Plan for Exports and Imports for Waste, June 2000

A Consultation Paper on changes to the percentage activity obligation and other matters, September 1999

Report of the Market Development Group, August 1999

A way with waste—a draft waste strategy for England and Wales, September 1999.

Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the anticipated funds to be generated through the retail compliance scheme under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive will be distributed in order to develop an adequate collection infrastructure across the UK. [163093]

Mr. Morley: No decision has yet been made about how the funds will be distributed to establish an adequate collection network.. The Government are currently discussing the details of the retailer compliance scheme with the British Retail Consortium.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what factors underlie her decision to ring fence £5 million of the proposed retail fund for local authority collection infrastructure under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [163094]

Mr. Morley: Local authorities are well placed to collect waste electrical and electronic equipment at civic amenity sites as they have a well established collection infrastructure already in place. The WEEE Directive, however, does not place any obligations on local authorities, and the Government have said that any new burdens placed on local authorities as a result of the WEEE Directive should be properly financed.

Under the proposals put forward in the most recent consultation paper on the WEEE Directive, local authorities would be able to bid into a ring-fenced retailer fund to upgrade their facilities to collect separately WEEE. The level of this funding (initially set at £5 million per annum for years 2005–10, with a review in 2008) was determined by a study carried out by consultants on behalf of Defra.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how her Department intends to *(a)* encourage reuse of waste electrical and electronic equipment and *(b)* maintain the role of charity organisations in the collection of waste electrical and electronic equipment. [163095]

Mr. Morley: Reuse of whole appliances is given priority in the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive, and the Government have asked for views from stakeholders on how best this should be done in the most recent consultation paper on the implementation of the WEEE Directive. The UK has a good network of charitable organisations that refurbish and reuse WEEE, and the Government are keen for this to continue.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how her Department intends to protect existing retail from take-back activities and reduce the likelihood of them being withdrawn, with particular reference to white goods, under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [163097]

Mr. Morley: The current proposals for a retailer compliance scheme encourage retailers to continue their existing take back schemes, and establish new schemes. Formal consultation has recently ended but discussions continue with interested parties on the best practical way forward.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when her Department expects to provide definitive information to businesses with duties under the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive on its scope across equipment categories. [163098]

Mr. Morley: The Government expect to issue draft guidance on the scope of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive in late spring this year, alongside draft implementing regulations.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the regulating authorities will ensure that the visible fee shown on consumer prices represents only the collection, treatment and disposal costs incurred by the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [163099]

Mr. Morley: No decision has yet been taken on the question of a visible fee. The Government are currently analysing the responses to the recent consultation on the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive, and considering representations from industry on this issue.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how her Department plans to *(a)* enable compliance and *(b)* enforce the regulations in the case of internet and mail order sellers when they fall under the scope of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive. [163100]

Mr. Morley: The proposals set out in the most recent consultation Paper on the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive were that producers would have to register as a condition of placing products on the market. The Paper asked for views from stakeholders on how best to implement and enforce this. The Government are currently analysing the responses.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the potential impact of other legislation which will interact with the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive, with specific reference to *(a)* the Batteries Directive and *(b)* the impending changes to the UK's hazardous waste classification and licensing system. [163101]

Mr. Morley: A draft proposal for a new batteries Directive has now been put forward by the Commission and is currently being considered by Member States and the European Parliament, which is expected to hold a First Reading on 19 April. The Government are keen to ensure that the text of the final Batteries Directive and the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) Directive are complementary. Talks are underway internally to ensure that mutual objectives are achieved, and the Government will also work to ensure that the batteries proposals are consistent with other waste legislation.

The interaction with the changes to the UK's hazardous waste classification system is being assessed in the ongoing review of hazardous waste legislation.

Defra is currently reviewing the existing waste management licensing system and intends to replace it with a new permitting regime. Under this new regime, the degree of regulation will be proportionate to the risks posed by different waste recovery and disposal activities. The new regime will include the transposition of the supplementary permitting requirements of the WEEE Directive and the future Batteries Directive as well as the permitting of the recovery and disposal of hazardous wastes.

Waste Incineration

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to increase the monitoring and control of waste incinerators. [163610]

Mr. Morley: Waste incineration processes are currently in a period of transition from integrated pollution control to the pollution prevention and control requirements of the Pollution Prevention and Control Act 1999 and the Waste Incineration Directive. These impose new, tighter, requirements for the monitoring and control of emissions from waste incinerators. The new requirements for the Waste Incineration Directive must be in place by 28 December 2005. Local Authorities and the Environment Agency will be responsible for implementing and enforcing these new requirements.

Water Services

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of climate change on the quantities of water that may be sustainably abstracted over the next 50 years. [165303]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency is the statutory body with a duty to manage water resources in England and Wales. As part of the agency's management role it has national and regional water resource strategies which set out the pressures over the next 25 years. Water companies have 25-year water resource plans which complement the agency strategies. Both the plans and strategies factor in the effects of climate change and will develop over time as the implications become clearer. The plans will also identify where there is a need for development of new resources.

The Environment Agency's Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies (CAMS) are a mechanism to ensure that there is a sustainable balance, at the catchment level, between the needs of abstractors and the environment. Pressures on water resources, such as climate change, are taken into consideration in the CAMS process and the agency will be able to use its powers to rebalance water resources as necessary.

The 2002 UK Climate Impacts Programme scenarios suggest higher winter flows and lower summer flows, with more frequent summer droughts over the next 50 years. The Environment Agency and water companies have carried out a preliminary assessment which suggests that the impact of these changes on abstraction for the public supply is mixed. Further work on this is due to start in the next few months.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on average water flow data between 1994 and 2003 at sites operated by the Environmental Change Network. [165797]

Mr. Morley: The Environmental Change Network (ECN) is the UK's long-term integrated monitoring network designed to aid in the detection, interpretation and forecasting of environmental changes resulting from natural and human causes. It is a multi-agency initiative which currently consists of a network of 54 terrestrial and freshwater sites making regular measurements on the main drivers of change and ecosystem responses.

Annual water flow from ECN's 14 river sites in England is shown in the following table. The data are incomplete for the requested period because: (i) some river sites did not begin monitoring until after 1994; (ii) equipment faults sometimes resulted in too few data points to allow estimation of annual means; and (iii) some data towards the end of the period have not yet been incorporated in the ECN database.

Annual mean flows (cubic metres per second) between 1994 and 2003 at all Environmental Change Network freshwater river sites in England.

Site Name	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Eden (Cumbria)	17.4	13.3	8.7	12.2	16.9	16.3	20.4	11.5	18.3	—
Esk	4.4	4.2	3.9	4.0	7.9	6.2	7.9	6.2	4.7	—
Coquet	7.4	6.9	6.6	6.7	11.7	8.2	11.9	10.4	—	—
Exe	22.2	16.0	—	14.4	21.5	—	—	14.3	—	—
Lathkill	—	—	—	—	—	1.0	1.7	1.5	2.0	—
Cringle	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.5	—	—
Frome	8.0	4.9	5.4	4.9	8.0	—	—	—	—	—
Bradgate Brook	—	—	—	—	—	—	0.2	0.2	—	—
Stinchar	—	—	—	—	—	11.2	12.5	9.0	11.1	—
Coln	—	—	—	—	—	2.5	—	—	—	—
Lambourn	—	—	—	—	—	2.0	—	—	—	—
Ewe	31.6	31.2	21.2	27.0	34.3	34.7	31.0	24.3	24.0	—
Moor House— Upper Teesdale	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.7	0.6	0.7	—	0.6	—
Wytham	—	—	—	—	0.001	0.000	0.001	—	—	0.001

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made in reducing water leakage; and if she will make a statement. [165378]

Mr. Morley: Since the Water Summit in 1997, Ofwat has set water companies annual leakage targets. This has helped to achieve a significant reduction in leakage, from 4,505 Megalitres per day in 1996–97 to 3,623 Megalitres per day in 2002–03. Most companies are now at their economic level of leakage which is the level at which it would cost more to further reduce leakage than to supply additional water from other sources. The Director General of Water Services publishes leakage data annually in the 'Security of Supply, Leakage and the Efficient Use of Water' reports, copies of which are available in the Library of the House. The Government's approach to demand management was confirmed by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State in March 2004 in her Principal Guidance to the Director-General of Water Services.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of households have water meters; and if she will make a statement. [165375]

Mr. Morley: An estimated 24 per cent. of households in England and Wales received bills based upon a meter reading in 2003–04, this is predicted to rise to 26 per cent. in 2004–05.

There are no figures available for the number of households where a meter is present but is not used as the basis for charging.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what monitoring of water quality is being undertaken by the National Rivers Authority. [164204]

Mr. Morley: Since 1996, responsibility for monitoring water quality has been with the Environment Agency. The Agency routinely monitors over 7000 sites in the aquatic environment. The Agency's programmes cover all monitoring required by EU Directives, national and international commitments, national and regional operational needs, responses to pollution incidents and regulation of authorised discharges to water. The programmes cover a wide range of chemical parameters plus routine biological monitoring for the purposes of both assessing compliance with standards and general assessments of environmental quality. The Agency's programmes cover both freshwaters i.e. rivers, lakes and groundwaters and the estuarine and marine environment.

Zebra Fish

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what plans she has to prohibit the sale of genetically modified *(a)* zebra fish and *(b)* other species in the UK; [165035]

(2) what assessment her Department has made of the possible future market for genetically modified pets. [165036]

Mr. Morley: Sales of genetically modified fish and other GM animals are already prohibited within the European Union unless specifically authorised under Directive 2001/18 on the Deliberate Release into the Environment of Genetically Modified Organisms or kept in secure containment under the terms of Directive 90/219 (as amended by Directive 98/81/EC) on the contained use of Genetically Modified Micro-Organisms. To date no applications have been received in the EU to release either GM fish or GM pets. The Department has not undertaken any assessment of the future market for genetically modified pets.

HEALTH

Heroin Addicts

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered heroin addicts there were in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each of the last five years. [162339]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not available because there is no longer a register of heroin addicts. The Home Office register of heroin addicts ceased in 1997 as resistance to register by heroin users meant the data were so inaccurate they were unusable.

Adverse Drug Reactions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what proportion of inpatients had their hospital stay prolonged by adverse drug reactions in the last 12 months; [163488]

(2) what his latest estimate is of the proportion of hospital admissions caused by adverse drug reactions; and if he will make a statement. [163497]

Mr. Hutton: The Department of Health collects information on all hospital admissions (Hospital Episode Statistics data). These data contain primary and secondary reasons for hospital admissions, which includes data on 'external causes' such as adverse drug reactions (ADRs).

In the year 2002–03 about 0.5 per cent. of admissions were identified as caused by ADRs. However, this proportion is likely to be an under-estimate because only admissions specifically identified as caused by ADRs will have been included.

United Kingdom wide data are not available to allow estimation of the proportion of in-patients who had their hospital stay prolonged by adverse drug reactions in the last 12 months.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will place in the Library a copy of the *(a)* Committee on Safety of Medicines' policy on the disclosure of information about adverse drug reactions and *(b)* Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency's policy on disclosure of information. [163490]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A copy of the publication scheme of the Committee on the Safety of Medicines (CSM) has been placed in the Library. The CSM does not routinely publish information about suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs). However, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) currently responds on behalf of the CSM to individual requests for ADR data under the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Anonymised ADR data are released on this basis.

An independent review of access to data from the yellow card scheme is currently considering whether, and if so under what conditions and for what purposes, data collected on suspected ADRs should be made more widely available. The review is expected to be published later this year.

The MHRA is committed to making available as much information as is compatible with the provisions of the current Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. A copy of the MHRA's approved publication scheme has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the 10 types of drug most commonly involved in adverse drug reactions reported to the yellow card scheme. [163491]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The following table lists the 10 drugs most commonly associated with suspected adverse drug reactions reported to the yellow card scheme in 2003. The figures provided relate to the number of reports received. Some reports may contain more than one reaction.

Drug[1]	*Number of reports*
Clozapine	1,075
Rofecoxib	367
Venlafaxine	359
Bupropion	348
Celecoxib	341
Paroxetine	294
Risperidone	290
Aspirin	275
Infliximab	265
Etoricoxib	239

[1] Stated as drug substance

Total number of reports received in 2003: 18,060.

The total number of reports received for a particular drug does not reflect the effects of factors such as an individual's medical history, concomitant medication and age, nor do they reflect the total usage of a drug (aspirin has a very high usage), whether a particular drug has a monitoring scheme (clozapine) or is being intensively monitored due to it being a new drug on the market (infliximab, bupropion, etoricoxib). These factors may result in an increased number of reports submitted via the yellow card scheme.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what his Department's estimate is of the percentage of adverse drug reactions which are reported by *(a)* general practitioners, *(b)* hospital doctors, *(c)* nurses and *(b)* pharmacists via the yellow card system; and if he will make a statement; [163492]

(2) what the nurse reporting figures for adverse drug reactions were for each month since the scheme started, broken down by those under the *(a)* e-yellow card and *(b)* paper based yellow card scheme; [163494]

(3) how many calls NHS Direct has received from callers reporting adverse drug reactions since 1 January 2003. [163496]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In the United Kingdom, the yellow card scheme allows health professionals to report suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) on a voluntary basis to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). Alongside doctors, pharmacists, dentists and coroners, the scheme was extended to allow nurses, health visitors and midwives to report suspected ADRs on 31 October 2002. An electronic version of the yellow card was launched on the same date.

To date, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has received 2,992 reports of suspected adverse drug reactions from nurses, from both paper and electronic versions of the yellow card. The following table provides a breakdown of reports received from nurses, for both paper and electronic yellow cards (table 1).

In 2003, the MHRA received a total of 18,060 yellow card reports from health professionals broken down as in table 2.

A pilot scheme enabling patients to contribute to the yellow card scheme via NHS Direct was launched in a single NHS Direct area on 25 April 2003. NHS Direct nurses and health information advisors submit reports of suspected adverse drug reactions via an electronic yellow card. All calls from patients reporting suspected ADRs at the Beckenham call centre have been reported to the MHRA and, to date, we have received 39 reports from patients via NHS Direct.

Table 1: Breakdown of reports from nurses since 31 October 2002

Received date (month/year)	*Number of reports (paper)*	*Number of reports (electronic)*	*Total number of reports*
October 2002	8	0	8
November 2002	253	3	256
December 2002	85	1	86
January 2003	60	2	62
February 2003	295	0	295
March 2003	239	10	249
April 2003	146	6	152
May 2003	129	13	142
June 2003	167	9	175
July 2003	211	11	222
August 2003	154	4	158
September 2003	126	7	133
October 2003	202	8	210
November 2003	218	2	220
December 2003	173	4	177
January 2004	171	3	174
February 2004	158	4	162
March 2004	106	4	110

Total number of reports received to date: 2,992.

Table 2: Breakdown of report source and number of adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports received by the MHRA in 2003 from the Adverse Drug Reactions On-line Tracking (ADROIT) database

Report source	*Number of reports*	*Percentage*[1]
General Practitioner	5,564	31
Hospital Doctor	4,388	24
Nurse	2,196	12
Pharmacist	3,434	19
Other	2,477	14

[1] Percentage of total number of reports received in 2003.

Total number of reports received in 2003 was 18,060.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evaluation has been made of the *(a)* impact and *(b)* quality of information received on electronic yellow cards. [163495]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) launched a new electronic yellow card on 31 October 2002, to provide a rapid and convenient way to report suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) for healthcare professionals. To date, the MHRA has received 386 reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) via the Internet.

A working group of the CSM and its Subcommittee on Pharmacovigilance (SCOP) was formed to advise on

strategies for electronic reporting and the criteria for evaluation of its contribution to pharmacovigilance. The working group proposed a questionnaire for electronic reporters to obtain their opinions on the usefulness of the electronic yellow card. A one-year evaluation has been carried out to assess the impact of, and the nature and quality of, information received on electronic yellow cards in comparison with the paper counterparts.

Electronic reports were comparable with paper reports with respect to the proportion of serious ADRs reported and reports associated with new, intensively monitored drugs. In general, there was little difference in the quality of core information (patient, reporter, suspect drug and reaction details) provided via electronic and paper yellow cards. A significant proportion (93 per cent.) of electronic reporters intend to continue reporting via the Internet. The working group and the MHRA are currently assessing method's to promote and increase the awareness and usability of the electronic yellow card amongst health professionals.

A new website providing rapid and direct access to the electronic yellow card is at www.yellowcard.gov.uk. This was launched on 19 February 2004 and the working group MHRA are in the process of linking this with other health-related websites. The findings from the evaluation will be presented to CSM for consideration and to inform future enhancements to the electronic yellow card.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people, broken down by age, suffered from adverse drug reactions, in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997; and how many of those reactions were fatal; [163498]

(2) how many children suffered from adverse drug reactions, in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997; and how many of those reactions were fatal. [163499]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are collected by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) through the spontaneous reporting scheme, the yellow card scheme. Approximately 20,000 reports of ADRs are reported to the MHRA/CSM through this scheme each year, of which approximately 3 per cent. report a suspected ADR with a fatal outcome.

There are five regional monitoring centres (RMCs) that act locally on behalf of the CSM to collect reports of ADRs and to stimulate ADR reporting through local initiatives. These are Mersey, Wales, Northern, West Midlands and Scotland, which was established in 2002.

The attached tables contain the total number of suspected ADR reports and ADR reports with a fatal outcome received via the yellow card scheme from 1997 to 2003 inclusive. The figures are broken down by age groups: 16 years and under, 17 to 59 years and 60 years and above. Included in the tables are the numbers of suspected ADR reports and reports with a fatal outcome received from the five RMCs. A breakdown of ADR data by health authority is not available, as this information is not collected as part of the yellow card scheme. Data from the yellow card scheme cannot be used to measure the frequency of an ADR in a particular region or health authority, as spontaneous ADR reporting is associated with an unknown and variable degree of under-reporting.

It is important to note that the submission of a suspected ADR report does not necessarily mean that it was caused by the drug. Many factors have to be taken into account in assessing causal relationships including temporal association, the possible contribution of concomitant medication and the underlying disease. Additionally, the use of medicines may vary between different age groups. Use of medicines in the elderly, for example, is higher than in other age groups and elderly patients are more likely to be using combinations of medicines.

Table 1: Total number of adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports and reports with a fatal outcome, broken down by age group, from 1997 to 2003 received by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) from the Adverse Drug Reactions On-line Tracking (ADROIT) database. Figures include reports received from the regional monitoring centres (RMCs).

Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA)

	Age group 16 years and under	*17 to 59 years*	*60 years and above*	*Total*[1]
1997				
Total	1,360	8,706	5,536	16,627
Fatal	22	168	227	446
1998				
Total	1,395	9,358	6,024	18,054
Fatal	11	212	246	521
1999				
Total	2,387	8,734	5,943	18,483
Fatal	26	225	249	563
2000				
Total	11,986	11,491	7,304	33,151
Fatal	36	252	283	629
2001				
Total	1,629	11,556	6,669	21,466
Fatal	35	261	295	643
2002				
Total	1,477	8,289	5,875	17,174
Fatal	31	274	295	657
2003				
Total	2,169	8,161	6,077	18,060
Fatal	25	289	323	722

[1] Includes reports where the patient age has not been specified (10,889 reports in total since 1997 inclusive).

Table 2: Total number of adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports and reports with a fatal outcome, broken down by age group, from 1997 to 2003 received by the five regional monitoring centres (RMCs) from the Adverse Drug Reactions On-line Tracking (ADROIT) database.

Total number of adverse drug reaction (ADR) reports

	Northern			Mersey			West Midlands		
	Age range								
	16 years and under	*17 to 59 years*	*60 years and over*	*16 years and under*	*17 to 59 years*	*60 years and over*	*16 years and under*	*17 to 59 years*	*60 years and over*
1997									
Total	67	435	297	59	297	217	88	573	419
Fatal	[1]—	7	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—	7	10
1998									
Total	40	468	349	41	302	225	70	620	481
Fatal	0	9	15	0	6	6	0	10	13
1999									
Total	71	373	344	81	270	224	106	534	460
Fatal	[1]—	7	10	0	[1]—	10	[1]—	[1]—	12
2000									
Total	345	402	316	147	298	244	1091	706	479
Fatal	[1]—	7	16	0	[1]—	8	[1]—	[1]—	17
2001									
Total	67	638	424	40	318	258	89	681	439
Fatal	0	[1]—	6	0	[1]—	6	[1]—	10	24
2002									
Total	47	372	423	57	298	629	87	399	330
Fatal	0	[1]—	20	[1]—	[1]—	29	[1]—	[1]—	17
2003									
Total	111	444	452	112	353	740	176	433	415
Fatal	0	9	15	0	7	17	[1]—	6	15

	Wales			Scotland[2]		
	Age range					
	16 years and under	*17 to 59 years*	*60 years and over*	*16 years and under*	*17 to 59 years*	*60 years and over*
1997						
Total	57	366	318	—	—	—
Fatal	[1]—	7	17	—	—	—
1998						
Total	71	429	351	—	—	—
Fatal	0	14	9	—	—	—
1999						
Total	136	406	319	—	—	—
Fatal	0	6	9	—	—	—
2000						
Total	781	790	567	—	—	—
Fatal	[1]—	[1]—	13	—	—	—
2001						
Total	67	722	456	—	—	—
Fatal	0	7	12	—	—	—
2002						
Total	92	431	403	6	79	66
Fatal	0	9	113	0	[1]—	[1]—
2003						
Total	122	361	334	89	406	365
Fatal	0	[1]—	6	0	6	17

[1] Small number of cases. Data withheld to protect patient confidentiality.

[2] CSM Scotland began to receive yellow cards on 10 October 2002.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 22 March, *Official Report*, column 599W, on older people, how many adverse drug reactions occurred in individuals aged *(a)* 60–79 years, *(b)* 70–79 years, *(c)* 80–89 years and *(d)* over 90 years in each year since 1997. [164256]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are collected by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) through the spontaneous reporting scheme, the Yellow Card scheme. Approaching 20,000 reports of ADRs are reported to the MHRA/CSM through this scheme each year.

The table shows the total number of suspected ADR reports received via the yellow card scheme from 1997 to 2003 inclusive. The figures are broken down by age group: 60–69 years, 70–79 years, 80–89 years and 90 years and above.

	Age group				
Year	*60–69*	*70–79*	*80–89*	*More than 90*	[1]*Total number reports*
1997	2,627	2,050	776	83	16,627
1998	2,754	2,348	833	89	18,054
1999	2,781	2,271	815	76	18,483
2000	3,473	2,706	1,012	113	33,151
2001	3,071	2,440	1,023	135	21,466
2002	2,339	2,214	1,133	189	17,174
2003	2,401	2,239	1,241	196	18,060

[1] Total number of reports received for all ages through the yellow card scheme (includes reports where the patient age has not been specified)

It is important to note that a report of an adverse reaction does not necessarily mean that it was caused by the drug. Many factors have to be taken into account in assessing causal relationships including temporal

association, the possible contribution of concomitant medication and the underlying disease. Additionally, the use of medicines may vary between different age groups. Use of medicines in the elderly, for example, is higher than in other age groups and elderly patients are more likely to be using combinations of medicines.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his Department's review of the Yellow Card scheme for reporting adverse drug reactions. [164611]

Ms Rosie Winterton: On 21 July 2003, my noble Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Health announced an independent review into the access to and use of data collected by the Medicines Healthcare products Regulatory Agency on suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs). The review is being led by Dr. Jeremy Matters, CB. The primary purpose of the review is to consider whether, and if so under what conditions and for what purposes, the data should be made more widely available.

A 12 week public consultation exercise ended on 9 January 2004. The report of the Review is expected to be published later in the year.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of adverse reactions relating to herbal medicines were reported to the yellow card scheme in each year since 1997. [164681]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) are collected by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) through the spontaneous reporting scheme, the yellow card scheme. By 30 March 2004, the CSM and MHRA had received 527 reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) associated with herbal medicines since 1997. A breakdown of the number of reports received per year is shown in the table.

Year	*Number of ADR reports associated with herbal medicines*
1997	46
1998	41
1999	65
2000	142
2001	79
2002	69
2003	66
2004 (part)[1]	19
Total	527

[1] Figures to date

It is important to note that the submission of a suspected adverse reaction does not necessarily mean that it was caused by the drug. Many factors have to be taken into account in assessing causal relationships, including temporal association, the possible contribution of concomitant medication and the underlying disease.

The number of reports received via the yellow card scheme does not directly equate to the number of people who suffer adverse reactions to drugs for a number of reasons, as this scheme is associated with an unknown and variable level of under-reporting. Reporting through the yellow card scheme has been low for products used in self-medication as health professionals may not be aware of their use. ADR reporting rates may be influenced by the seriousness of reactions, their ease of recognition, extent of use of a particular drug and promotion and publicity about a drug. Data from the yellow card scheme cannot be used as a basis for determining the incidence of an ADR as neither the total number of reactions occurring, nor the number of patients using the drug is known.

Agency Nurses (CRO Checks)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what risk assessment has been made of agency nurses working in care home settings without the need for a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure; [164811]

(2) what risk assessment he has made of allowing care assistants to work unsupervised for a domiciliary care agency before their Criminal Records Bureau checks are complete. [164818]

Dr. Ladyman: In view of current recruitment difficulties within the care home and domiciliary care sectors, the Department is consulting on amendments to the Care Homes Regulations 2001, the Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations 2002 and the Nurses Agencies Regulations 2002 to allow staff to start work prior to the satisfactory completion of a Criminal Records Bureau disclosure.

The consultation ends on 16 April and I will carefully consider all responses. An announcement will be made in due course.

Allergic Reactions (Latex)

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to require primary care trusts to establish a policy to reduce allergic reactions to latex in *(a)* staff and *(b)* patients. [165568]

Mr. Hutton: Actions to be taken in relation to natural rubber latex (NRL) are covered by the Health and Safety at Work Act, Etc. 1974 which places a general duty on all National Health Service employers to keep staff and patients healthy and safe at work. The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1992 places duties on employers to systematically assess all workplace risks and to take all reasonably practicable action to minimise those risks—this includes exposure to NRL. The Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Regulations 2002 (COSHH), also apply in requiring employers to undertake an assessment of any substances used at work that are hazardous to health. All of this legislation applies to primary care trusts.

The Department of Health, working with the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) and other interested parties, has developed a latex toolkit covering the issues surrounding latex allergy such as what employers and employees should be doing in the workplace, areas affected and general information.

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of NHS staff adversely affected by an allergic reaction to latex; and *(a)* how many days work have been lost and *(b)* how many staff have left the service as a result of latex allergy in each of the last five years. [165571]

Mr. Hutton: The Department of Health does not collect this information centrally, as it would duplicate data collection undertaken by the Health and Safety Executive in relation to the control of substances hazardous to health.

Ambulance Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will publish the ambulance response times for *(a)* England and *(b)* each ambulance trust for (i) category a, (ii) category b and (iii) category c calls in each year since 1997; [163506]

(2) what percentage of urgent patient journey calls were more than 15 minutes late in *(a)* England and *(b)* each ambulance trust in each year since 1997. [163507]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the form requested. The available data are published in the statistical bulletin "Ambulance services, England: 2002–03", a copy of which is in the Library. It is also available at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0313.htm. This shows available performance data for England and by ambulance trust.

Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish the franchise plan for the Ashford and St. Peter's Hospitals NHS Trust. [165064]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 1 April 2004]*: I refer to hon. Member to the reply I gave on 12 June 2002 at column 1320W.

Biometric Data

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans his Department has to introduce a black box style system to retain key biometric data for major operations; and if he will make a statement. [162639]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The operating theatre black box system has been invented by a scientist in Britain and can be used to record the actions of surgical teams and clinical information about a patient during an operation. It is one method to support learning and improve patient safety.

The Government recognise the need to understand more about the nature and causes of errors in surgery and as part of the Department's patient safety research programme has funded research into the safety of surgical care. The research team will make recommendations to inform surgical team training in error management in the future. The national Patient Safety Agency is also undertaking work to reduce patient safety incidents associated with surgery.

Further information is available on the patient safety research programme website at: http://www.publichealth.bham.ac.uk/psrp and on the National Patient Safety Agency website at: http://www.npsa.nhs.uk.

Cancer Treatment

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to his answer of 5 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 200W, on the National Institute for Clinical Excellence, when the findings of the investigation into the implementation of guidance on the use of cancer treatments produced by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence will be published; [164239]

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (2) when the National Cancer Director expects to have completed his review of postcode prescribing in the case of cancer treatment. [R] [164683]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Professor Mike Richards, the National Cancer Director, is continuing his investigation into the causes of the apparent variation in the uptake of cancer drugs approved by the National Institue for Clinical Excellence.

Professor Richards is currently considering evidence provided by the 34 cancer networks in England and data supplied by the pharmaceutical industry.

Findings are expected to be available in Spring 2004.

Care Homes

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what new arrangements are in place for patient forums to inspect care homes. [162921]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Patients' forums have statutory powers to enter and inspect care homes for the purposes of carrying out their functions, such as monitoring and reviewing the services provided in them, where the services are provided under partnership arrangements between the national health service and a local authority under Section 31 of the Health Act 1999 and where the services provided relate to the exercise of the local authority's health related functions.

In addition patients' forums can enter and inspect NHS care homes and NHS services provided in private care homes. Patients' forums only have the powers to enter and inspect the care homes that have been mentioned for the purposes of their functions.

From 1 April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection will be responsible for regulation and inspection of care homes and will have a duty to co-operate with the Commission for Health Care Audit and Inspection. The Government expect these bodies to work closely with patients' forums as they carry out their statutory functions.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much was paid on average per day by local authorities to independent care homes for the provision of *(a)* food, *(b)* care and *(c)* accommodation in the latest year for which figures are available. [163601]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government do not collect data on payments by local councils to independent care homes. According to the most recent National Care Standards Commission report (March 2004), fees for care homes for older people fall most often into the £200 to £400 per week range with very few above £700 per week. In the case of younger adults, fees charged fall in the range of £300 to £1,200 although overall they range from under £100 to over £2,000 per week.

The figures are not broken into the component costs.

CFISSA

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* budget and *(b)* outturn figures for the Centrally Funded Initiatives and Services Special Allocation (CFISSA) were for each of the last three years; if he will publish the total list of allocations from CFISSA for the current financial year; and if he will list the virements from the CFISSA. [151797]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 2 February 2004]:* Tables have been placed in the Library showing:

(a) for the years 2000–01, 2001–02 and 2002–03 the initial and final budget levels and outturn for each of the main areas within the Centrally Funded Initiatives and Services and Special Allocations budget.

(b) the total allocations made to NHS organisations to date in 2003–04.

The latest information on virement from capital to revenue in 2003–04 are shown in the following table. There were no net virements from the CFISSA programme into capital in 2003–04:

2003–04 Capital to revenue virements for the CFISSA programme

Budget	*£000*
National IT Programme: Corporate Services	3,605
National IT Programme: Procurement, commercial and legal services	22,000
National Knowledge Service	1,000
Surveillance and Disease Registers	2,500
National IT Programme: Local Initiatives	88,895
	118,000
Local NHS capital to revenue transfers	200,000
Total capital to revenue virement	318,000

Clinical Trials

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the full results of clinical trials submitted to the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency are required to be published. [163849]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The full results of clinical trials submitted to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) are not required to be published. Sponsors of clinical trials conducted in the United Kingdom have an obligation to provide end of study data in a report. For marketed drugs, the marketing authorisation holder has an obligation to inform the MHRA of any information relevant to the evaluation of the risks and benefits of the product and provide periodic safety update reports to the MHRA. However, the MHRA has made information available about clinical trials in the specific circumstances where it has been in the public interest to do so.

Community Hospitals

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the bed occupancy rate is in the community hospitals of *(a)* Townlands, *(b)* Wallingford, *(c)* Abingdon, *(d)* Wantage, *(e)* Watlington and *(f)* Didcot. [164102]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Bed data are not centrally collected by hospital site. Data are collected annually on a provider basis from National Health Service trusts. The two trusts involved are the South East Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust (PCT) and the South West Oxfordshire PCT. The average daily number of available, and occupied beds in wards open overnight for the two trust involved, are shown in the table. The bed occupancy rate is also included in the table.

Information for each NHS trust is published annually on the Department's website at: http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/.

	SHA	*Org ID*	*Total*	*General and Acute*	*Acute*	*Geriatric*	*Mental illness*	*Learning disability*	*Maternity*
2002–03									
SE Oxfordshire PCT	Q16	5DX							
Available			48	48	48	—	—	—	—
Occupied			44	44	44	—	—	—	—
Percentage occupancy			91.2	91.2	91.2	—	—	—	—
SW Oxfordshire PCT	Q16	5DY							
Available			151	151	151	—	—	—	—
Occupied			143	143	143	—	—	—	—
Percentage occupancy			95.2	95.2	95.2	—	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH03
Status:
Published 11 September 2003 (latest data available)

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the minimum number of beds required to ensure the *(a)* clinical and *(b)* financial viability of community hospitals in Oxfordshire is. [164105]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held by the Department.

Our policy on "Shifting the Balance of Power" means that funding decisions rest with primary care trusts (PCTs). PCTs, in conjunction with strategic health authorities (SHAs), have responsibility for planning and developing services according to the needs of local people and they have the local knowledge to assess the health care needs of their residents and to identify strategies and plans to meet those needs.

I understand that the South East and South West Oxfordshire PCTs are carrying out a consultation "South Locality Plan", which they hope will shape a long-term strategy for improving care and services

delivered by the local health economy. The hon. Member may therefore wish to approach the Thames Valley SHA on this matter.

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the circumstances leading to the closure of the community hospital in Burford. [164106]

Ms Rosie Winterton: I understand that Burford Hospital was closed in 2000. The decision to close the hospital was made following a full public consultation on Oxfordshire community services in 1998. All patients who were receiving their care at Burford were relocated to other community hospitals following its closure.

Conflicts of Interest

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what regulations are in place governing conflicts of interest on medical advisory committees, including the *(a)* Committee on Safety of Medicines and *(b)* Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation; and if he will make a statement. [162426]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All members of the Committee on Safety of Medicines are required to follow a code of practice relating to declarations of interests in the pharmaceutical industry. The code is comprehensive and is followed at each meeting to ensure the integrity of the advice given to Ministers by the committee. This code, and a register of members' interests, is published in the Annual Report of the Medicines Advisory Bodies. The report for 2002 is in the Library. It is also available at www.mhra.gov.uk

Members of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) are also required to follow a code of practice relating to declarations of industry interests which is followed at each meeting. A register of JCVI members' interests is available on the JCVI pages of the Department of Health's website at www.advisorybodies.doh.gov.uk

Consultants Appointments

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the specific requirements of the NHS (Appointment of Consultants) Regulations 1982 are on the appointment procedure for NHS consultants; what *(a)* qualifications and *(b)* experience a surgeon is required to have to be appointed as an NHS consultant; what (i) experience and (ii) qualifications a surgeon is required to have to work for an independent sector treatment centre; and what criteria the appointment procedure must satisfy. [164602]

Mr. Hutton: Current requirements are those set out in the National Health Service (Appointment of Consultants) Regulations 1996. To become a consultant in the NHS a doctor must be included on the specialist register held by the General Medical Council (GMC) and successfully compete for a consultant post in open competition. In the United Kingdom the postgraduate specialist medical qualification, leading to automatic inclusion on the specialist register, is a certificate of completion of specialist training. Individual employers may also specify any particular requirements for a post in a job description and person specification.

Procedures for the appointment of staff in independent sector treatment centres are a matter for the relevant independent healthcare providers. In order to operate independently in an independent sector treatment centre a doctor must be a registered medical practitioner included on the specialist register held by the GMC.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many appointments have been made to the New Consultant Entry Scheme; and how many appointments are expected to be made in *(a)* 2004, *(b)* 2005 and *(c)* 2006. [156292]

Mr. Hutton: The New Consultant Entry Scheme (NCES) became fully operational in January. To date, five specialist registrars have been appointed to psychiatric, paediatric intensive care, histopathology, rehabilitation medicine and ophthalmology consultant posts on the scheme. Expressions of interest in the scheme continue to grow and we expect to match additional specialist registrars to vacant consultant posts in the coming months.

The scheme is managed by NHS Professionals for Doctors but not centrally funded, allowing strategic health authorities to make local arrangements to place doctors on the scheme. Local reports suggest a further 60 doctors had been appointed on the scheme.

The scheme is voluntary but potentially there are [1]2,485 specialist registrars in 2004, 2,399 specialist registrars in 2005 and 2,167 specialist registrars in 2006 who are expected to obtain their certificate of completion of specialist training and would be eligible to apply to the scheme.[1]

Non-consultant career grade doctors who have a certificate of completion of specialist training or are on the specialist register, are also eligible for the scheme. Latest available figures from the September 2001 medical workforce census suggest that there are 448 doctors on the specialist register working in non-consultant career grade posts who would be eligible for the scheme.

[1] Specialist registrar figures based on calendar year 2004, 2005 and 2006.

Source:

Department of Health Planning Extract.

Continuing Care Entitlement

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of reimbursing people who had not received NHS continuing care to which

they were entitled following the Health Service Ombudsman's report; and if he will estimate what impact the review of eligibility criteria will have on the cost of free personal care. [164872]

Dr. Ladyman: Funding was made available to strategic health authorities to cover the estimated costs of recompense claims for patients inappropriately denied fully funded National Health Service continuing care. The Department does not routinely publish details of estimated costs of a specific service. Any variation in future costs of free personal care remains within the range of estimates previously made by the Department.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate how many people have not received NHS continuing care because of strict eligibility criteria who will now receive such care after the review of eligibility criteria following the Health Service Ombudsman's report. [164873]

Dr. Ladyman: It is not possible to make an assessment of the number of people affected by changes in fully funded National Health Service continuing care criteria. It is expected that strategic health authorities will provide continuing care based on assessed needs, in accordance with their local eligibility criteria, following review of those criteria.

Cost of Accountants

Mr. Paul Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost to the NHS in 2003–04 of employing accountants to handle the administration of claims for VAT exemption; and if he will make a statement. [164874]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not centrally collect the information on which such an estimate could be made.

Cots

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to increase the number of cots for *(a)* pre-term babies and *(b)* severely premature babies in the South East of England. [163619]

Dr. Ladyman: We are investing an additional £70 million in neonatal intensive care services to provide, over the next two years, up to 75 new cots nationally. This provision will include cots and services for pre-term and severely premature babies in the South East of England.

Deaf People

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how measures included in the initiative on choice in the NHS will benefit deaf people. [163057]

Dr. Ladyman: "Building on the Best: Choice, Responsiveness and Equity in the NHS" draws out the main themes that emerged from the recent consultation on what changes would do the most to improve the experience of health care for patients, users and cares. The Department is planning to produce an accessible summary of the document for deaf people. "Building on the Best" emphasised that there must be flexible arrangements for people to access services that respond to their needs in the round rather than a response that isolates their health needs and that communications barriers must be dismantled.

Dentists

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 24 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 134, on dentists, what information the hon. Member for Doncaster, Central used to obtain the dentist training numbers for this year and for 1997. [159700]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The estimates were based on information from dental schools in England of the number of students accepted for the 1997–98 and 2003–04 academic years.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what *(a)* renovation and *(b)* maintenance projects on buildings (i) owned and (ii) rented by his Department were undertaken in each of the last five years; and what the associated costs were of each. [163946]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Renovation and maintenance projects to the value of £6.24 million were carried out at the buildings owned and rented by the Department in the period 1999–2004 and shown in the table.

Capital Expenditure on Renovation and Maintenance Projects

£ million

	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	Total
Leasehold						
Skipton House	24,143	0	0	28,449	0	52,592
Hannibal House	0	0	174,991	76,047	48,097	299,135
Eileen House	0	0	183,480	3,370	0	186,850
Market Towers	27,257	0	0	0	0	27,257
Freehold						
Wellington House	1,029,676	144,078	390,224	1,096,688	97,628	2,758,294
Richmond House	425,120	375,333	144,973	807,000	332,887	2,085,313
Premier Buildings, Nelson	500	10,300	6,000	10,609	10,927	38,336
Pensions Agency, Blackpool	45,870	2,000	6,319	172,555	570,000	796,744
Totals	1,552,566	531,711	905,987	2,194,718	1,059,539	6,244,521

Departmental Policies (Ilford, North)

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the impact of his Department's policies on the services for users of *(a)* King George Hospital, Ilford and *(b)* Whipps Cross University Hospital since 1997. [164876]

Mr. Hutton: Detailed information on the impact of Departmental policies nationally is set out in the Department of Health annual reports. A copy of the most recent report "Department of Health—Government Expenditure Plans" is available in the Library and on the Department's website.

King George Hospital is one of four main hospitals within the Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals National Health Service Trust. Developments and improvements at King George Hospital since 1997 include:

A cardiac angiography suite opened to patients in November 2003, (partially funded by the New Opportunities Fund) to provide facilities for local residents to receive cardiac investigations closer to home.

The Cedars Centre cancer unit, redeveloped and extended cancer treatment facilities recently opened by Her Royal Highness Princess Alexandra, developed in conjunction with Macmillan Cancer Relief.

A primary care walk-in centre will open in April 2004 within the King George Hospital accident and emergency department. A capital redevelopment of the accident and emergency area is planned to accommodate a full walk-in centre in due course.

In April 2001, following a major reconfiguration of all healthcare services within north-east London, Whipps Cross Hospital NHS Trust was established as an acute trust within the North East London Strategic Health Authority. Developments and improvements at Whipps Cross University Hospital since 1997 include:

Investment

The approval of the outline business case for the redevelopment of Whipps Cross Hospital at a total cost of £331 million.

The opening of a satellite renal unit £1.35 million in partnership with Barts and The London NHS Trust.

The opening of the new Acorn children's unit—£1.2 million.

The opening of the Gillian Revell rehabilitation centre—a rehabilitation unit for older people.

Information Management Technology

A trust-wide programme to upgrade information management technology investment in both hardware and software.

Access: Accident and Emergency

Major upgrading of the accident and emergency department.

£2.5 million emergency medicine centre opened in June 2003.

In March 2002, there were 382 patients waiting more than 12 months for inpatient treatment and 874 waiting 9 to 11 months. Latest figures show 344 waiting more than 9 to 11 months.

In March 2002, there were 2,310 patients waiting more than 13 weeks for outpatient treatment. Latest figures show 1,366 patients waiting more than 13 weeks.

83.6 per cent. of patients spend less than four hours in the accident and emergency Department. In September 2002, the figure was 49.1 per cent.

99.8 per cent. of urgent referrals for suspected cancer are seen by a specialist within two weeks.

Coronary Heart Disease Services

The opening of rapid access chest pain clinic on Byron ward. Extra funding allocated for heart disease services has resulted in a cut in waiting times from over 26 weeks to 13 weeks.

The opening of an integrated cardiology unit on Byron ward.

The opening of a cardiac catheterisation laboratory.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what improvements to users of primary care services in the London borough of Redbridge have been funded by his Department since 1990. [164877]

Mr. Hutton: Detailed information on the impact of departmental policies nationally is set out in the Department of Health annual reports. A copy of the most recent report "Department of Health—Government Expenditure Plans", is available in the Library and on the Department's website.

The London borough of Redbridge is coterminous with Redbridge Primary Care Trust (PCT).

Information is not held centrally for the period 1990 to 2002. In April 2003 Redbridge PCT was merged with part of the disaggregated Chingford, Wanstead and Woodford PCT. Figures are therefore only available from June 2003 for Redbridge PCT. This information is shown in the tables.

Number of people waiting for in-patient treatment (including day cases) in Redbridge PCT

	Month end	
	June 2003	*January 2004*
Total waiting list	5,209	4,811
Patients waiting 9–11 months	384	368
Patients waiting over 12 months	0	0

Source:
Department of Health form KH07.

In June 2003 71.9 per cent. of patients (of practices which have an appointments system) were offered an appointment to see a primary care professional within one working day. Latest figures show that this has risen to 82.8 per cent. (December 2003).

Number of people waiting for out-patient treatment in Redbridge PCT

	Month end	
	June 2003	*September 2003*
13+ weeks	1,710	1,982
17–20 weeks	457	481
21+ weeks	0	0

Source:
Department of Health form KH07.

The NHS Plan commitment by March 2003 was that no one would wait more than 21 weeks. As figures show, the PCT is meeting this target.

Redbridge PCT allocations

	£ million
2003–04	160.65
2004–05	175.54

During 2003–04 Redbridge PCT invested significant monies in Primary Care Service development. These include:

Scheme	£000
Enhanced Intermediate Care Team	120
Paediatric Diabetes Nurse Specialist	25
Provision of community based services by GPwSI	60
Extension of GP Co-operative	30
Investment at Whipps Cross Hospital MRI Waits and GP referrals	50
Mental Health Treatments	18
Exceptional treatment	50
Integrated equipment store	15
Setting up and providing a GP appraisal system for all RPCT practicing GPs	115
Child protection improvements—nurse consultant	50
Diabetes retinal screening	100
Free Nursing Care	70
Breast screening extension to 65–70 year olds	79
Fund GP counselling service	173
IT support for CHD and Diabetes registers: 2 IT facilitators	45
Total	1,000

The PCT has also funded increased activity and service developments for specialist services, which it commissions through consortium arrangements within North East London strategic health authority and pan London consortia.

The PCT has also been working in partnership with non-NHS organisations to the benefit of Redbridge residents, during 2003–04 £400,000 was spent on schemes including community volunteers, mental health concern, dementia, local action for health, regeneration and health improvement and user involvement.

Eligibility Criteria

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 916W, on eligibility criteria, what information will be available centrally on the number of individual cases granted recompense. [165301]

Dr. Ladyman: After the end of March 2004, the number of individual cases granted recompense up to that time will be held centrally.

Foundation Hospitals

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many members each foundation trust applicant has recruited. [157759]

Mr. Hutton: The independent regulator has authorised the first 10 National Health Service foundation trusts. When doing so, the chairman of the independent regulator announced there are 50,000 members of the 10 NHS foundation trusts. More detailed information about membership numbers at each of the NHS foundation trusts is available from the constitutions, and the register of members. Both documents are held by the NHS foundation trusts themselves.

Health Services (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average number of patients on *(a)* in-patient and *(b)* day case waiting lists was in Crosby in each year since 1997; and what the percentage change was in each year. [164308]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis but at national health service trust level. This information is shown in the table.

Average number of patients waiting for elective admission, selected NHS trusts, 1996–97 to 2003–04

	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust		*Southport and Formby Hospitals Services NHS Trust*		*West Lancashire NHS Trust*		*Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust*	
	Ordinary in-patient	*Day case*	*Ordinary in-patient*	*Day case*	*Ordinary in-patient*	*Day case*	*Ordinary in-patient*	*Day case*
Average number waiting								
1996–97	4,953	5,109	1,340	2,678	937	1,309	—	—
1997–98	4,163	5,287	1,466	2,745	1,046	1,363	—	—
1998–99	3,790	4,610	1,270	2,557	1,199	1,423	—	—
1999–2000	3,514	4,948	—	—	—	—	2,446	3,595
2000–01	3,485	4,515	—	—	—	—	2,389	3,320
2001–02	3,118	3,922	—	—	—	—	2,415	3,064
2002–03	2,770	3,613	—	—	—	—	2,229	2,812
2003–04 (three quarters data)	2,236	3,846	—	—	—	—	1,956	2,883
Percentage change								
1996–97	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1997–98	-16	3	9	2	12	4	—	—
1998–99	-9	-13	-13	-7	15	4	—	—
1999–2000	-7	7	—	—	—	—	—	—
2000–01	-1	-9	—	—	—	—	-2	-8
2001–02	-11	-13	—	—	—	—	1	-8
2002–03	-11	-8	—	—	—	—	-8	-8
2003–04 (three quarters data)	-19	6	—	—	—	—	-12	3

Notes:
1. Southport and Formby Hospitals Services NHS Trust and West Lancashire NHS Trust merged to form Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals NHS Trust.
2. Waiting times data are collected quarterly. The average number waiting has been calculated by adding the totals for each quarter and dividing by four.
3. Only three quarters data are available for 2003–04.

Source:
Department of Health form KH07.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were waiting for cataract surgery in Crosby for more than *(a)* three, *(b)* six and *(c)* nine months in each year since 1997; and what the percentage change was in each case in each year. [164309]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis but at national health service trust level. This information is shown in the table.

In-patient elective waiting list for ophthalmology from 1996–97 to 2003–04

	Patients waiting for admission by months waiting			Percentage change		
Year/Name	*Three months and over*	*Six months and over*	*Nine months and over*	*Three months and over*	*Six months and over*	*Nine months and over*
1996–97						
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	586	291	64	—	—	—
Southport and Formby NHS Trust	908	527	270	—	—	—
1997–98						
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	572	217	46	-2	-25	-28
Southport and Formby NHS Trust	919	659	430	1	25	59
1998–99						
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	608	359	177	6	65	285
Southport and Formby NHS Trust	637	345	111	-31	-48	-74
1999–2000						
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	792	436	156	30	21	-12
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust	627	360	147	-2	4	32
2000–01						
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	555	274	56	-30	-37	-64
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust	695	322	137	11	-11	-7
2001–02						
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	350	162	25	-37	-41	-55
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust	630	358	135	-9	11	-1
2002–03						
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	262	71	8	-25	-56	-68
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust	615	328	76	-2	-8	-44
2003–04						
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	140	27	0	-47	-62	-100
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust	199	24	0	-68	-93	-100

Notes:
1. Southport and Formby NHS Trust (REQ) and West Lancashire NHS Trust (RJV) merged to form Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals NHS Trust (RVY).
2. West Lancashire NHS Trust had no reported data for ophthalmology.

Source:
Department of Health form KH07.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the performance of health authorities in Crosby in meeting out-patient access targets since 1997. [164310]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis but as National Health Service trust level. This information is shown in the table.

Waiting times for first out-patient appointment, March 1997 to December 2003 GP written referral requests not yet seen, who have been waiting (weeks)

	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust (REM)		Southport and Formby Hospitals Services NHS Trust (REQ)		West Lancashire NHS Trust (RJV)		Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust (RVY)	
Quarter	*13 to < 26*	*26 >*	*13 to < 26*	*26 >*	*13 to < 26*	*26 >*	*13 to < 26*	*26 >*
March 1997	1,266	49	840	0	426	222	—	—
June 1997	1,162	53	1,736	4	404	180	—	—
September 1997	1,151	102	976	0	558	215	—	—
December 1997	1,499	124	1,248	1	656	201	—	—
March 1998	1,607	173	1,215	39	577	288	—	—
June 1998	1,554	198	1,137	303	835	275	—	—
September 1998	2,062	118	1,303	378	1,030	312	—	—
December 1998	2,330	238	1,178	392	1,035	350	—	—
March 1999	2,237	557	805	434	662	417	—	—
June 1999	2,151	1,183	—	—	—	—	1,465	848
September 1999	2,062	1,340	—	—	—	—	1,712	435
December 1999	2,146	1,421	—	—	—	—	1,757	481
March 2000	1,450	1,346	—	—	—	—	2,088	24
June 2000	2,352	1,413	—	—	—	—	2,459	82

Waiting times for first out-patient appointment, March 1997 to December 2003 GP written referral requests not yet seen, who have been waiting (weeks)

Quarter	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust (REM)		Southport and Formby Hospitals Services NHS Trust (REQ)		West Lancashire NHS Trust (RJV)		Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust (RVY)	
	13 to < 26	26 >	13 to < 26	26 >	13 to < 26	26 >	13 to < 26	26 >
September 2000	2,167	1,257	—	—	—	—	1,887	21
December 2000	1,101	1,059	—	—	—	—	1,671	36
March 2001	971	977	—	—	—	—	1,198	310
June 2001	920	833	—	—	—	—	1,948	611
September 2001	1,056	355	—	—	—	—	1,867	318
December 2001	1,022	245	—	—	—	—	1,326	112
March 2002	966	0	—	—	—	—	822	0

	13 to < 17	17 to < 21	21 to < 26	26 >
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust (REM)				
June 2002	459	218	14	0
September 2002	628	96	26	0
December 2002	468	34	1	0
March 2003	326	111	0	0
June 2003	567	213	0	0
September 2003	646	165	0	0
December 2003	344	0	0	0
Southport and Ormskirk Hospital NHS Trust (RVY)				
June 2002	808	280	51	0
September 2002	701	248	59	0
December 2002	604	119	2	0
March-2003	416	109	0	0
June 2003	627	68	0	0
September 2003	636	103	0	0
December 2003	431	0	0	0

Note:

Southport and Formby Hospitals Services NHS Trust and West Lancashire NHS Trust merged to form Southport and Ormskirk Hospitals NHS Trust.

< less than and > more than

QM08 return revised to give smaller timebands

Source:

Department of Health form QM08.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients in Crosby *(a)* were admitted, treated and discharged within four hours of arrival in accident and emergency departments and *(b)* had four to 12 hour trolley waits, in each year since 1997. [164357]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information is not collected on a constituency basis but at national health service trust level. This information is shown in the following table.

Total time spent in A&E from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge, Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust (REM)

		Major A&E (Type 1 only)		All A&E/MIU/WIC (Type 1, 2, 3)	
	Quarter	Total attendances	Percentage of patients who spent less than 4 hours in A&E	Total attendances	Percentage of patients who spent less than 4 hours in A&E
2002–03	2	19,630	52	—	—
2002–03	3	18,931	59	—	—
2002–03	4	18,360	75.4	—	—
2003–04	1	20,106	77.4	20,106	77.4
2003–04	2	21,348	90.8	21,348	90.8
2003–04	3	19,016	85.0	19,016	85.0

Source:

Department of Health dataset QMAE

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* cancelled urgent operations and *(b)* last minute cancelled operations there were in Crosby in each year since 1997. [164358]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data are not collected on the number of cancelled urgent operations. However, quarterly data are collected on the number of operations cancelled by the hospital for non-clinical reasons.

Cancelled operations data are collected nationally and by National Health Service Trust and strategic health authority level. This information is available in the Library and on the Department's website at www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of *(a)* ambulance emergency responses were within eight minutes and *(b)* urgent ambulance responses to general practitioners requests were within 15 minutes in Crosby in each year since 1997. [164359]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data are collected for ambulance trusts from 1998 when each ambulance service introduced call prioritisation. The information requested is available in the Library and can be found on the Department's website at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0313.htm.

Health Services (Lancashire)

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses were agency staff in (i) Preston and (ii) Chorley hospitals in each of the last three years. [147858]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not held centrally.

Hip Replacement (Qualifying Criteria)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the qualifying criteria for the patient choice scheme are for orthopaedic patients on the Royal London Hospital waiting for hip replacement. [163988]

Mr. Hutton: The Royal London Hospital is part of the London patient choice project. This pan-London scheme is at present for London patients who are registered with a London general practitioner.

The London patient choice project offers choice of treatment in an alternative hospital to clinically appropriate patients waiting longer than six months for surgery, including orthopaedic surgery.

From 1 April 2004 the London patient choice scheme will be open to all clinically appropriate patients, including those resident outside of London, who are on a London Hospital waiting list. However the scheme is not enacted until the patient has been on the waiting list for six months.

HIV/AIDS

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what training is provided to nationals of sub-Saharan African countries working within the NHS in treating HIV/AIDS. [164760]

Mr. Hutton: The training and education that a member of the national health service workforce receives will depend upon the demands of the specific role within the NHS. An individual's training needs are identified through the development of individual career plans and appraisal mechanisms. There are no specific training programmes for nationals of sub-Saharan Africa working in the NHS, but if specific needs are identified, these are addressed on an individual basis.

Hospital Infections

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the efficacy of Ebiox handrub and handwash products as part of a programme of infection control in hospitals; and what advice he has issued concerning their use. [163149]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As part of Winning Ways we are developing a rapid review process to assess new procedures and products for which claims of effectiveness are made for their ability to prevent or control healthcare associated infection. This will help the national health service assess new products such as the Ebiox's products which are still under development.

Existing guidance already provides advice on hand hygiene products[1].

[1] The epic project: Developing National Evidence-based Guidelines for Preventing Healthcare Associated Infections. Phase 1 guidelines for preventing hospital acquired infections (available at http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/07/73/68/04077368.PDF).

Hospital Shower Curtains

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what studies he has made of hospital shower curtains as a source of micro-organisms. [163760]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not commissioned any research into hospital shower curtains as a source of pathogenic micro-organisms. There is no evidence of disease linked to micro-organisms found on shower curtains within the United Kingdom.

Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the *(a)* current and *(b)* proposed private finance initiative projects for the Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Hospitals Trust. [165040]

Mr. Hutton: There are two Private Finance Initiative hospital schemes for the Hull and East Yorkshire NHS Hospitals Trust: new maternity facilities at Hull Royal Infirmary (which became operational in March 2003) and the development of a new integrated oncology and clinical haematology unit at Castle Hill Hospital, which is currently in procurement and scheduled to reach financial close in winter 2004–05.

Illegal Meat Imports

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the risks to human health from illegal imports of meat. [165202]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I am advised by the Food Standards Agency (FSA) that it has developed a risk profile of the microbiological risks to public health from illegally imported meat.

On the basis of the risk profile, the FSA does not believe there is currently the evidence to suggest the need for a formal risk assessment. However, the FSA will continue to monitor the available data and review the risk profile.

The United Kingdom public health bodies involved in the investigation of outbreaks of infectious intestinal disease have not traced any outbreaks of human disease in the UK to illegally imported meat.

The FSA's advice to UK consumers is that illegally imported meat should not be eaten because it will not have been subject to proper controls at the point of production and will have evaded export controls in the country of origin and import controls at the port of entry to the EU. These controls are designed to verify compliance with food safety standards, and such illegal imports cannot legally be sold in the UK.

The FSA has advised local authorities, which are responsible for enforcement of imported food and food safety legislation, that all illegally imported food products, including meat, should be removed from the human food chain. The FSA is also working closely with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and HM Customs and Excise to assist in the targeting of enforcement work to detect and seize illegal meat imports.

In-patient Treatment (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were waiting for in-patient hospital treatment in Greater London, broken down by hospital trust, in each month since June 2002. [163732]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in a table which has been placed in the Library.

Infection Control (Care Homes)

Mr. Paul Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many deaths in care homes were attributed to notifiable infectious diseases in each year since 1997, broken down by disease. [165240]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Paul Burstow, dated 7 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many deaths in care homes were attributed to notifiable infectious diseases in each year since 1997, broken down by disease. (165240)

The latest year for which data are available is 2002. The figures in the table below relate to deaths occurring in care homes from diseases which are notifiable under the Public Health (Control of Disease) Act 1984 and the Public Health (Infectious Diseases) Regulations 1988. Only those diseases for which there were any deaths occurring in care homes have been included in the table.

Number of deaths

	Tuberculosis and late effects of tuberculosis	*Other*	*Total*
1997	31	16	47
1998	30	10	40
1999	33	9	42
2000	21	12	33
2001[1]	20	21	41
2002[1]	19	21	40

[1] The introduction of the International Classification of Diseases Tenth Revision (ICD-10) for coding case of death in 2001 means that data for 2001 onwards may not be completely comparable with data for years before this date. Analysis of data for tuberculosis suggests that figures for ICD-9 and ICD-10 are broadly comparable, but detailed analyses of other notifiable diseases has not been undertaken. The data should therefore be interpreted with caution.

Notes:

1. Care homes were defined as NHS and non-NHS nursing homes, local authority residential homes and private residential homes
2. Figures are based on deaths occurring in each calendar year.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of hospitals had implemented a ward housekeeping service in England at the latest date for which figures are available. [165244]

Mr. Hutton: The most recent data collected at the end of September 2004 by NHS Estates from national health service trusts show 40 per cent. of all hospitals have introduced housekeepers. 53 per cent. of larger hospitals (those having 100 beds or more, and accounting for 86 per cent. of all beds), have already implemented the service.

Information Technology

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will ensure that general practitioner practices will be granted at least three choices of information technology suppliers under the new General Medical Services contract. [163348]

Mr. Hutton: The National Programme for Information Technology (NPfIT) has awarded a number of contracts to local service providers (LSPs) who act as prime contractors to deliver the elements of the NPfIT in a geographical area. It is the primary responsibility of the LSPs to work with a range of other suppliers to deliver the solutions that the national health service needs. This will include working with clinical professionals and primary care system providers to ensure that the systems in use across the NHS conform to the national standards required and can be upgraded to integrate with new national applications as they come on line.

The new general medical services contract guaranteed a choice of systems for general practitioners. We will ensure that they do have a choice of systems that comply with agreed national standards. It is not appropriate to specify a particular number of choices.

IT (Dentists)

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 388W, on IT (Dentists), (1) what pilot schemes have been undertaken to facilitate integration of NHS dentistry within the national programme for IT; [163906]

(2) what assessment has been made of *(a)* the success of and *(b)* areas for improvement within pilot schemes to facilitate integration of NHS dentistry within the national programme for IT. [163907]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Forty seven dental practices in England are involved in 23 pilot schemes set up by the Modernisation Agency as part of the modernising dentistry programme, which was created following the publication of Options for Change in August 2002. The aim of the modernising dentistry programme is to facilitate new ways of working in the delivery of National Health Service primary care dental services. Allied to this are streams of work to support modernisation in dental hospitals and secondary care.

The focus is on supporting and improving any area of patient care through the better use of Information Technology (IT) and the National Programme for IT (NpfIT) is developing services that are intended to be used by all NHS clinicians. This includes dentists, and we will be testing new ways of working and contributing to the new dental service which will be rolled out from 2005 onwards. Although these pilots were initiated prior to dentistry being brought into the NPfIT, the outcomes of these pilots will feed directly into the future requirements for dental IT systems.

Khat

Ms Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the impact on health of the use of Khat. [164090]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In the publication "Dangerousness of Drugs (2003)" , copies of which are available in the Library, the Department published guidance on the health impact of Khat. This summary was commissioned from the National Addiction Centre based on expert review of the evidence.

Limited Registration (Doctors)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 11 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1540W, on doctors, what he means by a period of limited registration. [162236]

Mr. Hutton: All doctors who wish to practice medicine in the United Kingdom must be registered with the General Medical Council (GMC). There are four main types of registration: provisional, limited, full and specialist. Limited registration is granted to doctors whose primary medical qualification is obtained outside the United Kingdom and who have provided evidence

of linguistic abilities, capability to practise in the UK and secured an offer of employment. Doctors with limited registration may only work under the supervision of fully registered medical practitioner and the type of posts in which they can work is also restricted.

A doctor who has been granted limited registration can apply to move to full registration if they meet the GMC's requirements. By law the total maximum period for which limited registration can be granted is five years. Further details on registration can be obtained directly from the GMC, as the independent statutory body responsible for licensing medical practitioners.

Liver Disease

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate his Department has made of the incidence of undetected cases of hepatitis C in England; and if he will make a statement; [162068]

(2) if he will estimate the incidence of *(a)* hepatitis C and *(b)* all liver disease in England in each year since 1990; [162071]

(3) what estimate his Department has made of the incidence of *(a)* hepatitis C, *(b)* liver cancer and *(c)* all liver disease in England in the next decade. [162073]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Laboratory reports of antibody to hepatitis C in England, between 1992 (when national surveillance began) and 2003 are available on the Health protection Agency's website at http:// www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics/ az/hepatitis c/data lab region.htm The majority of cases of acute hepatitis C infection do not result in symptoms and therefore new infections are not usually identified. These laboratory reports do not distinguish between new (incident) and past infections and represent newly diagnosed cases of hepatitis C.

Studies suggest that about 0.5 per cent. of the general population in England (250,000 people) has been infected with hepatitis C. The number of cumulative laboratory reports is lower than the estimate for the overall population prevalence and suggests that the majority of hepatitis C infections have not been diagnosed.

Finished admissions into National Health Service hospitals in England for liver disease from 1995–96 to 2002–03 are shown in the table.

Finished admissions into National Health Service hospitals in England for liver disease 1995–96 to 2002–03

1995–96	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
16,293	16,790	18,729	19,301	19,990	20,595	20,640	21,956

Note: Data in table refer to admissions where there has been a primary diagnosis of liver disease (i.e. ICD-10 K70-K77, Q44.6, B66.1, B66.3). Data are only available from 1995/96 because of changes in the way diagnoses are coded.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics, Department of Health

The future incidence of hepatitis C and the associated burden of liver disease are not known. The Department is funding the Health Protection Agency, in collaboration with the Medical Research Council's Biostatistics Unit at Cambridge, to provide estimates in this area.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate his Department has made of the level of need for liver transplantation in England in the next decade. [162072]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The growing success of liver transplantation means that more people are now being offered a transplant. It is estimated that the demand, particularly for alcoholic liver disease and hepatitis C, will continue to grow slowly at a rate of 10–15 per cent. over the next five years.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging Scanners

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his strategy for cutting inpatient and outpatient waiting times for access to magnetic resonance imaging scanners in England. [165345]

Mr. Hutton: Data on waiting times for diagnostic tests, including magnetic resonance imaging (MRI), are not collected centrally; however, data may be collected locally by some strategic health authorities.

As recently announced by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State, work is under way to eradicate waits for MRI through national procurement of a mobile MRI service. This will deliver an approximate 10 per cent. increase in the capacity already available to the national health service. In practical terms, approximately 80,000 extra MRI scans will be available to patients by July 2004.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made with the *(a)* recruitment and *(b)* training of radiographers to reduce waiting times for access to magnetic resonance imaging scanners in England. [165347]

Mr. Hutton: There has been significant progress in increasing both the numbers of radiographers employed in the national health service and the number of radiographers entering training each year. Between 1997 and 2003, the number of NHS radiographers increased by 1,573 or 13 per cent. and between 1996–97 and 2002–03, the number of training places for radiographers has increased by 634 to 107 per cent.

Information is not collected centrally on waiting times for access to magnetic resonance imaging scanners.

Medical Devices Agency

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* fatal accidents and *(b)* adverse incident

reports to the Medical Devices Agency there were in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement on the most common causes of these incidents. [163505]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information on total numbers of reported medical device related adverse incidents and reported incidents involving a fatality is shown in table 1.

Table 1: Reported medical device related adverse incidents 1997–2003

	Total number of reported incidents	*Reported incidents involving a fatality*
1997	5,383	47
1998	6,298	79
1999	6,610	87
2000	7,249	92
2001	7,896	141
2002	8,756	175
2003	8,795	166

For summary information and reported purposes, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency groups the causes of medical device related adverse incidents into four categories:

1. Before delivery—issues relating to design, manufacture, quality control and/or packaging.

2. After delivery—relating to performance and/or maintenance failures and device degradation.

3. User error—where the device had not been used in accordance with the instructions for use.

4. No established link to device—where *(a)* the device was found subsequently to work as intended (possibly due to an intermittent fault, tampering, or user error) or *(b)* it was not available for inspection, or *(c)* because the report was made on precautionary basis.

The percentage of incidents falling into each of these categories in 2003 is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Reported medical device related adverse incidents 2003

Percentage

Cause of incident	*All incident reports (number = 8,795)*	*Reported incidents involving a fatality (number = 166)*
1. Before delivery	37	12
2. After delivery	30	11
3. User error	18	36
4. No established links to device	44	62

Note:
Figures total more than 100 per cent. as multiple causes have been identified in some reports.

Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether any members of the expert working group of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency have an interest in GlaxoSmithKline; [162486]

(2) what the reasons were for four separate reviews of Seroxat (paroxetine) by the expert working group of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency; [162487]

(3) who sits on the expert working group of the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency; [162488]

(4) when the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency was informed about the recently issued guidance on the recommended prescription doses of Seroxat (paroxetine); [162557]

(5) what plans he has to withdraw Seroxat (paroxetine) from new prescriptions. [162558]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Since paroxetine (Seroxat) was authorised in 1990, its safety has been closely monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Government's independent expert advisory committee, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). The CSM has considered the safety of Seroxat on a number of occasions in response to the receipt of new data in relation to the issues of suicidal behaviour and withdrawal reactions.

The CSM's expert working group on the safety of selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) was established in May 2003 to review the current available evidence relating to the safety of SSRIs, including paroxetine. The CSM's expert working group comprises the following members whose areas of expertise include psychiatry, child and adolescent psychiatry, epidemiology, statistics and general practice:

Professor Ian V. D. Weller
Professor Deborah Ashby
Mr. Richard Brook (resigned in March 2004)
Professor Mary G. A. Chambers
Dr. Jonathan D. Chick
Professor Colin Drummond
Professor David J. Gunnell
Professor Klaus Ebmeier
Dr. Elizabeta Mukaetova-Ladinska
Mr. Eamonn O'Tierney
Dr. Ross J. Taylor
Dr. Ann York
Dr. Morris Zwi

Members of the Medicines Act advisory committees such as the CSM and its working groups are required to follow a code of practice relating to declarations of interests in the pharmaceutical industry. The code is rigorously followed at each meeting to ensure the integrity of the advice given to the Licensing Authority by those committees. None of the members of the CSM's expert working group have a personal interest in GlaxoSmithKline or any of the other companies which hold marketing authorisations for SSRIs.

To date the expert group has met nine times and has completed the most comprehensive review yet undertaken of the safety of SSRIs in paediatric use. An interim report, which provides information on the key evidence considered by the group up to July 2003 and the action that has been taken as a result of the group's advice, was published on the MHRA/CSM website in September 2003. The expert group is now focused on completing its task of reviewing all the data related to the use of paroxetine and the related drugs in adults, specifically focusing on suicidal behaviour, withdrawal reactions and the dosage recommendations.

As part of the ongoing in-depth review, the expert group has recently re-evaluated the original dose finding studies carried out for the licensing of paroxetine. The expert group initially reviewed one of the dose finding studies for paroxetine in October 2003. On the advice of the expert group, the manufacturer was then asked to provide data to justify the current dosing recommendations for all indications as part of the European review of the risks and benefits of paroxetine. The expert group reviewed the completed data set at their meeting on 27 February 2004.

This review confirmed that, as stated in the product information provided to prescribers, the recommended daily dose is 20mg, with the exception of obsessive compulsive disorder and panic disorder, for which the recommended daily dose is 40gm.

On 10 March 2004, the CSM confirmed the advice of its expert group and advised that public communication was necessary on the basis of the re-evaluation of clinical trial data and the evidence of prescribing outside of the recommendations in the summary of product characteristics. Ministers accepted the CSM's advice and a communication underlining the recommended daily doses for paroxetine was issued to health professionals on 11 March 2004.

The CSM's current advise is that the balance of risks and benefits of this medicine in the licensed indications is favourable and, on this basis, there are no plans to restrict its use in new patients.

Mental Health Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on a negative impact of the four-hour target for total time in accident and emergency on the care of patients with mental health difficulties who present to accident and emergency departments; and if he will make a statement. [159736]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Patients with mental health difficulties benefit along with other patients from the reduction in delay in assessment and treatment the four-hour target requires. Concerns were expressed last year by clinicians about the minority of patients who clinically need more than four hours in accident and emergency (A&E). In response to this the final December 2004 target was adjusted at the end of 2003 to a minimum operating standard of 98 per cent. This gives all trusts up to 2 per cent. headroom to manage clinical exceptions and other patients still in A&E after four hours. The number of patients with mental health difficulties who clinically need more than four hours in A&E is very small.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were resident in mental hospitals or mental institutions in each of the last five years. [163014]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the numbers of patients resident in national health service hospitals in England under the care of a mental illness or learning disabilities consultant from 31 March 1998 to 2002 is shown in the table.

	Mental illness	*Learning disabilities*
1998	31,734	8,413
1999	30,801	7,102
2000	29,891	6,030
2001	31,560	6,507
2002	31,344	5,362

Source:
NHS Facilities

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people were outpatients affiliated to a mental hospital or mental institution in each of the last five years. [163015]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is not available in the form requested.

Between 2001 and 2002 there was an increase of over 50,000 in numbers of patients seen by community mental health teams and increases of 1,000 and nearly 3,000 inpatients seen by crisis resolution and assertive outreach teams.

The number of attendances at consultant led outpatient National Health Service clinics for Mental Illness sector is provided in table 1. Taken alone, these figures do not reflect accurately the volume of provision as mental health services are provided in a number of alternative ways as well as through traditional outpatient appointments. Table 2 provides the currently available information on the number of people receiving services from assertive outreach, crisis resolution, and early intervention teams, which provide mental health services to people with mental health problems in the community.

Table 1
Consultant outpatient attendances: Mental Illness sector, England

Year	*Quarter*	*Sector*	*First attendances seen*	*Subsequent attendances seen*	*Total attendances seen*
1998–99		[1]	287,411	1,813,011	2,100,422
1999–2000		[1]	281,578	1,790,408	2,071,986
2000–01		[1]	284,884	1,760,399	2,045,283
2001–02		[1]	272,599	1,684,879	1,957,478
2002–03		[1]	276,442	1,736,263	2,012,705
2003–04	1	[1]	61,924	381,459	443,383
2003–04	2	[1]	66,997	397,497	464,494
2003–04	3	[1]	64,975	416,155	481,130

[1] Mental illness

Source:
Department of Health dataset KH09 (Annual Data)
Department of Health dataset QMOP (Quarterly Data)

Table 2
Number of people receiving services from functionalised community teams, England

	Snapshot at Q3 2003–04	*Q1–Q3 2003–04*
Assertive outreach	11,493	
Crisis resolution	—	30,650
Early intervention	1,226	—

Source:
Local Delivery Plan Returns

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many mental health trusts have fully established women-only day care facilities. [163044]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not centrally available.

"Following Shifting the Balance of Power", strategic health authorities (SHAs) carry responsibility for the development of local delivery plans that show how proposals for mental health modernisation will be taken forward.

Information to guide local services on applicable service models is available in guidance published by the Department of Health. Women's mental health: into the mainstream was made available to services in September 2002. A copy is available in the Library.

In addition, a programme of work led by the National Institute for Mental Health in England focuses on the development of services for women, including day care provision.

SHAs carry responsibility for the direct management of trust performance, taking account of national guidance and local population needs and resources. Our annual national assessment of local services' self-assessment of development shows that progress is being made but information is not captured centrally on a trust by trust basis.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many episodes of mental health treatment for minors took place in each of the last five years. [163058]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not available in the form requested.

A survey of the mental health of children and adolescents in Great Britain, carried out in 1999 by the Office for National Statistics on behalf of the Department of Health, Scottish National Executive and National Assembly for Wales, showed that about 10 per cent. of children aged five to 15 in Great Britain had a mental disorder in that year, of whom half had seen someone from the educational services, about a quarter had used the specialist health care services and a fifth had contact with the social services.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* consultant psychiatrists, *(b)* mental health nurses and *(c)* primary care mental health workers (i) were recruited by and (ii) left the NHS in (A) 2003–04 and (B) in each of the previous five years. [163684]

Mr. Hutton: The Department's workforce census, which takes place each September, does not collect the number of joiners and leavers in the national health service.

The number of consultants in the psychiatry group and the number of all specified mental health nurses in post since 1998 is shown in the table. Separate information is not collected on the number of primary care mental health workers employed in the NHS.

Consultants within the psychiatry group specialty and all specified mental health nurses as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	Consultants in the psychiatry group	*All specified mental health nurses*[1]
1998	2,627	48,877
1999	2,808	48,922
2000	2,904	49,026
2001	2,959	51,315
2002	2,979	52,204
2003	3,229	53,678

[1] Includes nurses employed in learning disabilities, community learning disabilities, psychiatry and community psychiatry areas of work.

Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census
Department of Health non-medical workforce census

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* consultant psychiatrists, *(b)* mental health nurses and *(c)* primary care mental health workers are employed by the NHS; and how many of these work (i) part-time and (ii) full-time. [163685]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of consultants in the psychiatry group and qualified nurses working in the mental health areas of work is shown in the tables. Separate information is not collected on the number of primary care mental health workers employed in the national health service.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) staff in England by contract group as at 30 September 2003

Headcount

	Consultants in the psychiatry group
Total	3,229
Whole-time	2,321
Maximum part-time	66
Part-time	643
Honorary	199

NHS hospital and community health services: qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff by specified area of work and nature of contract, in England as at 30 September 2003

Headcount

	All specified mental health nurses[1]
Total	53,678
Full-time	39,497
Part-time	8,889
Unknown	5,292

[1] Includes nurses employed in learning disabilities, community learning disabilities, psychiatry and community psychiatry areas of work

Source:
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce census
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce census

Ministerial Accommodation Costs

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's allowance is for the cost of a night's accommodation in a hotel for a Minister. [163602]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Accommodation arrangements for Department of Health Ministers when travelling on official business are in line with the Ministerial Code, paragraph 84 and are borne by the Department.

Nanotechnology

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evaluation his Department has made of the safety of injectable quantum dots. [165026]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Quantum dots are understood to be another manifestation within the field of nanotechnology and the Department and its agencies are monitoring developments in this field closely. As the technology develops we expect it will be used in healthcare to produce new products and to improve the way that existing products work. Products developed using this technology may be classified either as medicines or as medical devices, according to the standard definitions and assessed to ensure the safety of any product.

Nappies

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to promote awareness of the benefits of reusable nappies. [164113]

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department is taking to promote the use of real nappies once mothers and babies are discharged from hospital. [165321]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 29 March 2004]*: The Government firmly believes that women and their families should be given information on the use of both reusable nappies to make an informed choice. The Pregnancy Book and Birth to Five are two comprehensive information booklets produced by the Department which are given free to all first time mothers.

Both publications give detailed information on both reusable and disposable nappies including information about nappy laundering services.

It is for individual units and trusts to decide on the practicalities of promoting the use of terry nappies in their own maternity units.

National Programme for Information Technology

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 922W, on the national programme for information technology (NPfIT), what the total projected cost was for the NPfIT when it was announced in June 2002 *(a)* up to March 2006 and *(b)* up to and beyond March 2006. [165302]

Mr. Hutton: When the national programme for information technology in the national health service (NPfIT) was announced in June 2002 the costs were still being assessed and work was ongoing as part of the Spending Review (SR) 2002. The first projected cost for the NPfIT announced in January 2003 as part of SR2002 was £2.3 billion to cover the period April 2004 to March 2006.

We are not considering budgetary requirements as part of SR2004 and the key indicator of the projected cost for the NPfIT following award of the eight contracts is £6.2 billion to cover the period from April 2004 to beyond March 2006. The initial £2.3 billion was allocated as follows: £370 million for 2003–04, £730 million for 2004–05 and £1.2 billion for 2005–06.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much has been spent by *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* NHS trusts on the National Programme for IT since 2001; and what spending is projected for the next three years; [159140]

(2) what assessment has been made of the cost to each *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* NHS trust for training users of the new IT systems under the National Programme for IT; and what allocation of funding has been made to each for that purpose. [159142]

Mr. Hutton: There was no spending on the National Programme for Information Technology (NPfIT) in 2001 nor 2002. The three year expenditure programme started in April 2003 but there has been no local expenditure on the National Programme by primary care trusts and national health service trusts in the last year. The expenditure projection over the three years from April 2003 is shown in the following table and is centrally funded.

In addition to this central funding, the NHS spends its own resources on information technology, mainly for existing IT systems. In 2003–04, it is estimated that the NHS will spend around £880 million. About 70 per cent. of this amount will be spent by NHS trusts with the remainder spent by primary care trusts and strategic health authorities.

As the NPfIT is implemented over the years ahead, an increasing proportion of the existing NHS IT spend will become available to be spent on additional services under the national programme contracts as trusts make local choices. However, it is too soon to accurately predict the proportion.

£ million

	Current estimate
2003–04	330
2004–05	956
2005–06	1,352
Total	2,638

Training requirements for users are being developed as part of the detailed plans for each geographical cluster. This will enable the programme to consider the most appropriate ways of providing training and development and produce firmer costs.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the EMIS IT system is one of the accredited systems for the National Programme for IT. [160663]

Mr. Hutton: EMIS systems have been accredited for use in national health service primary care under the terms of the former "Requirements for Accreditation" process and the new General Medical Services contract.

The National Programme for Information Technology has awarded a number of contracts to local service providers (LSPs) who act as prime contractors to deliver the elements of the NPfIT in a geographical area. It is the primary responsibility of the LSPs to work with a range of other suppliers to deliver the solutions that

the NHS needs. This will include working with EMIS and other primary care system providers to ensure that the systems in use across the NHS conform to the national standards required and can be upgraded to integrate with new national applications as they come on line.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his Answer of 5 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 201W, on NHS contracts, what *(a)* total value and *(b)* duration was originally set for the contract; and what the total expected (i) value and (ii) duration is. [156351]

Mr. Hutton: The value and duration set for the contracts awarded by national programme for information technology in the national health service are as shown in the table.

Contracts awarded by national programme for information technology

Company	Value £ million	Expiry	Purpose
BT	620	2013	National data spine
BT	530	2011	National NHS network
SchlumbergerSema	64.5	[1]2008	National e-booking service
Accenture	1,099	2013	North East local service provider (LSP)
Accenture	934	2013	Eastern LSP
BT	996	2013	London LSP
CSC	973	2013	North West and West Midlands LSP
Fujitsu	986	2013	Southern LSP

[1] With an option for renewal.

National Service Framework (Older People)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimates his Department has made of the costs of implementing Standard 1[0] of the National Service Framework for Older People. [164765]

Dr. Ladyman: There is little research or firm evidence available to allow us to quantify the extent of age discrimination and therefore the cost associated with eliminating it. Eliminating age discrimination, promoting person-centred care, ensuring evidence-based practice and access to specialist care and treatment are inter-linked aspects of the national service framework for older people that are centred around giving older people fair access to the national health service based on priority of clinical need.

New NHS Hospitals

Dr. Richard Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many of the new NHS hospitals built under the Private Finance Initiative have incurred penalty charges by exceeding the level of bed occupancy stipulated in the NHS trusts' contracts with the private consortia providing the service. [165235]

Mr. Hutton: Hospitals are not penalised or fined for having higher bed occupancy rates. All Private Finance Initiative contracts include additional payments for higher levels of services needed when there are more patients in the hospital. Bed occupancy rates are used to measure these increases.

NHS Ancillary Staff

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nursing assistants, *(b)* nursery nurses, *(c)* healthcare assistants, *(d)* clerical and administrative staff, *(e)* maintenance and works staff, *(f)* medical secretaries, *(g)* medical records officers and *(h)* porters are employed by the NHS. [165086]

Mr. Hutton: Separate information is not collected on the number of medical secretaries, medical records officers and porters employed in the national health service. Medical secretaries and medical records officers are included among clerical and administrative staff in clinical support and porters are in the support to doctors and nurses staff group. The available information, including a table of explanatory notes for each staff group, has been placed in the Library.

NHS Beds

Andy Burnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds there were in the NHS on *(a)* 1 May 1997 and *(b)* 1 March 2004. [158688]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 March 2004]:* Information on beds is not collected at individual census dates in the year. The average daily number of available beds in 1997–98 and 2002–03 is shown in the table.

Average daily number of available beds, by sector, England, 1997–98 and 2002–03

	1997–98	2002–03
All Specialties (excluding day only)	193,625	183,826
General and Acute	138,047	136,679
Acute	107,807	108,706
Geriatric	30,240	27,973
Mental illness	36,601	32,753
Learning disability	8,197	5,038
Maternity	10,781	9,356
Day only	7,125	8,544

Source:
Department of Health form KH03.

The decrease in the number of national health service beds in some sectors reflects service improvements away from in-patient stays. We are aiming to deliver as many services as possible in the most low tech and local environment with more support in peoples' homes and the community. More procedures are taking place in out-patients and community settings which used to require hospital admission. At the same time, more consultations and treatments are taking place outside hospitals in the community and being delivered by different groups of staff. General practitioners are starting to offer treatments and consultations, which were once only done by hospital consultants. Similarly, there is an increase in the range of work undertaken by nurses. Many of the changes in the way services are delivered have been supported by the Modernisation Agency and through collaboration and learning between different parts of the NHS. This redesign of services has allowed the NHS to treat more patients and offer more convenient services.

The NHS Plan did, however, recognise a need for more general and acute beds and set a target of 2,100 extra by 2004. The latest available statistics for 2002–03 showed that general and acute beds increased by 1,600

to 136,679 over the previous three years. This represents over three quarters of the target set out in the NHS Plan. This is the first time general and acute bed numbers have increased in three consecutive years since records began in 1960.

NHS Dentistry

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what steps he plans to take to improve access to *(a)* NHS dentistry and *(b)* NHS orthodontic treatment in the Southampton Primary Care Trust area; [164118]

(2) what assessment he has made of the availability of NHS orthodontic treatment to patients in the Southampton Primary Care Trust area; [164119]

(3) what assessment he has made of the availability of NHS dentistry to patients in the Southampton Primary Care Trust area. [164120]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answers 31 March 2004]:* Southampton City Primary Care Trust (PCT) has made arrangements to ensure that any patients requiring urgent dental treatment can usually be offered an appointment on the same day. For patients wishing to register with a National Health Service dentist for routine dental care there were, on 30 March 2004, four dental practices in the city accepting new NHS patients. There were also three dental practices accepting NHS orthodontic patients, although there are waiting times for these appointments. The PCT has also put in place arrangements to ensure that the more complex orthodontic cases are treated at Southampton General Hospital, which has 1.5 whole time equivalent orthodontic consultants. Southampton also has one personal dental service site in operation—the Southampton and South West Hampshire Dental Access Centre—which sees an average of 815 patients each month.

We have provided new investment totalling £90 million to NHS dentistry over the last year. £59 million will support access, and strategic health authorities (SHAs) have been advised of their shares and are working with their PCTs to address access issues. Hampshire and the Isle of Wight SHA has been allocated £1.64 million, and Southampton City PCT will receive a share of this to support its action plan to improve access to NHS dentistry in Southampton. Additionally, the PCT funds a local dental helpline, which provides information on where NHS dentistry, including orthodontics, is available locally, either for urgent or routine treatment.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists have left the NHS, in whole or in part, to work in the private sector in each year since 1997 in *(a)* total, *(b)* NHS Trust areas covering Portsmouth and *(c)* NHS Trust areas covering Hampshire. [160769]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the total number of dentists leaving the general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) is shown in the table. Information is not available on the reason for leaving.

Dentists can leave the National Health Service for a variety of reasons. These include retirements, short term absence, leaving for other employment as well as dentists leaving the NHS dental services to practise wholly privately.

Few dentists leave the NHS altogether to practise privately. There are approximately 1,000, or 5 per cent. of dentists who practise wholly privately. This number includes specialists.

Number of leavers from the GDS or PDS

12 months ending September	*England and Wales*	*Hampshire and Isle of Wight*	*Portsmouth City Primary Care Trust*
1998	1,000	48	5
1999	1,065	63	14
2000	1,228	67	13
2001	1,256	74	12
2002	1,370	77	14
2003	1,248	67	8

Information is not available on the number of dentists who have partially left the NHS. Dentists on the GDS and PDS are mainly self-employed and are free to vary the amount of NHS work they do.

NHS Direct

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of nurses NHS Direct will employ in England by 2006; and if he will make a statement. [160340]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The forecast from the latest NHS Direct capacity improvement plan estimates that NHS Direct will employ 1,550 nurses by April 2006.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of calls to NHS Direct resulted in the caller being advised to attend *(a)* accident and emergency, *(b)* an NHS walk-in centre and *(c)* a primary care surgery appointment in the last year for which figures are available. [162056]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The proportion of calls to NHS Direct that resulted in the caller being advised to attend accident and emergency, a NHS walk-in centre, and a primary care surgery appointment in the last year for which figures are available are set out in the table.

Disposition	*Percentage of total calls*
Accident and emergency	7.5
NHS walk-in centre	0.3
Primary care surgery appointment	9.9

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the target time is in which to answer calls to NHS Direct; and what the target will be after 1 April. [162262]

Ms Rosie Winterton: NHS Direct's performance is measured on a daily basis against eight service delivery targets. The service delivery target set for NHS Direct to answer calls, is 90 per cent. of calls to be answered within 30 seconds. The service delivery targets are consistent with the out-of-hours standards and they will therefore be adjusted in line with any changes to the out-of-hours accreditation standards.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the target for the percentage of calls to NHS Direct to be answered is; and what the target will be after 1 April. [162263]

Ms Rosie Winterton: NHS Direct's performance is measured on a daily basis against eight service delivery targets. The service delivery target for the percentage of calls to NHS Direct that should be answered is that less than 5 per cent. of callers will hang up before the call is answered. The service delivery targets are consistent with the out-of-hours standards and they will, therefore, be adjusted in line with any changes to the out-of-hours accreditation standards.

NHS Hospitals (Deficits)

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS hospitals built with private sector funds have deficits in this financial year. [163484]

Mr. Hutton: Audited information on the financial position of national health service trusts for year 2003–04 will be published in their individual annual accounts. This data will be available centrally in the autumn. We have no plans to publish unaudited information.

NHS Modernisation Agency

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many whole-time-equivalent nurses he estimates will be performing non-clinical duties with the NHS Modernisation Agency. [163462]

Mr. Hutton: At 1 March 2004 the NHS Modernisation Agency employed 143 whole time equivalent staff who are qualified as nurses. 139 whole time equivalent of these staff work either directly with clinical teams to improve services for patients or their role involves them actively encouraging and promoting service modernisation out in the National Health Service.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the annual budget of the NHS Modernisation Agency was in the last three years for which figures are available. [163463]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Modernisation Agency was established on 1 April 2001. Annual budgets for 2001–02 and 2002–03 were as follows.

£ million

	Budget
2001–02	54
2002–03	132

For the current financial year 2003–04, the annual budget stands at £232 million.

The arm's length body review is reviewing bodies like the Modernisation Agency. It is clear that the Agency will be re-shaped with more of its staff transferred to modernisation within local settings but retaining a national capacity, smaller than now, to preserve a strong focus on modernisation and innovation in the national health service.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have been appointed to the NHS Modernisation Agency; and at what remuneration level. [163464]

Mr. Hutton: As at 1 March 2004, the NHS Modernisation Agency had 767 employed or seconded whole time equivalent staff in post.

Of the total staffing profile of the agency, 17 per cent. are senior managers or clinician level, 49 per cent. are programme manager level and 34 per cent. are support staff.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he last met the head of the NHS Modernisation Agency. [163465]

Mr. Hutton: The Secretary of State for Health has regular meetings with the Head of the Modernisation Agency including at the National Modernisation Board. Other Ministers also meet the Head of the Modernisation Agency.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how often the NHS Modernisation Agency meets; and when the last meeting took place. [163466]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Modernisation Agency is a directorate of the Department of Health. Its Director, David Fillingham, is a member of the Department's Delivery Board, which meets monthly. The Modernisation Agency's management team meets every month.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* clinical and *(b)* non-clinical staff are employed by the NHS Modernisation Agency; and what the figures were for the last five years. [163467]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Modernisation Agency was created in April 2001.

At 30 December 2002, there were 670 staff employed by the NHS Modernisation Agency, of which 216 had professional clinical qualifications.

As at the 1 March 2004, there were 767 whole time equivalent staff employed by or seconded to the NHS Modernisation Agency. Of these, 213 WTE have professional clinical qualifications.

NHS Professionals

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether NHS Professionals is covered by the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations; and if he will make a statement. [160594]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 11 March 2004]*: The NHS Professionals Special Health Authority is covered by the Conduct of Employment Agencies and Employment Businesses Regulations.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what representations he has received on the *(a)* training and *(b)* criminal records checks undergone by nurses used by NHS Professionals; and if he will make a statement; [163500]

(2) what representations he has received on the adequacy of the *(a)* facilities and *(b)* IT systems to support NHS Professionals; and if he will make a statement. [163502]

Mr. Hutton: No such representations have been received.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS acute trusts have signed up to use NHS Professionals; and what proportion of acute trusts this represents. [163501]

Mr. Hutton: 55 acute trusts are currently signed up with NHS Professionals. This represents 24 per cent. of all acute trusts in England.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the budget for NHS professionals is for each of the next three years. [163510]

Mr. Hutton: The budget for 2004–05 will be agreed very shortly. Budgets for the subsequent two years will be agreed at a later stage.

NHS Staff

Mr. Norman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many support staff there were for scientific and technical staff in the NHS broken down by *(a)* trainees, *(b)* assistants, *(c)* healthcare assistants, *(d)* clerical and administrative staff and *(e)* maintenance and works staff in each of the last seven years; [165327]

(2) how many support staff there were for NHS ambulance staff, broken down by *(a)* trainee ambulance personnel, *(b)* healthcare assistants, *(c)* support workers, *(d)* clerical and administrative staff and *(e)* maintenance and works staff in each of the last seven years. [165398]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: Support to clinical staff by area and by grade in England as at 30 September each year

Headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Total support to clinical staff	283,871	289,363	296,619	307,225	325,890	344,524	360,666
Support to doctors and nursing staff[1,2]	240,040	243,960	249,216	257,136	271,978	287,098	398,752
Unqualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff	116,434	116,580	119,678	123,847	128,043	133,876	137,242
Clerical and administrative—clinical support	63,971	66,145	68,425	72,406	77,861	83,312	90,057
Maintenance and works—clinical support	189	151	170	175	154	184	104
Health care assistants—nursing	19,227	21,693	22,429	24,040	29,014	32,657	35,330
Other support staff—nursing	25,197	25,140	24,862	23,422	24,660	24,760	24,253
Health care assistants—central functions	102	156	147	159	172	216	270
Other support staff—central functions	12,579	11,952	11,560	11,046	9,885	9,733	8,909
Nursing, midwifery and health visiting learners	2,341	2,143	1,945	2,041	2,189	2,360	2,587
Support to scientific, therapeutic and technical staff[1,3]	38,074	39,162	40,465	41,800	44,602	48,030	52,230
Unqualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff	23,818	24,180	25,667	26,562	28,806	30,942	33,969
of which:							
Student/trainee	2,419	2,328	2,658	2,808	3,508	3,923	4,755
Helper/assistant	21,399	21,852	23,009	23,754	25,298	27,019	29,214
Clerical and administrative—STT support	12,584	12,703	12,726	12,986	13,374	14,666	15,891
Maintenance and works—STT support	57	110	78	68	86	68	94
Healthcare assistants—STT support	420	703	677	735	750	783	880
Other support staff—STT support	1,195	1,466	1,317	1,449	1,586	1,571	1,396
Support to ambulance staff[1,4]	5,757	6,241	6,938	8,289	9,310	9,396	9,684
Ambulance trainees	816	812	1,127	1,657	2,069	2,103	2,137
Clerical and administrative—ambulance support	2,495	2,569	2,674	2,986	3,039	2,933	3,059
Maintenance and works—ambulance support	137	118	151	120	195	260	274
Health care assistants—ambulance support	1,461	1,769	1,832	2,130	2,599	2,712	2,964
Other support staff—ambulance support	848	973	1,154	1,396	1,408	1,388	1,250

[1] NHS staff by staff groups, September 2003.

[2] Nursing assistants/auxiliaries, nursery nurses, healthcare assistants and support staff in nursing areas. Also includes clerical and administrative staff and maintenance and works staff working specifically in clinical areas, for example medical secretaries and medical records officers. They also include all support workers and healthcare assistants in central functions, as these are mainly general porters involved in moving patients around the hospital.

[3] ST&T trainees and helper/assistants, healthcare assistants, support workers, clerical and administrative staff and maintenance and works staff specifically identified as supporting ST&T staff.

[4] Trainee ambulance personnel as well as healthcare assistants, support workers, clerical and administrative staff and maintenance and works staff specifically identified as supporting the ambulance service.

Source:

Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

NHS Staff (Foreign Nationals)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nationals of sub-Saharan African countries are employed by the NHS *(a)* directly and *(b)* through private agencies. [164420]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Health care professionals who work in the United Kingdom have to be registered with the relevant body. East body produces a statistical breakdown of their register.

NHS Staff Numbers

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the net change in the number of *(a)* general practitioners, as defined in the NHS Plan (Cm 4818), *(b)* nurses, *(c)* consultants and *(d)* midwives was for each year since 1997. [160658]

Mr. Hutton: The net change in the number of general practitioners (GPs) (excluding GP retainers and GP registrars) nurses, consultants and midwives for each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

Between 2002 and 2003 there was the largest increase recorded in the number of nurses, GPs and consultants—bringing the total workforce in the national health service to its highest level yet.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health services (HCHS) consultants, NHS Plan group GPs, all NHS qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff, including practice nurses employed by unrestricted principals and equivalents (UPEs)[1] and NHS hospital and community health service midwives—England

Number (headcount)

	Change					
	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Consultants	850	997	1,080	1,381	1,288	1,680
NHS Plan GPs[2]	205	216	126	209	400	1,156
Nurses[3]	4,601	6,180	6,495	14,429	17,139	18,839
Midwives	456	-42	-227	503	174	692

[1] UPEs include GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs and PMS salaried GPs.
[2] NHS Plan GPs includes GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, salaried doctors, PMS other and flexible career schemes.
[3] Practice nurse headcount figures are estimated for 1998 and 1999.
Note:
All data as at 30 September 1997–2002 and 30 June 2003 except GP and practice nurse data 1997–99.
Source:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Nurses (Recruitment)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health with which countries other than the Philippines, Spain, India and Indonesia his Department is holding discussions to develop bilateral agreements on international nurse recruitment. [164289]

Mr. Hutton: We have no plans to enter further bilateral agreements on International Recruitment.

Officials from the Department recently met with representatives from the Chinese Embassy to discuss issues of mutual interest and the scope for co-operation without the need for formal agreements.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses have *(a)* applied for posts and *(b)* been recruited through the bilateral agreement with Indonesia. [164290]

Mr. Hutton: We do not hold the information centrally as to how many nurses applied for posts through the Memorandum of Understanding with Indonesia. Sixty seven nurses were interviewed and 19 were offered employment.

Four Indonesian nurses have been recruited into the National Health Service through the bilateral agreement.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* nurses and midwives and *(b)* medical consultants have been recruited through bilateral agreements, broken down by country. [164291]

Mr. Hutton: The Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Philippine Government last year. To date the National Health Service has recruited 186 nurses through the agreement.

The Department has a bilateral agreement with the Ministry of Health in Spain. To date the NHS has recruited 892 nurses/midwives and 18 medical consultants as a result of this agreement.

The Department has an agreement with the Ministry of Health in India. To date the NHS has recruited 431 nurses/midwives and 136 medical consultants as a result of this agreement.

The Department signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Indonesian Government in 2002. To date the NHS has recruited four nurses through the agreement.

We have recent signed a Memorandum of Understanding with South Africa to offer South African and English healthcare professionals the chance to go on time-limited placements to the other country.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses recruited through bilateral agreements are working in the NHS. [164292]

Mr. Hutton: 1,513 nurses currently working in the national health service have been recruited through bilateral agreements.

431 nurses have been recruited from India, four from Indonesia, 186 from the Philippines and 892 from Spain.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department plans to monitor the number of nurses not trained in the UK working in the NHS. [164293]

Mr. Hutton: The Nursing and Midwifery Council holds information on the number of nurses and midwives from overseas entering the register each year. This information can be found at www.nmc-uk.org.

Operations

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were cancelled but rescheduled within 24 hours, in the NHS in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1996. [156298]

Mr. Hutton: Quarterly data are collected on the number of operations cancelled by the hospital for non-clinical reasons 'at the last minute' (that is on the day patients are due to arrive, or after arrival in hospital, or on the day of their operation).

Cancelled operations data at England level and by National Health Service trust and Strategic Health Authority level are available in the Library and on the Department's website at http://performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitality

Data on the number of operations postponed by hospitals for periods of less than 24 hours are not collected centrally by the Department.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which operations are being purchased from the private sector. [164693]

Mr. Hutton: During recent years the national health service has purchased a range of operations from the private sector under the 'Concordat' arrangement. These have largely been less complex procedures, mainly in ophthalmology, general surgery and orthopaedics. Information is not held centrally on which operations have been commissioned under the Concordat this year, but is available for 2002–03. An analysis has been placed in the Library.

To ensure that waiting time targets are met, patient choice increased and value for money improved, the NHS will be making much greater, but more structured use of the independent sector from next year. This will be done under the aegis of the independent treatment centre programme. The procedures purchased will be diagnostic and less complex surgical procedures (such as cataract treatment, hernia repairs, primary hip and knee replacement, arthroscopies, endoscopies), mainly in general surgery, ophthalmology and orthopaedics.

When fully operational, we expect the independent sector treatment centre programme to treat 250,000 patients per annum across a range of simple and day care procedures.

In addition to this main programme, the Department is also currently negotiating a supplementary procurement (announced in July 2003) of an extra 125,000 operations for the NHS over the next five years, principally for additional orthopaedic operations. Two services are already working: a treatment centre at Daventry (cataracts) and the mobile cataract treatment service provided by Netcare.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the price paid was for each class of operation purchased from the private sector; and what the equivalent NHS cost of those operations is. [164822]

Mr. Hutton: Information relating to the number of operations purchased from the private sector is not available.

Details of the finished consultant episode (FCE) activity that the national health service sub-contracted to, or directly commissioned from non-NHS providers during the financial year 2002–03, can be found in Appendix SRC5 of the Payment by Results: Core Tools 2004 publication, available on the Department's website at http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/FinanceAndPlanning/NHSReferenceCosts/f s/en.

This activity includes both operative and non-operative procedures and treatments, for elective and emergency admissions to hospital. Comparable details of the cost of such activity incurred by NHS trusts can be found in Appendix SRC1 of the publication.

The information is also available on the CD, "Payment by Results: Core Tools 2004". The CD contains unit cost information for each NHS provider in 2002–03 for designated procedures, diagnoses and treatments.

Opticians

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 926W, on opticians, how many optical premises were registered as accepting national health service optical vouchers in *(a)* each region and *(b)* each primary care trust for each year since 1997. [165298]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All optical premises registered on a primary care trust (PCT) list to provide general ophthalmic services can accept national health service optical vouchers. There is no requirement for optical practices to register to accept optical vouchers alone. The Department is not aware of any difficulty in the availability of practices willing to accept NHS optical vouchers.

Information on the number of ophthalmic premises holding a contract with health authorities and latterly PCTs to provide general ophthalmic services has been placed in the Library.

Out-of-Hours Services

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department has taken to inform the public of the changes to out-of-hours services when the new general practitioner contract comes into effect on 1 April. [162260]

Mr. Hutton: From 1 April 2004, general practitioner practices will be able to opt-out of responsibility for out-of-hours services, with the approval of their local primary care trust (PCT). From 1 January 2005, they will have a right to opt-out in all but exceptional circumstances.

Where practices opt-out, it will be for PCTs to put in place alternative service for patients. It will therefore be for PCTs and practices to inform patients of changes as and when they occur. The Department is providing materials to help PCTs do that and has also briefed a number of national organisations representing patients.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to reply to questions tabled by the honourable Member for Sutton and Cheam, reference *(a)* 152306, *(b)* 151700, *(c)* 144757 and *(d)* 144782. [158719]

Dr. Ladyman: Replies were sent to the hon. Member on:

Friday 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1169–70W
Thursday 18 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 444–45W
Wednesday 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 910W.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of written questions for answer by his Department on a named day received a holding answer in the period between State Opening in *(a)* November 1998, *(b)* November 1999, *(c)* December 2000, *(d)* November 2002 and *(e)* November 2003 and the last day of February in the following year; and of those questions, what proportion received a substantive answer (i) within five parliamentary sitting days, (ii) within six to 10 parliamentary sitting days, (iii) within 11 to 20 parliamentary sitting days and (iv) after more than 20 parliamentary sitting days. [159997]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 10 March 2004]:* Significant changes have been made to the parliamentary section and procedures for answering right hon. and hon. Members' questions within the Department since March 2002. A new database was introduced in October 2002 to help improve the process.

The available information is shown in the table.

Prior to October 2002, information from the previous database does not readily provide the further analysis sought, which could be obtained only by a manual count which would incur a disproportionate cost.

Session	*Number of Named Day PQs received*	*Percentage of Named Day PQs given a holding answer*	*Number given a substantive answer within 5 calendar days*	*Number given a substantive answer 6 to 10 calendar days*	*Number given a substantive answer within 11 to 20 calendar days*	*Number given a substantive answer after 20 calendar days*	*Number not yet answered*	*Average number of calendar days taken to answer a Named Day PQ after a Holding Reply was issued*
2003–04[1]	378	69.5	130	59	48	19	7	13.6
2002–03	1,469	68.6	480	245	140	144	—	15
2001–02*(a)*	283	70.3	101	54	21	13	—	12.3
2001–02*(b)*	4,205	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
2000–01	929	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1999–2000	1,763	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998–99	1,175	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] To end February.

Note:
The information for the 2001–02 session has been divided into two parts, as during this session a new Parliamentary Questions database was introduced to the Department. The information for 2001–02 *(a)* has been provided by this new database; the information for 2001–02 *(b)* has been taken from the old database.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will reply to the Question tabled by the hon. Member for Wells on 12 February, ref: 155796. [162500]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 March 2004]:* A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 26 March.

Patient Experience Definition

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of the research to develop the Patient Experience Definition. [162425]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The total cost of the project to explore the overall experience of patients using national health service services, was £39,722.60. One element of the project was the production of a Patient Experience Definition.

The Patient Experience Definition articulates the entirety of the desired experience from a patient perspective when using NHS services. Traditionally service delivery has focused on the physical aspects of patient care and has given much less emphasis to patients' emotional needs. The research has clearly identified that for patients a good emotional experience is critical to their overall satisfaction with the NHS. The definition enables both the Department and the NHS to have a more complete understanding of the patient experience when developing and delivering patient-centred services in the future.

Patients Choice Scheme

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many patients he estimates will receive treatment under the Patients Choice Scheme in its first year; and if he will make a statement; [164695]

(2) if he will make it his policy to allow patients to opt into the Patients Choice Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [164696]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is committed to giving patients greater choice over the hospital they attend.

All strategic health authorities have completed robust plans for the implementation of choice for patients waiting more than six months for elective surgery which will be rolled out between April and August 2004. The plans anticipate that during the period April 2004 and December 2004 some 85,000 patients who have waited over six months will accept the choice of moving to another hospital for faster treatment. By December 2004 there will be no patients waiting longer than six months for inpatient treatment.

All patients waiting more than six months for elective surgery will be eligible to be considered for the scheme unless there is an overriding clinical reason why it would not be in the patient's best interest.

Under the current choice pilot schemes, almost 20,000 patients have already chosen to move to another hospital for faster treatment.

From December 2005 choice of hospital will be offered at the point of general practitioner referral, benefiting 10 million patients each year.

Percutaneous Endoscopic Gastrostomy

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients received percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy in each year since 2001; and for what types of impairment. [163703]

Dr. Ladyman: Information for 2001–02 and 2002–03 on the numbers of episodes, listed by primary diagnosis, in which percutaneous endoscopic gastrostomy was the main procedure has been placed in the Library.

Pest Infestations

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1610W, on pest infestations, what central monitoring will occur of action area three in Winning Ways. [163564]

Mr. Hutton: Strategic health authorities will monitor overall progress in achieving the measures set out in action area three of Winning Ways—on reducing reservoirs of infection.

Additional information on specific actions will be provided by the hospital cleanliness key target, standards of cleanliness scores, the performance indicator Winning Ways—processes and procedures and the controls assurance standards.

Plasma

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the projected timeline is for providing fresh frozen plasma sourced outside the UK for *(a)* children born in March, *(b)* older children born since 1996 and *(c)* high-risk groups. [163481]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government announced on 15 August 2002 that fresh frozen plasma (FFP) will be obtained from the United States for new-born babies and children born after 1 January 1996 as an added precaution against the theoretical risk of variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease transmission. The National Blood Service will begin issuing imported FFP for all neonatal patients from the week commencing 29 March 2004. This will be extended to older children born on or after 1 January 1996 as soon as practicable. A commercially produced FFP product, sourced from the United States, is also available for the national health service to purchase.

The expert Advisory Committee on the Microbiological Safety of Blood and Tissues for Transplantation is considering whether to extend the provision of non-United Kingdom sourced FFP to high risk groups. There is no defined time scale at present.

Prescriptions

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 393W, on prescriptions, if he will list the sources and types of risks and threats, including fraud, identified by the security analysis evaluation made by the University of Newcastle into electronic transmission of prescriptions; and what countermeasures have been put in place. [163842]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information was presented in a report to the Department by the Sowerby Centre for Health Informatics at the University of Newcastle entitled "Report on Security Assessment of the ETP pilots", a copy of which has been placed in the Library.

The lessons learned on fraud prevention from the earlier pilots are being taken into account in the design of the national model for the electronic transmissions of prescriptions and as part of the overall security architecture of the NHS Care Records Service.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of primary care trusts that plan to use NHS Direct to handle their out-of-hours calls from 1 April. [162098]

Ms Rosie Winterton: No estimate has been made of the number of primary care trusts that plan to use NHS Direct to handle out-of-hours calls from 1 April 2004.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what support will be given by his Department to primary care trusts who have had to sign early contracts with foundation trusts to manage risks involved with signing contracts before negotiations on activity levels have been completed. [165245]

Mr. Hutton: The Department of Health has put in place a package of support for primary care trusts (PCTs) that will be contracting with national health service foundation trusts, including:

Model 'template' contract documents to be adapted locally;

Bespoke training on 'Contracting with and by NHS Foundation Trusts'. Currently 253 NHS staff have attended the training course including 122 representatives from 78 PCTs; and

Access to specialist legal advice.

Prisons (Medical Access)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received on ambulance and paramedic access to prisons; and if he will make a statement. [164612]

Dr. Ladyman: Ministers have received no representations on this issue. The Prison Service and the Department jointly issued a letter to prison governors and chief executives of National Health Service ambulance trusts on 22 March 2004 stating that agreed local protocols must be drawn up for rapid access to emergency paramedical services. Officials from the Department and the Prison Service are working together to look at providing central advice to high security prisons.

Private Finance Initiative

Mr. Jim Cunningham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what analysis he has made of the effect of the Private Finance Initiative in the NHS, with particular regard to the cost of *(a)* services and *(b)* increasing capacity. [165136]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* The Department reviews the business cases for all major private finance initiative (PFI) projects in accordance with the Department's capital investment manual. To be approved, a business case must demonstrate that in PFI option is affordable and value for money when compared with the publicly funded alternative. National Health Service trusts are also required to monitor performance throughout the lifetime of the PFI contract.

Since 1997, 21 major new PFI hospitals have opened and another 10 are under construction, representing capital investment in the NHS of nearly £3.5 billion.

All PFI schemes announced since the NHS Plan was published in July 2000 have resulted in increases in capacity. The 29 major schemes announced in February 2001, many of which are now in procurement, were the first to be planned from the start after July 2000 and are intended to increase NHS beds by approximately 2,900. These increases are in both acute and intermediate care beds, contributing to the targets in the NHS Plan.

Project Funding

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many *(a)* solely state-financed and *(b)* public-private partnership and private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible have been launched in each region in each of the last 10 years; [160969]

(2) how much was spent by *(a)* the Government on solely state-financed projects and *(b)* the (i) Government and (ii) private sector on public-private and private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible, in each of the last 10 years, broken down by region. [160970]

Mr. Hutton: The table provides information on projects which have reached financial close. In the case of the hospital build programme only schemes with a capital value of £25 million and over are included. Further information on private finance initiative projects can be found on the Treasury website at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/publicprivatepartnerships/ppp_pfi_stats.cfm

It is not possible to break these numbers down into regions as projects such as the national health service local improvement finance trust and treatment centres programmes cross administrative boundaries. Also, regional health authorities, NHS regional offices and directorates of health and social care have now been replaced with 28 strategic health authorities.

	NHS capital expenditure						*PFI/PPP investment*			
	Publicly procured hospital schemes		*Treatment centres*		*PFI hospital schemes*		*Treatment centres*		*NHS lift*	
Financial year[1,2]	*No.*	*Total capital value (£ million)*	*No.*	*Total capita value (£ million)*	*No.*	*Total capital value (£ million)*	*No.*	*Total capital value (£ million)*	*No.*	*Total capital value (£ million)*
1993–94	5	194								
1994–95	3	116								
1995–96	3	85								
1996–97	2	95								
1997–98					5	425				
1998–99	3	98			7	551				
1999–2000					6	439				
2000–01					3	486	1	18		
2001–02					2	167				
2002–03[3]			[4]23	[4]250	2	376	1	60		
2003–04					9	1052	1	23	6	124

[1] Expenditure pre 1999–2000 is on a cash basis.

[2] Expenditure figures from 1990–2000 to 2002–03 are on a Stage 1 Resource Budgeting basis (and consistent with figures in table 3.3a of Departmental Report 2003.

[3] Estimated outturn.

[4] Made up of wholly publicly procured and as part of an existing PFI scheme. The Treatment Centre programme is spread over 2 years.

Records are not held centrally for all contracts entered into with private sector companies. This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Public Bodies (Health Services)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will list the *(a)* budget, *(b)* administration budget, including payroll, *(c)* number of staff and *(d)* capital assets of the (i) Access Task Force, (ii) Adoption and Permanence Task Force, (iii) Cancer Task Force, (iv) Children Task Force, (v) Coronary Heart Disease Task Force, (vi) Cross Task Force Prevention Group, (vii) Herbal Medicines Statutory Regulation Working Group, (viii) Making a Difference, Reducing Burdens in Hospitals Task Force, (ix) Making a Difference, Reducing Burdens On GPs Task Force and (x) Mental Health Task Force; [163515]

(2) if he will list the *(a)* budget, *(b)* administration budget, including payroll, *(c)* number of staff and *(d)* capital assets of the (i) NHS IT Task Force, (ii) Older People Task Force, (iii) Patient Environment Steering Group, (iv) Practice Learning Task Force, (v) Quality Task Force, (vi) External Project for Reform of Social Work Education and Training, (vii) Reform of Social Work Education and Training, (viii) Practice Learning Project Group for Reform of Social Work, Education and Training, (ix) Qualification Development Project Group for Reform of Social Work, Education and Training and (x) Registration Post-Qualifying, Continuous Professional Development Project Group for Reform of Social Work, Education and Training; [163517]

(3) if he will list the *(a)* budget, *(b)* administration budget, including payroll, *(c)* number of staff and *(d)* capital assets of the interdepartmental group on the (i) Health Impact Assessment, (ii) Management of Medicines Renal NSF Groups, (iii) NHS Modernisation Board, (iv) NHSFT External Referenee Groups for Governance, (v) Nursing and Midwifery Modernisation Board, (vi) SCOTH/ACMD Working Group on Cannabis and Tobacco Smoking, (vii) National Users Panel of the Community Equipment Services External Reference Group, (viii) Interagency Working Group to Develop a Memorandum of Understanding between his Department and the Police and the HSE and (ix) Primary Care Workforce Review External Reference Group; [163516]

(4) if he will list the *(a)* budget, *(b)* administration budget, including payroll, *(c)* number of staff and *(d)* capital assets of the (i) Strategic Commissioning Group, (ii) Workforce Task Force, (iii) Advisory Committee for Topic Selection, (iv) Advisory Group for Genetics Research, (v) Agenda for Change Central Negotiating Group, (vi) Children's National Service Framework Strategy Group, (vii) Expert Group on Blocked Anaesthetic Tubing, (viii) Expert Group on Mental Health in Prisons, (ix) Forensic Psychiatrists Working Group, (x) Generic Medicines Management Steering Group for Diabetes, Renal and Long-Term Conditions National Service Frameworks and (xi) Implementation Board for Modernising NHS Hospital Medicines Manufacturing. [163518]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on the Department's task forces, ad hoc advisory groups and reviews is given in the annual publication "Public Bodies". This publication explains that such groups have a short-term focus and when their work comes to an end they are disbanded. These groups are usually created to give expert advice to the Government on a specific issue and are usually expected to remain in operation for less than two years. They are not separate statutory bodies. As such, they have no capacity to employ staff or hold assets in their own right, and rely on secretariat and other support from the Department and sometimes other interested bodies. They will not normally have any formal separate budget allocated to them, and accountability for expenditure will remain with the body to whom any funding is allocated. A number of those listed have completed their work and no longer exist.

Radiographers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the adequacy of provision of radiographers in England; and if he will make a statement. [164329]

Mr. Hutton: Considerable progress has been made in increasing the number of radiographers employed in the National Health Service. There are 13 per cent. more NHS radiographers than in 1997 and the number of training places has increased by 107 per cent. over the same period. The additional training places are now starting to make an impact on numbers in the workforce. However, there is more to do. National vacancy rates are 6.1 per cent. for diagnostic radiographers and 10.7 per cent. for therapeutic radiographers.

The Department recently launched a national radiography recruitment and retention strategy to build on the progress already made. For the next two years, this will focus on increasing the workforce, encouraging returns and developing an attractive career pathway for all radiography staff.

Register of Interests

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what requirements there are on officials in his Department to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for his departmental officials. [164691]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirements for civil servants declaring any conflict of interest. The Department of Health staff are required to follow the code and declare any relevant interests; and, in addition, to record such interests in a register.

Seroxat

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what estimate has been made under the yellow card system of the number of people who have suffered side effects from Seroxat in each of the last five years; [162560]

(2) how many people prescribed Seroxat are known to *(a)* suffer and *(b)* have suffered from side effects worthy of note. [162561]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency and Committee on Safety of Medicines receive reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) submitted by doctors, dentists, pharmacists and coroners via the yellow card scheme, and there is a legal requirement for companies to report suspected ADRs to their drugs.

The number of reports received via the yellow card scheme does not directly equate to the number of people who suffer adverse reactions to drugs for a number of reasons including an unknown level of under-reporting. It is important to note that the reporting of a suspected reaction does not necessarily mean it was caused by the drug and may relate to other factors such as the patient's underlying illness or other medicines taken concurrently.

A total of 8,958 reports of suspected ADRs have been received through this scheme in association with paroxetine (Seroxat) since 1990, of which 4,826 were serious (i.e. considered serious by the reporter, were fatal, life-threatening, resulted in hospitalisation or disability, or were medically significant).

The following table provides a breakdown of the total number of reports received in association with paroxetine (Seroxat) annually for the past five years.

	Number of reports for paroxetine (Seroxat)
1999	481
2000	433
2001	341
2002	359
2003	241

Comprehensive warnings about the possible side effects of Seroxat, including those which may occur upon withdrawal from treatment, are included in the product information for prescribers and the patient information leaflet.

Shared Services Scheme

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his Answer of 23 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 718W, on administration, if he will set out the projected estimated savings if the shared services schemes were rolled out nationally; and what the timetable is for rolling out these schemes. [165296]

Mr. Hutton: It is anticipated that using the existing capacity of the centres in Leeds and Bristol, and allowing for the safe and proper migration of data, take up of the shared service centres will be slightly over 60 per cent. of national health service organisations by number by 2009–10.

It is anticipated total savings will be £95 million to £105 million per annum by then.

Skin Cancer

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of children have developed skin cancer in each of the last seven years. [165579]

Dawn Primarolo: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Tim Loughton, dated 7 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what percentage of children have developed skin cancer in each of the last seven years. [165579].

The latest year for which figures are available is 2000. The proportion[1] of all children aged0–14 years registered with a newly diagnosed case of melanoma of the skin[2] for each of the seven years 1994–2000 in England, are given in the table below.

Number of children aged 0–14 years that developed skin[1] cancer, and rate of occurrence, England, 1994–2000

	Number of cases	*Rate per million children[1]*
1994	15	2
1995	7	1
1996	10	1
1997	8	1
1998	9	1
1999	6	1
2000	5	1

[1] Proportions are presented as rates per million population aged 0–14 in each year. The populations used are interim revised mid-year population estimates for England, released in November 2003.

[2] For the year 1994, International Classification of Disease, Ninth Revision Code (ICD-9) Code C172 For the years 1995 to 2000, International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) code C43.

Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Speech Therapy

Angela Watkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many speech therapists posts were vacant in each of the primary care trusts in Greater London in each year since 1997. [164174]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number and rate of vacancies lasting three months or more for speech and language therapists for all organisations in the London area in each year since 1999, the first year vacancy information was collected, has been placed in the Library.

Substance Misuse (Advertising Campaigns)

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the Government have spent on advertising campaigns highlighting the dangers associated with *(a)* alcohol misuse, *(b)* illegal drugs and *(c)* tobacco smoking in each year since 1997. [161067]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There has been no expenditure by the Department on advertising the dangers of alcohol during this period. The Department has funded health promotion work in this area from a centrally held budget, including campaign literature, helpline and website advice. However, local national health service agencies are responsible for local health promotion work. The funds they spend on this work forms part of their general budget and no breakdown of these funds is centrally available.

Prior to 1999–2000, the Health Education Authority ran the campaign highlighting the dangers of illegal drugs.

The figures in the table show the Department's expenditure from 1999–2000 on advertising the dangers of illegal drugs.

£ million

	Expenditure
1999–2000	0.53
2000–01	0.5
2002–03	1.5
2003–04	1.5[1]

[1] Contribution to joint Home Office/Department of Health/ Department for Education and Skills campaign on the dangers of illegal drugs.

Prior to 1999–2000 the Health Education Authority ran the public education campaign on the dangers of smoking. The Department of Health took over this work in 1999–2000.

The figures in the following table show the Department's expenditure from 1999–2000 to date.

£ million

	Expenditure
1999–2000	6.18
2000–01	8.97
2001–02	7.79
2002–03	7.88
2003–04	[1]17.76

[1] Total spend to date.

Suicide Bereavement

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment his Department has made of models of suicide bereavement support in other countries as part of its study into adopting such models in England. [164857]

(2) what role suicide bereavement support plays in the national suicide prevention strategy. [164858]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The national suicide prevention strategy for England is committed to providing appropriate support to people bereaved by suicide. The National Institute for Mental Health in England has established a small group comprising of organisations which provide support to people bereaved by suicide to consider what further support and information can be provided to this vulnerable group. No formal assessment of models of suicide bereavement support in other countries has been undertaken by the Department, but the bereavement group has considered some as part of its work. The Department has commissioned the York Centre for Reviews and Dissemination to undertake a review of evidence regarding interventions to help people bereaved by suicide. Its findings will inform the work of the bereavement group.

Mr. Truswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many suicide bereavement support organisations receive financial or other support from his Department. [164859]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department currently funds two organisations which provide support to people bereaved by suicide; CRUSE Bereavement Care and the Samaritans.

Teenage Cancer

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many teenage and young adult cancer patients entered into clinical trials in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [163891]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Cancer Research Network (NCRN) does not collect data on the ages of cancer patients entered into clinical trials. Therefore the information requested is not available. The Department of Health, which funds NCRN, is providing specific support for a specialised research network on paediatric oncology. The network is led by the United Kingdom children's cancer study group (UKCCSG). At the suggestion of the UKCCSG, this funding includes provision for a trial co-ordinator development post for teenage and young adult cancers. This investment reflects the importance the Department places on the development of clinical trials for teenage and young adult cancer patients.

Therapist Consultants

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 12 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1828W, on therapist consultants, how many allied health professions consultants there were in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2004. [164242]

Mr. Hutton: The Department of Health non-medical workforce census records that there were 20 allied health professions consultants on 30 September 2003. Corresponding figures for 2004 are not yet available.

Timber Purchases

Mr. Gardiner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how *(a)* the Department for Health, *(b)* health authorities, *(c)* the Meat Hygiene Service, *(d)* the Medicines and Healthcare Products and Regulatory Agency, *(e)* the NHS Estates, *(f)* the NHS Pensions Agency and *(g)* the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency monitor and audit purchases of timber and timber products to ensure that they meet the Department's stated commitment to being obtained from legal and sustainable sources. [164675]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information is as follows:

Department of Health: The Department is committed to ensuring that all its purchases of timber and timber products meet the requirements of the United Kingdom Government timber procurement policy. Following publication of revised guidance to Departments on sustainable timber procurement in January 2004, the Department has revised its standard Invitation to Tender to ensure that all tenderers are aware of and comply with the policy. In addition, the Department's facilities management team monitors all purchases of timber and timber products to ensure that they meet the requirements of the policy.

Health Authorities: The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHSPASA) is actively implementing a timber compliance strategy within the National Health Service (NHS). For example, NHSPASA is working with all the suppliers on the national NHS contract for furniture to implement the Government's timber procurement policy within the NHS.

This will ensure that the source of timber can be audited and monitored to make sure that it is from a sustainable and legal supply. Suppliers' progress is monitored on an ongoing basis, and updated information is available to the NHS on the NHSPAPSA's website.

Meat Hygiene Service (MHS): The MHS is an executive agency of the Food Standards Agency and as such is not covered by the Department's sustainable development policy. However, the MHS procurement strategy states that:

"the MHS will ensure that sound environmental policies are incorporated into its procurement process so that costs and benefits associated with 'green' procurement are always considered".

Medicines & Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency (MHRA): The policies of the central Department also apply to, and have been adopted by MHRA.

NHS Estates: The policies of the central Department have been adopted by NHS Estates. Any purchase of furniture would require the supplier to give undertakings as to the source of materials used. Any purchase of new furniture would require the supplier to give undertakings as to the source of the material used.

NHS Pensions Agency: Purchases of timber are made via the Agency's facilities management contractor, who endeavours to ensure that the products are purchased from legitimate timber merchants. Actual purchases are monitored and reported within the framework for sustainable development on the Government Estate.

NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency: NHSPASA buys timber products only from suppliers that have implemented chain-of-custody systems that have been independently audited. This is a requirement of NHSPASA's ISO14001 environmental management system.

Training

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* district nurses and *(b)* health visitors were in training in each year since 1997. [164865]

Mr. Hutton: The number of district nurses and health visitors in training in each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

Number of district nurses and health visitors in training

	Health visitors	*District nurses*
1997–98	627	603
1998–99	580	541
1999–2000	598	573
2000–01	695	560
2001–02	580	521
2002–03[1]	664	569

[1] Forecast

There has been significant growth in the number of community service nurses other than health visitors and district nurses. Since 1997 there has been an increase of 11,974(61.9 per cent.) in such nurses.

These figures reflect that changing nature of the nursing workforce and the increasing skill mix in community nursing teams. Health visiting teams are also increasing their skill mix through initiatives that are promoting integrated children's services where health visitors work as part of Sure Start and other community children's teams.

It is the responsibility of primary care trusts to determine how they use the extra growth money allocated, to deliver on both national and local priorities.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much he estimates it costs to train *(a)* 250 district nurses and *(b)* 250 health visitors. [164868]

Mr. Hutton: The contract for training community nurses does not differentiate between different branches of nursing, such as district nurses and health visitors.

Based on the average cost of the contract it would cost £5.9 million to train 250 district nurses and 250 health visitors.

Treatment Centres

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what criteria organisations had to satisfy to be invited to bid for independent sector treatment centre contracts; what stages the evaluation process consisted of; who evaluated the competing providers; and what qualifications each had to enable them to carry out the evaluation. [164604]

Mr. Hutton: All independent sector providers that expressed an interest in response to advertisements in the *Official Journal* of the European Communities were asked to complete and return a pre-qualification questionnaire. Detailed analysis of the information in the questionnaire enabled the selection of a group of short-listed bidders based on their financial standing and ability to deliver high quality clinical services. This group was invited to submit bids for the contracts to manage and run the proposed new treatment centres. The subsequent selection of the preferred bidders followed careful evaluation of the submitted bids. The evaluation criteria included clinical quality, infrastructure, information management and technology, human resources, legal, financial, speed of mobilisation and delivery, and value for money. There was a structured scoring mechanism against each of these criteria and total scores assessed between bidders.

The national implementation team co-ordinated the evaluation of submitted bids. Bids were evaluated and ranked by specialist teams consisting of members of the national implementation team, their advisers and local national health service sponsors and experts. The national implementation team is part of the new commercial directorate of the Department of Health and brings together staff with a range of the clinical, commercial and legal skills relevant to the procurement of clinical services.

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which organisations have been invited to bid for independent sector treatment centre contracts; and what specific experience each organisation has in running surgical facilities providing orthopaedic procedures and major joint replacement programmes. [164605]

Mr. Hutton: Announced preferred bidders for the independent sector treatment centre programme are: Netcare UK, Mercury Healthcare Ltd., Care UK

Afrox, Anglo Canadian Clinics, Nations Healthcare, Birkdale Clinic, New York Presbyterian, Capio UK and Interhealth Care Services (UK) Ltd. All likely preferred bidders are subject to final contract negotiation and agreement and schemes will only proceed if they provide the required level of value for money for national health service commissioners.

Contractual closure has also been reached on four of the schemes. One, a fixed site treatment centre at Daventry, managed and run by the Birkdale Clinic; the second, a mobile cataract theatre, run and managed by Netcare UK; the third a fixed site treatment centre at Trent, managed and run by Care UK Afrox; and the fourth a fixed site treatment centre at Bradford, managed by Nations Healthcare.

The selection of the preferred bidders followed careful evaluation of the submitted bids. This evaluation included a clinical assessment and preferred bidders have demonstrated that they are competent to provide the services for which they have bid.

Tuberculosis

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the mortality rate for TB was in each year since 2000. [161100]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The mortality rate for tuberculosis in each year from 2000 is shown in the table.

	Male	*Female*
2000	-0.69	0.41
2001	-0.69	0.41
2002	-0.80	0.40

Note:
Rates per 100,000 for England and Wales, directly age-standardised to the European Standard Population.
Source:
ONS

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of TB there were in England in the last period for which figures are available, broken down by *(a)* age, *(b)* sex, *(c)* ethnicity and *(d)* patient's country of origin. [161140]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 15 March 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the tables.

The following data are taken from the 2001 Enhanced tuberculosis surveillance.

Number of TB cases by age group and sex

Age group	*Male*	*Female*	*Sex not reported*	*Total*
Age not reported	2	3	0	5
0–4	79	68	0	147
5–9	59	59	0	118
10–14	83	95	0	178
15–19	167	187	1	355
20–24	330	276	2	608
25–29	445	351	2	798
30–34	400	297	2	699
35–39	306	231	1	538
40–44	266	181	0	447
45–49	233	176	1	410
50–54	186	153	0	339
55–59	139	133	0	272
60–64	190	140	0	330
65–69	146	147	0	293
70–74	169	126	1	296
75–79	142	126	0	268
80–84	100	89	0	189
85–89	44	44	0	88
90+	14	22	0	36
Total	3,500	2,904	10	6,414

Number of TB cases by place of birth

	TB cases	*Percentage*
Born in the UK	1963	30.60
Born abroad	3490	54.40
Place of birth not reported	961	15.00

Number of TB cases by ethnic group

Ethnicity	*TB cases*	*Percentage*
White	1,804	28.10
Black Caribbean	186	2.90
Black African	1,003	15.60
Black other	32	0.50
Indian	1,060	16.50
Pakistani	1,019	15.90
Bangladeshi	169	2.60
Chinese	82	1.30
Other (including mixed ethnic group)	486	7.60
Ethnic group not reported	573	8.90

Urine-based Therapies

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment has been made of the possibility of urine-based drug therapies providing a route for human-to-human transmission of *(a)* CJD and *(b)* other diseases. [162496]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The possibility of urine based drug therapies providing a route for human-to-human transmission of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) and other diseases has been considered by the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) and at a European level by the Committee for Proprietary Medicinal Products (CPMP). There is no evidence of human-to-human infection of CJD caused by urine based drug therapy and epidemiological evidence does not suggest a risk for urine-derived medicinal products from patients with sporadic CJD. However, as a precautionary measure, the CSM has advised that urine from a country with one or more cases of variant Creutzfeldt-Jacob Disease (vCJD) should not be used as a source of human urine to produce medicinal products for the United Kingdom.

All UK medicinal products are manufactured in accordance with European regulatory guidelines and it is a requirement that all urinary derived products use validated manufacturing process which are capable of

providing assurance that the risk of viral infectivity is minimised. These requirements are assessed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Authority for all urinary derived products. Bacterial infection should not be an issue, as these products are for injection and are therefore required to be sterile.

Waiting Times

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the waiting time statistics for *(a)* inpatient, *(b)* outpatient, *(c)* community and *(d)* treatment centre dental treatment in (i) England and (ii) each region in each of the last six years; and if he will make a statement. [156327]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The available information has been placed in the Library.

Information is not collected centrally on waiting times in the community and for treatment centre dental treatment.

Weston Area Health Trust

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many vacancies for *(a)* district nurses, *(b)* health visitors and *(c)* midwives there were in the Weston Area Health Trust in each year since 1997. [165602]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Figures for three-month vacancies for district nurses, health visitors and midwives in Weston Area Health National Health Service Trust as at 31 March each year have been collected since 1999 and are shown in the table.

NHS hospital community health services: three-month vacancies for district nurses, health visitors and midwives in the Weston Area Health NHS Trust as at 31 March each year

whole-time equivalent

	District nurses	*Health visitors*	*Midwives*
1999	0	0	0
2000	0	0	0
2001	0	0	0
2002	1	0	0
2003	0	0	1

Note:
Three-month vacancies are vacancies which trusts are actively trying to fill which had lasted for three months or more (whole-time equivalents)
Source:
Department of Health Vacancies Survey

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* district nurses, *(b)* health visitors and *(c)* midwives there were in the Weston Area Health Trust in each year since 1997 broken down by (i) headcount and (ii) whole-time equivalent. [165603]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is shown in the table.

NHS hospital community health services: district nurses, health visitors and midwives employed within Weston Area Health NHS Trust as at 30 September each year

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Whole-time equivalent							
District nurses	26	27	6	29	28	0	0
Health visitors	23	23	0	22	22	2	3
Midwives	8	7	3	8	8	9	12
Headcount							
District nurses	31	36	7	35	33	0	0
Health visitors	29	30	0	29	29	4	6
Midwives	10	8	4	9	10	14	25

Note:
The change in staff numbers from 2001 to 2002 is because in April 2002 community staff (including district nurses and health visitors) transferred from Weston Area Health NHS Trust to North Somerset PCT.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many intensive care beds there were in the Weston Area Health Trust in each year since 1997. [165605]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is only available centrally from 1999 and is shown in the table.

Available adult critical care beds on the census day, Weston Area National Health Service Trust

Date	*Open and staffed adult critical care beds*
March 1999	3
September 1999	3
January 2000	3
July 2000	3
January 2001	4
July 2001	4
January 2002	5
July 2002	5
January 2003	5
July 2003	5
January 2004	5

Source:
Department of Health form KH03a.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 17 March, *Official Report*, column 396W, on the Working Time Directive, if he will list the problems raised with him caused by the decisions of the European Court of Justice on the SIMAP/Jaeger cases; and if he will set out his Department's response to those representations. [164901]

Mr. Hutton: The two European Court of Justice decisions have raised particular problems for the National Health Service by ruling that residential on-call work, even if the doctor is resting or sleeping, has to be counted as work and also by stipulating that compensatory rest has to be taken immediately. This has made compliance with the Working Time Directive for doctors in training from August 2004 more difficult given the substantial reliance on resident on-call rotas to provide round the clock cover in acute services. These difficulties are most apparent in small isolated hospitals and some specialities.

CHURCH COMMISSIONERS

Weddings (Non-Anglican Communicants)

Paul Flynn: To ask the hon. Member for Middlesbrough, representing the Church Commissioners what plans the Commissioners have to increase the number of *(a)* church and *(b)* church-owned premises that are available for wedding ceremonies for those who have not been baptised in the Anglican communion. [166160]

Sir Stuart Bell: The legal rules on where Church of England weddings may take place are not a matter for the Church Commissioners.

However, I can tell my hon. Friend that, subject to a limited number of statutory exceptions, parishioners in England have a right to be married by the Church of England in their own parish church. This applies irrespective of whether the bride and groom have been baptised.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Electoral Registration

26. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the honourable Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what proposals the Electoral Commission has to encourage electoral returning officers to canvass local residents in order to update electoral registration. [166168]

Mr. Viggers: The Commission published a report last year on the electoral registration process, which made a number of recommendations for changes to the law and identified good practice in the management of the electoral registration process. The Commission also intends to issue practice guidance to electoral registration officers on what is possible and desirable within the current statutory framework to improve the accuracy of the register.

Voting Age

Mr. Allen: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission when the Electoral Commission's report on the age of voting and candidacy will be published. [166767]

Mr. Viggers: The Electoral Commission's report on the age of voting and candidacy is being published today. The Commission has sent copies to all Members of Parliament and has placed copies in the Library.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Electricity Consumption

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the total electricity consumption for the House has been for each year from 1997 to date; and what percentage in each year was derived from renewable sources. [165925]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The total electricity consumed each year on the parliamentary estate has been:

	Million kWh
1997–98	16.1
1998–99	17.1
1999–2000	17.2
2000–01	19.8
2001–02	21.1
2002–03	23.4

During this period the Parliamentary Estate has grown with the occupation of additional premises, so the figures are not directly comparable.

Since 2002 some 11 per cent. of our electricity has come from renewable sources.

Recycling

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission (1) what steps the Commission takes to facilitate the recycling of *(a)* glass and *(b)* cans within the House; [165923]

(2) what volume of paper collected from the House of Commons in 2003 was sent for recycling; [165926]

(3) what steps he takes to ensure that paper placed in containers for recycling is recycled. [165927]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Glass for recycling is collected and crushed in the waste centre off Peers Court. 154 tonnes were recycled in the 11 month period from April 2003 to February 2004. Metal cans for recycling are separated from general waste at our waste contractor's works.

In the 11 month period from April 2003 to February 2004, 347 tonnes of waste paper were sent for recycling.

Recycling bins are available for all offices on the parliamentary estate. Cleaners and waste centre attendants have been instructed accordingly. Members of the Waste Recycling Steering Group work within their respective parts of the estate to encourage maximum recycling.

Telephone Costs

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the total telephone bill for the House was in the last year for which figures are available. [165687]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The cost of telephone calls and rental in 2002–03 was approximately £1.6 million.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Licensing Act (Circuses)

9. **Mr. Luff:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, when she last met representatives of the circus industry to discuss the implementation of the Licensing Act 2003. [166149]

Mr. Caborn: Meetings with the circus industry about the Licensing Act 2003 have been at official rather than ministerial level. Officials from my Department last met circus industry representatives on 5 March and have also discussed these issues with the Arts Council and with Equity.

Motor Sport

10. **Richard Burden:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and sport, what efforts she is making to promote motor sport in the UK. [166150]

Mr. Caborn: The Government fully support the promotion of motor sport in this country including world-class motor sport events. Officials from my Department, together with those from the Department of Trade and Industry and four Regional Development Agencies are supporting the work of the Motorsport Development Board (MDB). This industry-led body has the remit to promote and develop motor sport in the UK. Financial support of up to £16 million for the work of the MDB was announced by my right. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on 11 July 2003.

Tourism (Seaside Resorts)

11. **Shona McIsaac:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what steps she is taking to promote tourism in English seaside resorts. [166151]

Estelle Morris: VisitBritain receives a grant of £12.9 million to promote holidays to the domestic market. Seaside resorts feature in the current and future campaigns. Next year they will benefit substantially from the "SeaBritain" campaign in which VisitBritain will be a partner of the National Maritime Museum.

Gift Aid (Museums)

12. **Mr. Heath** : To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, what recent discussions she has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on gift aid in relation to museums. [166153]

Estelle Morris: Officials from my Department, representatives from the museums sector and Inland Revenue officials met in February to discuss gift aid in relation to Museums. The results of the consultation will be announced around the time of the outcome of the 2004 Spending Review.

Gambling

13. **Mr. Swayne:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, if she will make a statement on reform of gambling laws. [166154]

Mr. Caborn: We plan to introduce a Gambling Bill as soon as parliamentary time allows. The Bill will modernise the law and provide stronger safeguards. We are considering the report of the Joint Scrutiny Committee that looked at our draft Bill. It made 139 recommendations and we will consider each carefully.

Playing Fields

15. **Mr. Robathan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Medial and Sport how many playing fields were sold in each financial year since 2001–02. [166156]

Mr. Caborn: The available data relate to planning applications. In 2001–02, 91 per cent. and in 2002–03, 90 per cent. of all approved planning applications relating to playing fields improved sporting provision or kept it at the same level.

National Lottery

17. **Bob Spink:** To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of the proportion of lottery good causes money that will go to the New Opportunities Fund. [166158]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund (NOF) gets 33.33 per cent. of operator-related income to the National Lottery Distribution Fund (NLDF), and a share of earnings from the investment of the NLDF balance. NOF's share of investment earnings is related to its proportion of the total NLDF balance. It changes frequently as that proportion changes.

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total amount of unclaimed lottery prizes is; and what the largest single unclaimed amount is. [166157]

Estelle Morris: Total unclaimed prizes up to the week ending 20 March 2004 were £614.4 million. The largest unclaimed prize to date is £3,011,065.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on Lottery funding for sports facilities for local football clubs. [166531]

Mr. Caborn: Lottery funding will continue to be made available for the provision of new sports facilities—including facilities for local football clubs.

Local football clubs can benefit from a wide range of publicly funded programmes and initiatives: for example, the New Opportunities Fund for PE and Sport; Active England; Community Club Development Fund; and Green Spaces and Sustainable Communities.

Funding is also available through the Football Foundation to support capital projects, such as the £60,000 recently awarded to Poppleton Junior Football Club for the re-development of pitches on their Millfield Ground.

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166095]

Mr. Caborn: The following contracts are those awarded over the stated time period:

(i) Deloitte & Touche—Nil return.

(ii) Ernst & Young—Nil return.

(iii) KPMG—Nil return.

(iv) PriceWaterhouseCoopers:

Commonwealth Games Review July 2001—£96,000

E-Commerce Impact Study on Tourism July 2002—£43,750

Costs and Benefit Assessment—London Olympic Bid 2012 January 2003—£38,000.

The return includes Royal Parks Agency.

BBC

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she last met the acting Director General of the BBC; and what was discussed. [166093]

Tessa Jowell: I met Mark Byford, the acting Director General of the BBC, on 4 February. This was an informal meeting and we discussed a range of topical issues relating to the BBC.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with the BBC on future funding of the Corporation. [166140]

Tessa Jowell: The arrangements for future funding of the BBC will be considered as part of the Charter review process. I have had several meetings with the BBC to discuss the review process but have not specifically discussed funding with the Corporation.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in her Department. [166372]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport will be updating a number of its desktop PCs as part of regular system upgrade plans. The Department also plans to update its e-mail, finance and HR systems.

Digital Television

Mr. David Stewart: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on public broadcasting provision to remote rural locations following conversion to full digital television broadcasting. [166155]

Tessa Jowell: The Government's policy for digital switchover is that everyone, including those in rural areas, who can currently get the public service broadcasting channels in analogue form, must continue to receive them on digital systems when analogue is switched off.

David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of accessibility to digital television in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* England, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland. [165677]

Estelle Morris: I will reply to my hon. Friend as soon as possible.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on plans to upgrade transmitters in Dumfries and Galloway to receive digital television services. [165970]

Estelle Morris: Until analogue signals are switched off there will be no frequencies available to broadcast digital television services from transmitters in Dumfries and Galloway without causing interference to viewers' existing analogue signals. The Digital TV Action plan provides the route map to achieve digital switchover, which could be completed between 2006 and 2010 and we are working closely with stakeholders on the detailed plans.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of the population of Dumfries and Galloway are able to receive Freeview digital television services. [165971]

Estelle Morris: According to the BBC's coverage prediction database, around 20,000, or 31 per cent. of households in Dumfries and Galloway have access to Freeview at this time.

Green Ministers

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the meetings at which her Department has been represented regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [165956]

Estelle Morris: It is established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Libraries (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money was spent on library *(a)* buildings and *(b)* books in Greater London in each year since 1997, broken down by borough. [165840]

Estelle Morris: The information in the following tables shows the funds spent on library premises and books in *(a)* Inner London *(b)* Outer London and *(c)* Greater London.

Information relating to individual London library authorities can be found within the Annual Public Library Statistics published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and available in the Library of the House.

Funds spent on library premises

£

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Funds spent on library premises					
Inner London	5,290,670	6,297,018	6,430,335	6,134,076	6,993,679
Outer London	9,703,422	8,750,414	8,806,541	8,882,198	9,666,024
Greater London	16,459,173	16,229,149	16,347,315	16,173,994	17,821,923

Funds spent on library premises

£

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02
Funds spent on books					
Inner London	5,173,792	5,287,380	4,949,176	4,668,713	4,553,556
Outer London	8,796,050	8,531,187	8,132,739	8,307,775	8,163,558
Greater London	14,500,596	14,281,363	13,557,198	13,466,932	13,217,627

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* public libraries and *(b)* mobile library units there were within each Greater London borough in each year since 1997. [165841]

Estelle Morris: The following information shows the number of service points open for 10 or more hours each week as well as the number of mobile libraries in *(a)* Inner London *(b)* Outer London and *(c)* Greater London.

Information relating to individual London library authorities can be found within the Annual Public Library Statistics published by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA), and available in the Library of the House.

Number of library service points in London

Libraries	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*
Inner London					
Static	136	135	134	132	133
Mobile	14	12	12	12	11
Outer London					
Static	234	236	235	232	232
Mobile	22	22	21	21	21
Greater London					
Static	370	371	369	364	365
Mobile	36	34	33	33	32

Library Digitisation (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in Birkenhead since 1997. [166506]

Estelle Morris: The Metropolitan Borough of Wirral is a partner in the Merseyside Gateway Project which received £370,000 from the New Opportunities Fund to create a website depicting the history and growth of the Port of Liverpool and its environs. 710 (out of 20,000 overall) images from Wirral Archives and Birkenhead Reference Library have been selected for the site—these include a number of Birkenhead related documents including several photographs and other documents from the Cammell Laird archive. The council's contribution to the project was over £1,000.

New Opportunities Fund 3

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations have been made in relation to the administrative burden associated with the New Opportunities Fund 3 programme; and if she will make a statement. [166467]

Mr. Caborn: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has received correspondence from the hon. Member for Enfield, Southgate (Stephen Twigg) on behalf of his constituent, Mr. M. Lazarus, of Hadley Wood. My right. hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills has also received correspondence from Bedfordshire County Council on this matter.

The New Opportunities Fund for PE and Sport (NOPES) programme is administered by the New Opportunities Fund (NOF). NOF has worked closely with local authorities throughout the bidding process to ensure that levels of bureaucracy are kept to the minimum necessary to protect the distribution of public funds.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the start date was of the New Opportunities Fund 3 project; what the projected expenditure on this programme was over its period; what the actual expenditure on this programme has been during that time; and if she will make a statement. [166468]

Mr. Caborn: The New Opportunities Fund for PE and Sport (NOPES) was officially launched in England in November 2001 with available funding of £581.25 million.

NOPES is a long-term project, reflecting the fact that such an investment takes considerable time and planning to ensure that money is spent both efficiently and effectively. Actual expenditure to date is £10.4 million.

It is anticipated that the majority of NOPES funding will be committed by the end of 2004, well ahead of schedule, with the great majority of new facilities in use by spring 2006, in line with the original timetable.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement about the progress of the New Opportunities Fund 3 initiative to improve sports facilities in schools. [166469]

Mr. Caborn: The New Opportunities Fund for PE and Sport (NOPES) was officially launched in England in November 2001 with available funding of £581.25 million.

NOPES is a long-term project, reflecting the fact that such an investment takes considerable time and planning to ensure that money is spent both efficiently and effectively. Actual expenditure to date is £10.4 million.

It is anticipated that the majority of NOPES funding will be committed by the end of 2004, well ahead of schedule, with the great majority of new facilities in use by Spring 2006, in line with the original timetable.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list those to whom a grant under the New Opportunities Fund 3 programme has been awarded where the award has been transferred from the Department to the school in recognition of works taking place. [166471]

Mr. Caborn: New Opportunities Fund grants for PE and Sport are allocated and paid to local authorities and not direct to schools. Details of grants paid to local authorities, based on invoices submitted, are being placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the awards made under the New Opportunities Fund 3 programme, broken down by *(a)* county and *(b)* amount. [166470]

Mr. Caborn: New Opportunities Fund awards for PE and Sport are made to local authorities and not to counties. Details of local authority allocations for England, grouped by region, are being placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Birkenhead in each year since 1997. [166505]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund made its first grant to the Birkenhead area in 1999. Since then, in each calendar year, it has allocated:

£

	Award amount
1999	5,687,368
2000	1,249,862
2001	1,909,933
2002	420,305
2003	383,372

These numbers are derived from the Department's database of lottery awards, which is based on information supplied by New Opportunities Fund (and the other distributing bodies).

Recycling

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of *(a)* copying paper and *(b)* paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste each amount contained. [165950]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS procures only 100 per cent. recycled copying paper, which meets the Department for Environment, Food, and Rural Affairs target of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. Paper for printed publications sometimes needs to be of higher quality but in excess of 60 per cent. of all such paper is 100 per cent. recycled; the post-consumer waste content is not known.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [165951]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS has purchased only recycled copier paper for at least the last five years. The paper of choice meets the stated content targets.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when her Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165953]

Mr. Caborn: DCMS already specifies all papers to meet the stated quick win targets. The current market is such that the specified paper cannot always be supplied in respect of printed publications.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports, in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the (A) recycled and (B) post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [165954]

Mr. Caborn: Currently all copier paper, stationery and envelopes are supplied by Corporate Express. Copier paper is Evolve and is 100 per cent. recycled with at least 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. Paper stationery items are from numerous manufacturers and content is not always published but at all times recycled products are specified. Paper for reports is supplied by the successful print tender but again recycled paper and high post-consumer waste content is specified by the Department.

SportScotland

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to review the maximum support available through SportScotland. [165974]

Mr. Caborn: I have no such plans. This is a matter for the Scottish Executive.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what steps she is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [165957]

Estelle Morris: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport, covers a range of issues which contribute to people's quality of life. We intend that in achieving our strategic priorities we also fulfil sustainable development aims. The departmental strategy for sustainable development, published in February, refers to the three broad headings of our objectives in this area: sustainable policies, sustainable estate management and communicating sustainable development. The Department is currently working to promote sustainable development within Government especially with the Department for Education and Skills and with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. We are also disseminating awareness-raising videos and training courses for our own staff and will be offering to provide these to other Departments.

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what progress has been made on her Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [165958]

Estelle Morris: The Department's Sustainable Development Strategy was published in February. Copies of the strategy are available from the Library of the House. We intend to review progress against the actions points listed early next year.

Tourism (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Birkenhead. [166507]

Mr. Caborn: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with The Mersey Partnership (TMP), the nominated Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Merseyside.

During 2003–04 TMP received £320,000 from the Agency's Marketing Image Budget for tourism and investment campaigns to promote Merseyside. £419,000 was also provided from the NWDA's Tourism budget for a variety of projects which will benefit Birkenhead.

The Mersey Waterfront Regional Park, which covers an area from Southport to Wirral, including Birkenhead.

£65,000 for new restrooms for the Birkenhead Historic Warships which include disabled access and enhanced visitor facilities. This will enable promotion to a wider audience including older and disabled visitors especially as D Day celebrations are planned for June 2004.

£90,000 towards the Landmark Monument feasibility study—the possibility of creating a signature type structure in the Mersey, which may be accessible to the public, a similar concept to the Statue of Liberty.

£400,000 for Hoylake/West Kirby Resort Improvements.

Birkenhead will also benefit in the longer term from the Festival of Light Study, which aims to provide world class permanent lighting across the Waterfront area to culminate in the year 2008 Capital of Culture. The Hotel Study will provide a review of expected demand and a forward plan for the development of hotels on the Waterfront and outer areas of Merseyside. The Woodside master plan is a blue print for future development at this key site. The restoration of the Wirral Way from West Kirby to Thurstaston will incorporate new cycle ways totalling £358,000.

The NWDA is also investigating the possibility of the Golf Open being held at the Royal Liverpool at Hoylake in the next few years.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Plastic Bags

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Chairman of the Catering Committee if he will discontinue the use in food outlets in the House of plastic bags for carrying take-away products and replace these with paper-based carriers. [165924]

Mr. Dennis Turner: The Refreshment Department will revert to the use of paper carrier bags for take-away food and drinks, except in the Debate restaurant in Portcullis House, where the use of clear plastic bags helps to reduce queues by allowing cashiers to see the contents without the need for carrier bags to be unpacked at the tills.

PRIME MINISTER

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Prime Minister what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte and Touche, (ii) Ernst and Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by his Office. [166099]

The Prime Minister: None.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list for each civil service grade within his Office the total number of staff employed, broken down by *(a)* gender, *(b)* ethnic group and *(c)* age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166386]

The Prime Minister: For these purposes, my office is part of the Cabinet Office.

The information requested is published in "Civil Service Statistics", copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Office. [166377]

The Prime Minister: Computer hardware and software packages are regularly reviewed and updated when necessary.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what reports he has received from *(a)* the United States Administration and *(b)* the Iraq Survey Group in respect of the whereabouts in Iraq of military equipment and technology capable of being used in weapons of mass destruction that were exported from the United Kingdom to Iraq prior to May 1997. [165175]

The Prime Minister: The Government has not received any reports from either the US Administration or the Iraq Survey Group in respect of the whereabouts in Iraq of military equipment and technology capable of being used in weapons of mass destruction that were exported from the United Kingdom to Iraq prior to May 1997.

My hon. Friend will be aware of the findings of the Scott inquiry into the supply of goods to Iraq during the 1990s.

Libya

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Prime Minister whether, during his meeting with Colonel Gaddafi, he asked Libya to provide him with details of arms and other support supplied to the IRA; and if he will make a statement. [166643]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for South Antrim (Mr. Burnside) on 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1569W.

Lords Lieutenant

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what his policy is on the future of Lords-Lieutenants. [166229]

The Prime Minister: Lord-Lieutenants are The Queen's representatives in their respective counties or areas. They carry out a range of duties which are widely appreciated, in particular in their role as a link with the Royal Family and in their support for a wide variety of local voluntary and community work. I welcome the continuing contribution which they make.

HEALTH

"No Secrets"

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the implementation of the guidance in "No Secrets". [164770]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department commissioned the Centre for Policy on Ageing in 2002 to analyse implementation of the Department's "No Secrets" guidance, which provides the basis for local multi agency codes of practice to prevent and tackle the abuse of vulnerable adults. The analysis indicates that local councils have met the requirements required by "No Secrets" and that considerable progress has been made towards improving co-ordination between agencies when dealing with adult abuse cases.

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166096]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department does not hold centrally a record of individual contracts, nor does it have similar details for its agencies. To secure such details could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Adverse Drug Reactions

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of adverse drug reactions he estimates are reported; and if he will make a statement. [163493]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In the United Kingdom, the yellow card scheme allows health professionals to report suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) on a voluntary basis to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM). There is a legal requirement for companies to report suspected ADRs to their drugs.

All voluntary reporting systems suffer from under-reporting. The proportion of suspected adverse drug reactions, which are reported, is very variable. Under reporting is thought to occur less frequently with newly identified, serious and unlabelled reactions (those reactions which are not yet included in the product information).

Studies in UK hospitals (Smith et al 1996) and general practice settings (Martin et al 1998, Heeley et al 2001) have estimated that around five to ten per cent. of all suspected adverse drug reactions experienced by patients are reported to CSM and MHRA through the yellow card scheme. The study in general practice carried out by Heeley et al (2001) combined serious and non-serious ADRs in this estimate of under reporting of ADRs. This study also provided a breakdown of the estimates of under-reporting of reactions classified as serious or non-serious and labelled or unlabelled, and estimated that general practitioners report between 30 and 50 per cent. of serious unlabelled adverse reactions to CSM and MHRA via the yellow card scheme.

Under-reporting does not necessarily detract from the ability of drug safety monitoring systems to identify new and important drug safety hazards. The MHRA and CSM are continually working to increase the quality and quantity of reports received via the Yellow Card Scheme in order to increase the potential for rapid identification of new drug safety hazards.

References:

Heeley E, Riley J, Layton D, Wilton RV and Shakir S (2001) 'Prescription event monitoring and reporting of adverse drug reactions' Lancet 358: 1872–1873

Martin RM, Kapoor KV, Wilton LV and Mann RD (1998) 'Underreporting of suspected adverse drug reactions to newly marketed ("black triangle") drugs in general practice: observational study' BMJ 317:119–120

Smith CC, Bennett PM, Pearce HM, Harrison PI, Reynolds DJM, Aronson JK, Grahame-Smith DG (1996) 'Adverse drug reactions in a hospital general medical unit meriting notification to the Committee on Safety of Medicines' British Journal of Clinical Pharmacology 42 (4): 423–429

Agency Nurses (Weston Area)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* resource budget, *(b)* administration costs and *(c)* staff numbers were for 2003 of the (i) Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health and (ii) Wider Health Working Group. [165121]

Ms Rosie Winterton: For the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH):

The budget allocation for 2003–04 was £35.4 million. This figure included £8 million for extension of community health councils from 1 April to 1 December 2003 and £3.2 million for the provision of the independent complaints advocacy service.

Administrative costs amount to £5.7 million. Administrative costs have been defined as those incurred by the headquarters. All other resources contribute directly to the delivery of the patient and public involvement forums as supported by the forum support organisations and the regional office network.

As 2003–04 has been the Commission's first full year of operation the staffing complement has grown steadily over this period. At 1 April 2003, the CPPIH employed three permanent staff and 19 temporary members of staff. By 31 March 2004, the position was that 136 permanent members of staff and 24 temporary staff had been recruited against a total staffing compliment of 198.

For the wider health working group the answer to all points for 2003–04 is nil.

Alcohol Treatment Services

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many alcohol treatment centres there are in the North West. [165503]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Allergies

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on trends in the occurrence of allergies in the UK; and what the Government's policy is on the alleviation of allergies. [165061]

Dr. Ladyman: We recognise that the numbers of people with allergies are increasing. It is not yet known why this is, but various factors are thought to be involved including a rise in dust mites due to a greater use of carpets, air pollution, and people being introduced to more allergens such as new plant species.

The Royal College of Physicians (RCP) published its report, "Allergy—the unmet need: a blueprint for better patient care", on 25 June 2003. We welcome the RCP report and believe it is a useful contribution to the debate on how to improve national health service allergy services.

The Food Standards Agency funds research on food allergy and intolerance, with particular emphasis on severe allergies; how they occur and what causes them. A large programme of research on food intolerance and allergy, costing around £1 million a year, is ongoing. King's College London is leading a £2.1 million European Commission-funded prospective study of the incidence and prognosis of allergy, allergic disease and low lung function in adults living in Europe. Also, The University of Manchester is leading a £1.2 million EC-funded investigation of the prevalence, pathogenesis, treatment and prevention of sun allergy across Europe. Sun-provoked skin reactions are one of the commonest forms of allergy.

It is the role of primary care trusts, in partnership with local stakeholders, to decide what services to provide for their populations, including those with allergies. They are best placed to understand local health care needs and commission services to meet them.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many allergy sufferers he estimates there are. [164930]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not held centrally. Last year, in the report, "Allergy—the unmet need: a blueprint for better patient care", the Royal College of Physicians estimated that around one in six of the population is affected by allergy.

Ambulance Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the provision of insurance cover for ambulance personnel in the event of death in a terrorist attack. [166408]

Mr. Hutton: Normal cover arrangements under the liabilities to third parties scheme, run by the NHS Litigation Authority, would apply to attendance at any major incident, including the site of a terrorist attack. Cross-Government discussions are also taking place with insurance industry representatives to clarify the general position in respect of personal insurance policies if staff are exposed to risks as a consequence of terrorist action in the course of their duties.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department has taken to prepare ambulance personnel for dealing with a terrorist attack. [166409]

Mr. Hutton: All ambulance services have plans in place for responding to and dealing with a range of major incidents, including possible terrorist attacks. National guidance requires that those plans are regularly reviewed and practised.

All ambulance services have been issued with standard personal protective equipment and decontamination units and have access to spare equipment and drug countermeasure supplies. Standard operating procedures have been developed and implemented in conjunction with the Ambulance Service Association and each service has instructors and teams of staff specifically trained to operate and perform safely in a contaminated environment.

All ambulance staff are also receiving recognition and awareness training and additional investment has been made available to develop and maintain their capacity and capability. The Department is currently purchasing instruments to give early warning of radiation for all front line ambulance staff.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many exercises simulating a major incident involving ambulance personnel took place in *(a)* England and *(b)* each region in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [166410]

Mr. Hutton: National guidance to National Health Service organisations requires that all major incident plans be reviewed and tested on a regular basis. Ambulance services have been conducting such exercises for many years, often in conjunction with local emergency partners. This includes testing their response arrangements to scenarios involving chemical, biological or radiological and nuclear materials. Such exercises are an integral part of testing local arrangements, identifying gaps and making continuous improvement. As such exercises are arranged and conducted at a local level, comprehensive information regarding numbers is not collected by the Department.

Asthma

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the prevalence of asthma among children under 16, broken down by health authority. [164815]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not collect the information requested on the prevalence of asthma centrally. Asthma is estimated to affect around 4 to 6 per cent. of children and 4 per cent. of adults sufficiently severely to require medical supervision. We do, however, have some data on the number of hospital admissions as set out in the following table.

Primary diagnosis (ICD-10 J45, J46) Asthma age on admission 0–15 years. Count of finished admission episodes by Strategic Health Authority (SHA) of Treatment NHS hospitals, England 2002–03

Strategic HA of Treatment	Finished Admission Episodes
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire HA	1,049
Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire HA	754
Essex HA	455
North West London HA	732
North Central London HA	625
North East London HA	853
South East London HA	879
South West London HA	661
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear HA	708
County Durham and Tees Valley HA	800
North and East Yorkshire And Northern Lincolnshire HA	882
West Yorkshire HA	1,306
Cumbria and Lancashire HA	1,098
Greater Manchester HA	1,980
Cheshire and Merseyside HA	1,598
Thames Valley HA	717
Hampshire And Isle of Wight HA	662
Kent and Medway HA	638
Surrey and Sussex HA	961
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire HA	868
South West Peninsula HA	615
Dorset and Somerset HA	562
South Yorkshire HA	625
Trent HA	881
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland HA	678
Shropshire and Staffordshire HA	676
Birmingham and The Black Country HA	1,755
Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire HA	687
England	24,705

A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

The primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (seven prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

Figures are grossed for both coverage and missing/invalid clinical data, except for 2001–02 and 2002–03, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the treatment of asthma cost the NHS in each of the last five years. [164816]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held centrally. However we estimate that the net ingredient cost of prescriptions dispensed in the community for the treatment of asthma in England for the last five years is set out in the following table:

Net ingredient cost of all asthma drugs dispensed in the community in England, 1998 to 2002

£ Million

BNF Section	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002

Net ingredient cost of all asthma drugs dispensed in the community in England, 1998 to 2002

£ Million

BNF Section	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
BNF 3.1	220.0	230.9	230.3	238.5	239.6
BNF 3.2	266.9	274.5	283.2	308.7	338.1
BNF 3.3	11.1	14.4	14.9	15.9	17.2
BNF 21.1.2	2.1	2.0	2.3	2.7	3.0
BNF 21.1.10	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0
BNF 21.12	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.4	1.5
Total	501.9	523.4	532.2	567.3	599.5

Source:
Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) data from the Prescription Pricing Authority.

Asthma drugs are included in British National Formulary (BNF) Sections 3.1 (Bronchodilators), 3.2 (Corticbsteroids), and 3.3 (Cromoglicate, related therapy and leukotriene receptor antagonists). Appliances used in the treatment of asthma are contained within the Prescription Pricing Authority pseudo British National Formulary sections 21.1.2, 21.1.10 and 21.12.

The prescription information is from the Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) system from the Prescription Pricing Authority, and shows data for all prescriptions items that are dispensed in the community in England. As well as prescriptions prescribed in GP practices, prescriptions prescribed in hospitals that have been dispensed in the community are included. Private prescriptions, and prescriptions dispensed in hospitals are not included.

The net ingredient cost refers to the cost (which the dispenser is reimbursed) of the drug before discounts and does not include any dispensing costs or fees. It does not include any adjustment for income obtained where a prescription charge is paid at the time the prescription is dispensed, or where the patient has purchased a pre-payment certificate.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has conducted into the reasons for increases in asthma rates in the last 25 years. [165259]

Dr. Ladyman: A range of research projects on the epidemiology of allergies have recently been completed or are ongoing. The International Study of Asthma and Allergies in Childhood was formed in 1991. Phase one measured the prevalence of childhood asthma, hayfever and atopic eczema for international comparisons. Phase two began in 1998 and involves more intensive studies in a smaller number of countries. The Department funded the United Kingdom contribution to phase two.

King's College London has led a £2.1 million European Commission-funded prospective study of the incidence and prognosis of allergy, allergic disease and low lung function in adults living in Europe. King's College is also participating in the Global Allergy and Asthma European Network, launched on 12 February 2004.

This European and international research activity will contribute to evidence on the possible causes of the increase in asthma rates in the UK and other European countries.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent research he has examined concerning asthma and a remodelling of the body's airways. [165406]

Dr. Ladyman: In April 2002, the National Asthma Campaign published its consultation document, "Where next in basic asthma research?" A copy of the report was sent to the Department. The charity identified seven key areas of basic asthma research, including airway remodelling, in people with asthma.

Care Homes

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the minimum standard of care in a care home setting is; and if he will make a statement. [164275]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 31 March 2004]*: The minimum standard of care for care homes is set out in the National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Older People and the National Minimum Standards for Care Homes for Adults (18–65).

These standards are taken into account by the Commission for Social Care Inspection, which is responsible for ensuring homes meet the requirements set down in the Care Homes Regulations 2001.

A copy of the Standards and the Regulations is available in the Library.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will assess the merits of exempting people suffering from particular illnesses from the requirement to recover the costs of personal care provided within care homes. [165468]

Dr. Ladyman: In our response to the Royal Commission on long-term care in the NHS Plan, we made it clear that we did not believe that making personal care free is the best use of limited resources. Instead, we have significantly increased investment in other aspects of older people's services. We believe that investing in services will secure greater benefits for older people than would have been achieved by providing free personal care.

Having made this decision, it would be inequitable to single out particular conditions or different settings for special treatment as far as personal care is concerned.

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received concerning the definition of personal care provided within care homes; and if he will make a statement. [164107]

Dr. Ladyman: Since January 2004, I have not received any representations which specifically ask about the definition of personal care provided in care homes.

The Department published statutory guidance, 'Supported Housing and Care Homes—Guidance on Regulation' in August 2002, about eligibility for care home registration.

Competent Authorities (EU Accession States)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 24 March, *Official Report*, column 934, on training (EU accession states), what assessment his Department has made of the likely numbers of *(a)* midwives and *(b)* other healthcare professionals who will come to the UK following the enlargement of the EU; and what actions his Department has taken to ensure that NHS employers have sufficient mechanisms in place to offer appropriate induction programmes to all such professionals requiring them. [R] [166452]

Mr. Hutton: No estimate has been made. The regulatory bodies will in due course have statistics about the numbers of practitioners from the acceding countries who join their registers. Guidance to the national health service on the implications of enlargement for the recognition of professional qualifications has been issued and is available on the Department's website at http://www.dhtgov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/HumanResourcesAndTraining/ModernisingProfessionalRegulation/FitnessToPractice/FitnessToPracticeArticle/fs/en?CONTENT ID = 4078281&chk = ku6xxC.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 24 February with regard to Mrs. E. D. Murphy; [164933]

(2) when he will reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 24 February, with regard to Mrs. E. O. Murphy. [166347]

Dr. John Reid: A reply was sent to my right hon. Friend on 2 April 2004.

Dentistry

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many dentists per head of population there were in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* Tyne and Wear, *(d)* the North East and *(e)* England in each year since 1997. [162925]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of general dental service (GOS) dentists per 10,000 population for South Tyneside Primary Care Trust (PCT), Tyne and Wear, the North East and for England for 1997 to 2003 is shown in the table. Jarrow constituency is covered by South Tyneside PCT.

These figures are on a headcount rather than a whole time equivalent basis (wte) basis and therefore take no account of part-time working. This may affect comparisons between different areas. The figures include dentists working in the GDS or in the personal dental service (PDS). They exclude dentists working in

other National Health Service dental services; community dental services and hospital dental services. Dentists working wholly privately are not covered.

Number of dentists per 10,000 population at 30 September each year

	[1]South Tyneside	[2]Tyne and Wear	[3]North East	England
1997	3.44	3.27	3.07	3.45
1998	3.60	3.39	3.25	3.54
1999	3.65	3.49	3.35	3.65
2000	3.67	3.57	3.37	3.72
2001	3.62	3.61	3.43	3.84
2002	3.73	3.75	3.54	3.89
2003	3.73	3.86	3.57	3.95

Notes:

[1] For 1997 to 2001, figures cover Gateshead and South Tyneside Health Authority (HA) area. From 2002, the figures cover South Tyneside PCT.

[2] Between 1997 and 2002, figures for Tyne and Wear include the following HAs: Gateshead and South Tyneside, Newcastle and North Tyneside and Sunderland. From 2002, figures represent the following PCTs: Gateshead, Newcastle, North Tyneside, South Tyneside and Sunderland Teaching.

[3] Between 1997 and 2002 the North East includes the following HAs: County Durham and Darlington, Gateshead and South Tyneside, Newcastle and North Tyneside, Northumberland, Sunderland and Tees. From 2002, it includes Northumberland, Tyne and Wear Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and County Durham and Tees Valley SHA.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of providing free dental checks for *(a)* children every six months and *(b)* adults every year. [164861]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Children are entitled to free dental treatment under the National Health Service, including free dental examinations every six months.

About a quarter of all adults are exempt from charges or pay reduced charges for NHS dental treatment. Under current arrangements, adults may have dental examinations at six monthly intervals if they wish.

If annual dental examinations were made free to all adults in England, patient charge revenue would be reduced by around £65 million per annum. Under the present dental payment system for general dental services, the total cost would be increased if the change stimulated demand for more dental examinations and these also led to some additional NHS dental treatment.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence has recently produced draft guidance for consultation, which proposes that the interval between dental examinations for patients should be tailored to meet their needs on the basis of an assessment of disease levels and risk of dental disease. If accepted, we would expect the new contractual arrangements for dentists which are currently under discussion with the profession to reflect this approach which is aimed towards care tailored to the clinical needs of patients. Under the new contract proposals, the link between treatments and payments will be abolished. Instead, dentists will be paid a guaranteed annual income for an agreed level of NHS commitment and will be free to decide treatments for their patients on the basis of clinical need, including the frequency of dental examinations.

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will place in the Library a list of NHS dentists serving North Derbyshire; what the addresses of each such clinic is; and what the extent of private dental work undertaken by each one is. [166378]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collated centrally. However, addresses and contact numbers for dentists serving in North Derbyshire can be obtained from NHS Direct (tel: 0845 4647), or from the national health service website at www.nhs.uk (tel: 020 7210 4850) which connects to local NHS services.

There is no information available on private work as this is a matter for individual contractors.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166367]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department ensures the currency of its information technology infrastructure through a regular programme of renewals. It is currently engaged in a major modernisation of its IT infrastructure and computers, installing Microsoft Windows XP and Microsoft Office XP on its desktop and laptop computers.

With regard to hardware, including desktop equipment, the Department has a replacement cycle of at least four years, with five to seven years or longer for central servers, and other network components.

Software is replaced or upgraded, as needed, and to keep it in line with suppliers' support arrangements, and where necessary, to meet enhanced business requirements. The Department will consider open source software in its future upgrade path.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what secondments *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst & Young and *(d)* KPMG have made to his Department since 2001; for what (i) periods and (ii) tasks the secondments were made; whether secondments of staff from his Department have been made to those firms; and for what (A) periods and (B) tasks. [156922]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There have been four secondments from PricewaterhouseCooper, three secondments from KPMG, one secondment from Ernst & Young and two secondments from Deloitte & Touche into the Department since 2001.

The four secondments from PricewaterhouseCooper are:

From January 2002—continues. The secondment involves providing advice on issues relating to policy and implementation of foundation trusts and the NHS Bank on issues pertaining to corporate finance, private finance and public—private partnerships.

From July 2002—continues. July 2002—February 2003, worked full time on the development of the National Health Service foundation trust financial regime. March 2003—July 2003, worked 50 per cent. of the time on the

NHS foundation trust financial regime and 50 per cent. on various projects in the strategy unit. August 2003—continuing, works full time in the strategy unit and makes occasional contributions to the NHS foundation trust financial regime.

From June 2003—September 2003. The secondment involved producing a guidance manual to best practice methods for successful contracting.

From September 2003—March 2004. The secondment involves working with the independent regulator for NHS foundation trusts transitional team and then the permanent team, to help develop an audit code setting out standards, procedures and techniques for the independent regulator as set out in the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003.

The three secondments from KPMG are:

From January 2001—January 2002. The secondment involved advising NHS trusts on financial aspects of private finance initiative contracts.

From December 2002—October 2003. The secondment involved working with franchising policy development.

From July 2003—continuing. The secondment involves establishing performance and finance measurement reporting, developing business plans and commercial evaluation of projects.

The one secondment from Ernst & Young is:

From October 2000—October 2001. The secondment involved advising NHS Trusts on financial aspects of private finance initiative contracts.

The two secondments from Deloitte & Touche are:

From November 2001—May 2003. The secondment involved advising NHS trusts on financial aspects of private finance initiative contracts.

From December 2001—November 2002. The secondment involved advising NHS trusts on financial aspects of private finance initiative contracts.

There was one secondment by a member of staff to Deloitte & Touche. The secondment was from November 2001 to November 2002, the secondment involved learning about private sector systems and procedures for evaluating private finance initiative schemes.

Further information on secondments into and out of the Department, from all sectors, has been placed in the Library.

Domiciliary Care

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has commissioned on the provision of domiciliary care in Oxfordshire. [164103]

Dr. Ladyman: No research has been commissioned on the provision of domiciliary care in Oxfordshire. However, the Department collects a range of data from councils with social services responsibilities and from the national health service through a series of statistical returns. These data inform policy development and inspection preparations nationally, and are published to aid local planning and comparison. In addition, all councils submit a delivery and improvement statement twice annually and this contains information on performance for 2003–04.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 598W, on older people, how the National Minimum Standards for Domiciliary Care Agencies are monitored; and what information is held centrally on compliance with the standard. [164257]

Dr. Ladyman: From 1 April 2004, the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) took over the regulatory responsibilities of the National Care Standards Commission. CSCI monitors National Minimum Standards (NMS) for domiciliary care agencies in the same way as it monitors NMS for all other services it regulates—through its registration and inspection actions.

Currently, the domiciliary care sector is being registered and only services assessed against the Regulations as fit are registered. At present, no information is held centrally on compliance with the NMS as the inspection programme has not yet begun. This will start later in 2004 and early in 2005. Results of inspections, including details of compliance with the NMS, will be held centrally on CSCI's registration and inspection database.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 598W, on older people, if he will place a copy of the standard on medication for domiciliary care agencies in the Library. [164258]

Dr. Ladyman: The Domiciliary Care Agencies Regulations and National Minimum Standards for Domiciliary Care were published in January 2003. The regulations came into force on 1 April 2003. Regulation 14(6)*(b)* and standard 10 of the National Minimum Standards set out requirements and a standard in relation to procedures for assisting with medication and health related tasks. The Regulations and National Minimum Standards are both available in the Library.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will break down by region the domiciliary care agencies which have applied for registration. [164766]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is set out in the table.

Domiciliary care agencies which have applied for registration. Position at 29 March 2004

Region	*Registered Services*	*Applications outstanding*
North East	126	97
East Midlands	62	236
South West	339	175
West Midlands	93	346
North West	241	413
London	200	319
South East	333	432
Eastern	104	408
Yorkshire and Humberside	148	187
Total	1,646	2,613

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health of the domiciliary care agencies which have been registered with action plans, how many are *(a)* in the public sector and *(b)* privately owned. [164767]

Dr. Ladyman: As at 29 March 2004, 855 domiciliary care agencies had been registered with conditions: 144 in the public sector, comprising three National Health Service agencies and 141 local authority agencies; and 711 independent agencies, comprising 613 private agencies, 79 voluntary agencies and 19 other agencies.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health of the domiciliary care agencies which have been fully registered, how many are *(a)* in the public sector and *(b)* privately run. [164771]

Dr. Ladyman: As at 29 March 2004, there were 1,646 domiciliary care agencies registered. Of these, 296 were in the public sector, comprising 292 local authority services and four National Health Service services and 1,315 services were in the independent sector, comprising 1,156 private agencies and 159 voluntary agencies. In addition 35 other agencies were registered.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many domiciliary care agencies have been refused registration. [164772]

Dr. Ladyman: As at 29 March 2004, six domiciliary care agencies have been refused registration, 2,613 applications are awaiting registration and the total number of agencies registered is 1646.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many domiciliary care agencies have been registered; and how many have been registered with action plans. [164773]

Dr. Ladyman: As at 29 March, a total of 1,646 domiciliary care agencies had been registered, of which 855 had been registered with conditions.

Elderly (Abuse)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the number of incidents of abuse of the elderly in residential and domiciliary care settings; and if he will make a statement. [164820]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department keeps no statistics centrally on the incidence of abuse in residential and domiciliary care settings. However, Ministers have agreed funding to enable Action on Elder Abuse to take stock of the information that is currently being collected locally under the "No Secrets" guidance. It is hoped to have preliminary results in six months time and fuller results towards the end of 2005. In due course, the Department plans to introduce national data collections and to identify performance measures, relating to adult abuse.

Eye Surgery

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidelines are in place on the quality of private laser eye surgery. [165789]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Private establishments where Class 4 laser treatment (the type used in laser eye surgery) is provided are required to be registered as independent hospitals, under the Care Standards Act 2000. As such they are required to meet national minimum standards among which is the requirement to ensure that all staff using lasers and intense pulsed light sources use them only for treatments for which they have been trained and, where appropriate, hold qualifications, and that they receive regular training.

Responsibility for the registration and inspection of independent hospitals passed from the National Care Standards Commission to the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection on 1 April 2004. Independent hospitals are inspected against the national minimum standards at least once every 12 months under the terms of the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection (Fees and Frequency of Inspections) Regulations 2004.

General Practitioners

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the effects of allowing general practices to sell goodwill as part of the new General Medical Services contracts. [165795]

Mr. Hutton: The sale of goodwill will cover less than 10 per cent. of primary medical services.

The long-standing prohibition on the purchase and sale of goodwill by medical practices providing essential services to a list of registered patients continues. Extending the ban to providers of other services is not necessary, nor is there any justification for depriving certain other providers of their existing rights under the European Convention on Human Rights.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average general practitioner list size was in *(a)* Birmingham and *(b)* the Black Country in each of the last 10 years. [165804]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available in the format requested.

Table 1 shows the average general practice list size for the area covered by Birmingham and the Black Country Strategic Health Authority for the years 1993 to 2003.

Table 2 shows the average list size for the primary care trusts within Birmingham and the Black Country Strategic Health Authority since 2001.

Table 1: Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents[1] (UPEs) average list size for Birmingham and the Black Country Strategic Health Authority, 1993–2003[2]

	Average list size
1993	1,993
1994	1,972
1995	1,955
1996	1,945
1997	1,941
1998	1,930
1999	1,967
2000	1,927
2001	1,943
2002	1,928
2003	1,929

Table 2: Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents[1] (UPEs) average list size for Birmingham and the Black Country Strategic Health Authority, by Primary Care Trust, 2001–03[2]

	2001	2002	2003
(a) Birmingham			
South Birmingham PCT	1,716	1,659	1,684
North Birmingham PCT	1,886	1,942	1,939
Heart of Birmingham PCT	2,203	2,299	2,315
East Birmingham PCT	1,991	2,024	2,082
(b) Black Country			
Dudley South PCT	1,927	1,855	1,857
Dudley Beacon and Castle PCT	2,075	2,082	2,003
Walsall PCT	2,063	2,002	1,899
Oldbury and Smethwick PCT	1,884	1,867	1,880
Rowley, Regis and Tipton PCT	2,022	2,041	1,914
Wednesbury and West Bromwich PCT	2,063	1,960	1,994
Wolverhampton City PCT	1,959	1,930	1,925
(c) Other			
Solihull PCT	1,786	1,795	1,853

[1] UPEs includes GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs.

[2] Data as at 1 October for the years 1993–99, 30 September for the years 2000–03.

[3] All data as at 30 September.

Source:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many developments by general practitioner practices have been halted as a result of the Department's requirement that contracts needed to be signed by 30 September 2003; and how many of these have subsequently proceeded with the support of their primary care trust. [165873]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is unaware of any general practitioner scheme that has been cancelled as a result of the change to single cash limited budget. The 30 September 2003 date was used as a means for identifying base line premise allocations. These have since been supplemented by a further premise growth allocation in March 2004 to lead primary care trusts in each strategic health authority area.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate is of the average general practitioner practice case load within Camden and Islington; how many general practitioner groups are expected to retire in the next 12 months; and how many new general practitioners he expects to be appointed in Camden and Islington in the next 12 months. [166350]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not collect centrally the information requested. However, there has been an increase of 256 general practitioners, excluding retainers and registrars, in London since 1999. London primary care trusts are planning to recruit over 200 additional GPs between July 2003 and March 2006.

Health Checks (Over-65s)

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what health checks are routinely performed on the NHS on people over 65. [164763]

Dr. Ladyman: General practitioners are required to provide a health check to all patients aged 75 or over who request it and have not had a consultation within the last 12 months. For people aged 65 or over, in receipt of health or community care, local National Health Service bodies and councils with social services responsibilities should routinely assess their needs and review services at least annually.

Health Services (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of *(a)* the number of extra midwives which will be required in the NHS in the next 10 years and *(b)* the adequacy of the number of training places available to meet that demand. [166235]

Mr. Hutton: We are committed to increasing the number of midwives working in the national health service. Speaking at the Royal College of Midwives in 2001, my right hon. Friend the Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) said that there would be an extra 2,000 midwives working in the NHS within the next five years. As at September 2003, there were 1,369 more midwives employed in the NHS than in 2000.

It is for the NHS to determine locally the number and type of training places it purchases for students to train as midwives. Increased investment has seen a rise of 28 per cent. between 1996–97 and 2002–03 in the number of students starting midwifery training and further growth is expected this year to support further growth in midwifery numbers.

Incontinence Pads

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidance he has given to primary care trusts about the quantity of incontinence pads to be supplied to individuals in residential homes; [166053]

(2) what consultation he has had with independent nursing homes about the supply of incontinence pads. [166054]

Dr. Ladyman: Since the introduction of national health service-funded nursing care in October 2001, residents in care homes providing nursing care should not have to pay for the continence supplies they need. The NHS will ensure that the care home either receives continence products free of charge, or will make a payment to the care home for continence provision. Guidance issued to primary care trusts in September 2001 and March 2003 was consulted upon with a wide range of stakeholders, including care homes providing nursing care. The guidance stresses the importance of the NHS consulting local providers about continence provision to ensure that, as far as possible, the arrangements meet their needs concerning delivery and storage.

Infection Control

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department is taking to improve standards of hygiene within the NHS. [165045]

Dr. Ladyman: We are working to improve both infection control and cleanliness. Key to achieving this is implementation of "Winning Ways—Working

together to reduce Healthcare Associated Infection in England". This will reduce infection rates and improve patient care.

In addition, to help the national health service comply with "Standards of Cleanliness for the NHS", a healthcare cleaning manual will be issued shortly to all NHS trusts. The National Patient Safety Agency is piloting a new approach to hand hygiene in acute hospitals and this will start to be implemented during 2004.

Insulin

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assurances he has sought from *(a)* Novo Nordisk and *(b)* CP Pharmaceuticals about the long-term provision of animal insulin; [166020]

(2) what steps he has taken to ensure the long-term supply of *(a)* human insulin and *(b)* animal insulin. [166021]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is in regular contact with Novo Nordisk and CP Pharmaceuticals and both these companies have confirmed that they will continue to supply animal insulin and human insulin for the foreseeable future.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the efficacy of *(a)* human insulin and *(b)* animal insulin for people with diabetes. [166022]

Ms Rosie Winterton: All authorised insulins, whether human insulin or animal insulin, have been demonstrated to be efficacious in people with diabetes mellitus. As part of the licensing approval process for any medicinal product, including insulins, the applicant has to provide evidence that the product meets appropriate standards of quality, safety and efficacy. This will include clinical trial data in patients with diabetes. Findings from the Cochrane review, which compared the effects of synthetic human insulin and natural animal insulin in diabetic patients from 1996 to 2002 and was subsequently updated in 2003, indicate that both human and animal insulins are equally effective. The decision to use one or other of the insulin rests with the physician in consultation with the patient.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the number of people with diabetes who are *(a)* unwilling and *(b)* unable to use human insulin to manage their condition; and what proportion of people with diabetes using insulin to manage their condition these represent. [166023]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This information is not collected centrally. However, both human and animal insulins remain available.

Long-term Care

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding his Department *(a)* has made available in each year since 1996–97 and *(b)* will make available in each year from 2004–05 to 2007–08 to tackle anomalies of the old funding system for long-term care. [164615]

Dr. Ladyman: The NHS Plan announced additional resources, rising to £360 million a year by 2003–04, to tackle anomalies in the system of funding for long term care. This was disseminated via the Preserved Rights Grant, the Residential Allowance Grant, the Deferred Payments Grant and new funding for National Health Service-funded nursing care. There has also been and continues to be extra investment in new services such as intermediate care and extra care housing.

Funding was made available in 2003 to strategic health authorities to cover the estimated costs of recompense claims for patients inappropriately denied fully funded NHS continuing care since 1996. The Department does not routinely publish details of estimated costs of a specific service.

Mental Health

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will assess the number of mentally disordered offenders who are deaf. [165834]

Ms Rosie Winterton: There are two specialist mental health facilities for deaf mentally disordered offenders. These are at Rampton Hospital, a high secure hospital, which accommodates up to 10 individuals and Mayflower Hospital, an independent medium secure hospital, which has places for up to 40.

There will also be some deaf people in prison. The exact number is not known because no statistics are collected. The best available estimate is that 0.1 per cent. of the prison population will have some degree of hearing loss and that there may be between 50 and 100 who are profoundly deaf. Of these, up to a third may have mental health problems. These figures are, however, estimates and should be treated with caution.

Musculoskeletal Disease

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to include the management and treatment of musculoskeletal disease within the terms of reference of the National Service Framework for Older People. [166208]

Dr. Ladyman: Although the National Service Framework (NSF) for Older People did not specifically focus on the management and treatment of musculoskeletal disease, the underlying principle, set out in the NSF, of fair access to high quality, joined-up care, based on need and not age, applies to all older people. We have no plans to add to the NSF for older people, which was published in March 2001.

NHS Usage Statistics

Laura Moffatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of NHS acute service users in the last period for which figures are available were above retirement age. [165879]

Dr. Ladyman: In 2002–03, 36 per cent., of all admissions to national health service hospitals in England in acute specialties were by people who were above retirement age on the day of admission. Further detail is shown in the following table.

Main Consultant Specialty Acute (Codes: 100–421, 450–460, 620, 800–901). Age on Admission in years 65+ (males), 60+ (females) and count for all ages. Count of Finished Admissions Episodes. NHS Hospitals, England 2002–03

Age Grouping	*Finished admission episodes*	*Percentage acute admissions*
65+ (males) and 60+ (females)	3,578,853	36.1
All ages	9,908,693	100.0

Notes:
A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
Figures have hot been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Nursing

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action has been taken by his Department to implement the recommendations of the Audit Commission report, "Brief Encounters", on temporary nurses. [166404]

Mr. Hutton: The recommendations contained in "Brief Encounters" will be taken into account by the newly established NHS Professionals special health authority in its management of the national health service temporary labour market, in partnership with local NHS trusts and primary care trusts.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the mandatory entry requirements are for nursing training *(a)* diplomas and *(b)* degrees. [166442]

Mr. Hutton: Currently, in line with Nursing and Midwifery Council standards, entry to nurse training programmes, either for pre-registration diplomas or pre-registration degrees, requires a statutory minimum of five GCSEs at grade A, B or C (or the equivalent). Midwifery programmes require the same statutory minimum. However, one qualification must be in a science subject.

These standards are due to change soon and the new arrangements will be in place for September, when specific education entry requirements will cease to apply. Applicants will be required to meet general education entry requirements that show their competence in literacy and numeracy, as well as providing evidence of good health and character.

Higher education institutions are expected to set their own additional entry requirements for degrees and diplomas.

Older People

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health for what *(a)* initiatives, *(b)* campaigns and *(c)* advisory bodies relating to older people his Department (i) is responsible and (ii) has provided funding since 2001; and what the cost in each year was for each one. [166238]

Dr. Ladyman: The national service framework (NSF) for older people, published in March 2001, forms the basis for the Department's programme to improve health and social care services for older people. Since its launch, the Department has supported a number of initiatives, campaigns and advisory bodies, as part of the implementation of the NSF. However, it is not possible to identify these separately.

Organ Transplants

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what authority controls the matching of donated organs with potential transplant recipients in the *(a)* NHS and *(b)* private sector. [164863]

Ms Rosie Winterton: It is the responsibility of UK Transplant, a special health authority based in Bristol, to match and allocate organs from deceased donors to suitable patients on the national transplant list, whether national health service or private, according to allocation rules agreed by national organ advisory committees.

It is the responsibility of local transplant centres or clinicians working in private practice to assess the suitability of a potential live organ donor and obtain approval from the Unrelated Live Transplant Regulatory Authority if required.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what protocols govern the selection of recipients of donated organs for transplant in the *(a)* NHS and *(b)* private sector. [164870]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The rules for allocating organs are publicly available on the UK Transplant website at www.uktransplant.co.uk. They are regularly reviewed by the medical profession in consultation with other health professionals, the Department and advisory groups. The system of allocation differs according to the type of organ; whether it is a heart, lung, kidney, liver or cornea, but there are some overall guiding principles which ensure as far as possible proper matching of organs to patients and equality of access to the organ available. All eligible patients, whether national health service or private, have to be registered on the relevant national transplant list and will be allocated a suitable organ when one becomes available.

Oxygen Cylinders

Mr. Laxton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the tender document to contractors for the supply of oxygen cylinders to cluster headache patients informs potential contractors of the number of cylinders that they will be required to supply each week to cluster headache patients. [166451]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Healthcare professionals are responsible for assessing and prescribing oxygen therapy for patients, including those suffering from cluster headaches. The new contract, being developed to support introduction of a modernised, integrated, oxygen service during 2005, will require service contractors to supply oxygen in a way that best meets the needs of the patient, as set out in the patient's prescription.

Pain Management

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how his Department guarantees that the quality

of local pain management services provided by NHS trusts and primary care trust commissioners is effectively monitored by strategic health authorities; and what steps it takes to ensure that best practice in pain management is shared between NHS trusts and primary care trusts from different strategic health authority regions. [165349]

Mr. Hutton: The process for commissioning health services involves the establishment of service level agreements between primary care trust commissioners and providers for various specialties. These set the framework for the monitoring of all services, including pain. Strategic health authorities would not normally become involved in this process except in cases of serious difficulty.

The commissioning process ensures that quality services are provided and it is for providers to ensure that they take account of developments in pain services, such as the recommendations in the Clinical Standards Advisory Group report on pain or the Royal College of Anaesthetists and Pain Society booklet, "Pain Management Services—Good Practice".

Residential Care

Mr. Dorrell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many registered beds there were in *(a)* residential care homes and *(b)* nursing homes in Leicestershire for each year since 1995–96. [166121]

Dr. Ladyman: The table shows the number of care home places in Leicestershire at 31 March for the years 1996 to 2001.

Figures for later years have been collected by the National Care Standards Commission, but comparable details broken down by local authority are not available.

Number of care home places in Leicestershire[1] at 31 March 1996–2001

Rounded numbers

At 31 March	*Residential*[2]	*Nursing*[3]	*Total*
1996	5,220	2,325	7,545
1997	5,960	2,320	8,280
1998	5,840	2,150	7,990
1999	6,065	2,190	8,255
2000	6,330	1,710	8,040
2001	6,640	1,625	8,265

[1] For 1996 and 1997, residential figures are for Leicestershire Council with Social Services Responsibilities (CSSR). For 1998 onwards, residential figures are for Leicestershire CSSR, Leicester CSSR and Rutland CSSR. Nursing figures are for Leicestershire Health Authority for all years.

[2] Includes places in local authority staffed, voluntary, private, small and dual registered homes.

[3] Includes places in general nursing homes, mental nursing homes and private hospitals and clinics.

Source:

Department of Health forms RAC5, RA, RH(N) and KO36.

Shared Service Centres

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 23 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 718W, on administration, what savings he estimates can be gained from the expansion of shared service centres for *(a)* financial services and *(b)* human resources. [164899]

Mr. Hutton: It is not possible to estimate precisely the level of savings from expanding either financial services or human resources (HR) as these depend on a number of factors. The level of savings at each trust will depend on the age of their existing information technology systems, their cost base and number and type of staff they employ, how their services are delivered at the moment and the volume of transactions that are undertaken. The speed of any roll-out will also dictate the level of savings and is equally dependent on similar local circumstances.

However, it is estimated that by 2009–10, total savings from the use of shared service centres in the national health service will be about £35 million per annum on HR and £60-£75 million on financial services.

Skin Disease

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the proportion of general practitioner time spent dealing with skin disease. [164903]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not held centrally.

Social Services (Destitute British Nationals)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what responsibilities social services departments have to support destitute British nationals. [165494]

Dr. Ladyman: If an adult British citizen approaches a council with social services responsibilities for help, the council should determine whether the person is ordinarily resident in its area or in urgent need. If so, the council should carry out a community care assessment if it believes that the individual adult's needs are such that s/he may be provided with community care services. If, on the basis of a community care assessment, the individual is deemed eligible for community care services, the council should provide those services and, thereafter, review both needs and services at frequent intervals. This process applies to all adult British citizens whether they are destitute or not. In some situations, a council may have to provide substantial help, including residential accommodation, if a destitute British citizen is returning to, or arriving in, the United Kingdom and cannot access benefits and housing immediately.

Temporary Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the employment agencies which his Department has used to supply temporary staff in each financial year since 1996–97 to the most recent date for which figures are available. [163820]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department of Health allows managers to access temporary staff, when necessary, through appropriate employment agencies at their own discretion, where the appropriate funding is authorised.

According to departmental records, a number of agencies were used by managers in the Department to supply temporary staff. The agencies used by the Department during 2002–03 and 2003 to date are shown in the list. The supplied information may not be complete due to limitations in the current departmental finance system.

Year 2002–03

Badenoch and Clark
Blue Arrow Ltd.
Brook Street UK Ltd.
Capita Business Services Ltd.
Capita SHG Resourcing
Computer People Ltd.
Contract Human Resource Service
Carlisle Staffing plc
First Choice Recruitment
Hays Accountancy Services
Hays DX
Hays IT Services Ltd.
Hays Montrose
Headway Recruitment
HR Interim's Ltd.
Interaction Recruitment plc
Katie Bard Executive Secretariat
Kelly Services (UK)
Lifeline Personnel Ltd.
Manpower plc
Office Angels
Parity Resources Ltd.
Parity Solutions Ltd.
Pertemps Group of Companies
Protemp and Profile Recruitment
Reed Agency Services Ltd.
Reed Solutions Ltd.
Reed Staffing Services Ltd.
Robert Half International
Select Appointments plc
StopGap Ltd.
Sue Bates Key Personnel
Sue Hill Recruitment and Services
TFPL Ltd.
TMF Worldwide
TMF Worldwide Ltd. (ADCOMMS)

Year 2003-to date

Accent Employment Services Ltd.
Ambitions Personnel Ltd.
Angel Human Resources
Badenoch and Clark
Brook Street UK Ltd.
Capita SHG Resourcing
Computer People Ltd.
Contract Human Resource Service
Carlisle Staffing plc
First Choice Recruitment
First Recruitment Services
Forrest Recruitment
Hays Accountancy Services
Hays IT Services Ltd.
Headway Recruitment
TMP/Hudson Global Resources Ltd.
Interaction Recruitment plc
Katie Bard Executive Secretariat
Kelly Services (UK)
Lifeline Personnel Ltd.
Manpower plc
Office Angels
Parity Resources Ltd.
Parity Solutions Ltd.
Pertemps Group of Companies
Reed Solutions Ltd.
Reed Staffing Services Ltd.
Robert Half International
Select Appointments Ltd.
Spring Personnel Ltd.
StopGap Ltd.
Sue Bates Key Personnel
Sue Hill Recruitment and Services
TFPL Ltd.
TMF Worldwide Ltd. (ADCOMMS)

Data for the years from 1996–2002 could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Treatment Centres

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which organisations have been consulted on the Trent Region Access and Choice programme; how long the consultation period was; and whether copies of the responses were made publicly available. [164603]

Dr. Ladyman: Responsibility for effective involvement activity rests with the Trent Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and the relevant primary care trusts (PCTs).

The SHA is responsible for communicating high level strategic issues relating to the programme and it is the responsibility of PCTs to communicate operational impact and seek views on how best to meet the needs of local people through the delivery of the new service.

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what submissions he has received regarding the location of the independent sector treatment centre in Trent as part of the Trent Region Access and Choice programme; what assessment the Department has made of *(a)* the length of journey and *(b)* the time taken to reach (i) Derby, (ii) Nottingham and (iii) Sheffield hospitals; and what assessment has been made of the potential impact on patient safety if complications occur after surgery. [164600]

Dr. Ladyman: The Barlborough independent sector treatment centre (IS-TC) is being set up to provide much needed additional clinical capacity in the Trent region, to help reduce waiting times and introduce choice for national health service patients. The location of the IS-TC in the Trent Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area was determined by the service provider, Care UK Afrox Healthcare (CUAH), working closely with Trent SHA, so that health requirements of the regional and local populations could be best served.

Information on travel times to the hospitals mentioned is not available, but the service provider will be providing NHS patients with transport to and from the IS-TC. All IS-TCs will be staffed by fully trained and experienced clinical teams. Surgeons operating in IS-TCs must be registered with the General Medical Council on its specialist register. IS-TCs will have facilities and trained staff to resuscitate and stabilise any patient who suffers such complications.

Patients needing transport to a NHS trust in the event of a clinical emergency will be transported using normal ambulance services to either Chesterfield Royal Infirmary or, should they require an intensive care bed, to one of the hospital trusts in the North Trent critical care network. This is the same arrangement that would be followed for patients in any district general hospital in south Yorkshire.

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether independent sector treatment centres will be subject to the same national audit framework as NHS hospitals. [164601]

Dr. Ladyman: The services provided by independent sector treatment centres for NHS bodies are subject to scrutiny by the Commission for Healthcare Audit and Inspection (CHAI) on the same basis as other National Health Service services.

In addition, under the Care Standards Act 2000, CHAI is responsible for registering and inspecting independent treatment centres against the National Minimum Standards and Regulations issued by the Secretary of State.

Vulnerable Adults

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the protection of vulnerable adults list will be implemented in healthcare settings. [164819]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department remains fully committed to implementing the protection of vulnerable adults (POVA) scheme for healthcare. The POVA scheme is being commenced in social care first as there is strong evidence that most abuse of vulnerable adults occurs either in people's own homes or in care homes. There remain problems with implementing POVA in healthcare settings. It is hoped to resolve these problems as soon as possible, with a view to fully implementing POVA during 2005.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what monitoring will be undertaken by his Department on the impact of the European working time directive on emergency medical transfers at night between hospitals. [166405]

Mr. Hutton: Performance management of the implementation of the working time directive is the responsibility of strategic health authorities, as part of mainstream national health service performance management.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

BACS

Brian White: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what progress his Department has made to manage the changeover from the Bank Automated Clearing System to the new BACSTEL-iP system for electronic payments. [164319]

Mr. Lammy: The Department's outsourced banking function (Liberata) have obtained costs for the new hardware and software required for the upgrade and made plans for the migration to BACSTEL-iP. The migration timetable is driven by our sponsoring bank, the Bank of England, which is in the process of drawing up a timetable for implementation by December 2005.

Immigration Control (Lawyers)

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many lawyers have been *(a)* prosecuted, *(b)* convicted and *(c)* struck off for offences related to the evasion of immigration control by their clients in each year since 1997. [165462]

Mr. Lammy: The complaints handling arm of the Law Society, the Office for the Supervision of Solicitors, have provided numbers of cases which resulted in solicitors being subject to disciplinary action, in relation to the provision of immigration advice since 1997.

1997

No cases

1998

1—subject to a section 43 Order (preventing a legal executive or a legal clerk from working in a firm of solicitors)

1—struck off

1999

1—fined

1—reprimanded

2000

1—struck off

3—fined

2001

1—struck off

1—subject to a section 43 Order

1—fined and suspended

1—suspended

2—fined

2002

No cases

2003

1—struck off

1—indefinite suspension

1—fined

Legal Aid

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many people *(a)* applied for and *(b)* received legal aid in England and Wales since 2000; and how many people had an application rejected. [165844]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission is unable to provide figures for criminal and civil Legal Help because decisions about whether to take on a case are made by the supplier and not referred to the Commission on a case-by-case basis.

The Commission can however provide figures for civil representation on the basis of the number of applications for funding certificates received, granted and rejected; the figures are not necessarily reflective of the number of individuals involved.

The figures for civil representation from 2000–01 are in table A. The number of applications received and dealt with by the Crown Courts are in table B. The number of applications received and dealt with by the magistrates' courts are in table C.

The number of applications rejected does not equate to the difference between the number of applications received and the number of applications granted because other outcomes are possible including abandonment or withdrawal of an application, or an offer of contributory funding that the applicant decides not to progress.

Table A—Civil applications

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*Total*
Funding applications received	226,104	205,821	211,723	643,648
Funding applications granted	174,017	161,988	164,096	500,101
Funding applications rejected	24,353	20,347	22,904	67,604

Table B—Crown court applications[1]

	2000	*2001*	*2002*	*Total*
Funding applications received	13,494	12,073	11,080	36,647
Funding applications granted	13,279	11,909	10,890	36,078
Funding applications rejected	264	204	190	672

[1] Information is available by calendar year only.

Table C—Magistrates' court applications

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*Total*
Funding applications received	477,307	627,215	662,847	1,767,369
Funding applications granted	449,632	598,422	632,057	1,680,111
Funding applications rejected	23,566	27,797	29,886	81,249

Legal Services

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to review the financial eligibility limits for publicly funded legal help. [165408]

Mr. Lammy: No decision has yet been taken on the eligibility uprating. We will inform the House as soon as a decision has been taken.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps he is taking to improve access to community legal services. [165409]

Mr. Lammy: The Community Legal Service (CLS) aims to improve access to quality legal and advice services for all. Regional Legal Service Committees and CLS Partnerships are responsible for co-ordinating the delivery of legal and advice services in their area and through an analysis of local legal needs, can ensure that resources are more effectively targeted to those most in need. A number of initiatives have been put in place to improve access to advice, including the Just Ask! website. A national telephone advice service will be available nationally from summer 2004 following a successful pilot. CLS leaflets provide information on legal rights and details of local service providers can be found in the CLS Directory, available at a number of public locations and online. The Constitutional Affairs Select Committee's current inquiry into the adequacy of civil legal aid provision is considering access to civil legal and advice services. An independent review is also evaluating the effectiveness of the CLS and is due to report in late April 2004.

Legal Services Commission

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) how many new solicitors firms have undertaken contracts with the Legal Services Commission in England and Wales since 2000; [165842]

(2) how many solicitors firms, in England and Wales have withdrawn from a Legal Services Commission contract in each year since 2000. [165843]

Mr. Lammy: I shall reply to the hon. Member as soon as possible.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many press officers were employed in the Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [162858]

Mr. Lammy: The Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA) was created in June 2003. Since its inception the DCA, which includes its agencies—the Court Service and the Public Guardianship Office (PGO) has employed:

	2003–04	
	Number	*Paybill (£)*
Press Officers	14	384,661
Support Staff	6	140,963

The Directors of Communications of the DCA and PGO, the DCA Deputy Director of Communications, and the DCA Head of News also deal with the media within their wider responsibilities.

Special Immigration Appeals Commission

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Special Immigration Appeals Commission is a court; and if he will make a statement. [165390]

Mr. Lammy: The Special Immigration Appeals Commission is a superior court of record pursuant to Section 1(3) of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission Act 1997 as amended by Section 35 of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. The amendment to the status of the commission took effect from 13 December 2001.

Whistleblowers

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what provisions are made across departments of Government to reward whistleblowers for providing information leading to successful detection of fraud or other crime; and how many and what sizes of rewards have been made in the past five years. [145211]

Mr. Lammy: My Department is not responsible for whistleblowing provisions across Government Departments.

However, we do have a whistleblowing policy that provides a confidential reporting procedure for employees to voice concerns about any aspect of work within the Department.

There is no policy of rewarding whistleblowers, and in the past year no rewards have been made.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Ulster-Scots

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people who completed the 2001 Census in Northern Ireland entered Ulster-Scots in response to the question on language. [166481]

Mr. Pearson: None. The question on language asked in the 2001 Census related specifically to Irish and allowed only tick-box responses.

A26

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average volume per day of vehicles using the A26 between Ballymena and Coleraine was in each of the last 10 years. [165732]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr Malcolm McKibbin to Mr Gregory Campbell dated 5 April 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding the average volume per day of vehicles using the A26 between Ballymena and Coleraine was in the last 10 years. I have been asked to reply as the issues fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

Roads Service collects traffic data from 4 locations along the A26 between Ballymena and Coleraine. The counters occasionally mal-function and/or require maintenance resulting in periods where traffic flow information is not available. The available data on the average volume of vehicles per day recorded in each of the last 10 years is shown in the attached table.

I hope you find this information helpful.

Location	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Dual carriageway between Ballymena and Glarryford	13,940	15,230	—	15,170	—	—	15,170	—	16,910	17,880
A44 Ballycastle junction to Ballymoney Bypass	9,640	10,260	10,760	11,410	11,040	11,860	11,740	12,630	12,860	—
Ballymoney Bypass	11,300	13,990	13,150	11,990	13,370	14,100	13,440	14,560	14,940	15,660
Between Ballymoney and Coleraine	11,750	12,170	12,050	13,170	13,870	14,630	14,610	15,060	14,920	15,670

Attendance Allowance

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many attendance allowance claims have been subject to appeal in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and what the percentage rate of success was. [165995]

Mr. Spellar: The number of attendance allowance appeals heard during the last five financial years and the percentage success rate was:

	Total	*Success rate (percentage)*
1999–2000	57	26.3
2000–01	43	25.6
2001–02	118	20.3
2002–03	143	27.3
2003–04	108	21.3

Car Ownership

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the change in the numbers of those owning cars in Northern Ireland over the past 10 years. [165998]

Mr. Pearson: Information on the numbers of people owning cars in Northern Ireland is not readily available. However, the 1991 Census of Population showed that residents of 64.5 per cent. of households had access to at least one car or van, rising to 73.7 per cent. of households in the 2001 Census of Population.

Civil Servants

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many travel warrants were issued to civil servants employed by his Department for travel between Northern Ireland and Great Britain via *(a)* Belfast City Airport and *(b)* Belfast International Airport in each of the last three years. [165774]

Mr. Pearson: The number of travel warrants issued to civil servants employed by the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Northern Ireland Office for travel between Northern Ireland and Great

Britain via *(a)* Belfast City Airport, and *(b)* Belfast International Airport, in each of the last three years is set out in the table.

£

	Belfast City	*Belfast International*
2001–02	11,947	4,568
2002–03	17,890	1,687
2003–04	16,981	2,507

These figures relate only to flights booked through the NICS and NIO contracted travel agency services and do not include any journeys undertaken and which were booked through other channels, as to obtain this information would be at disproportionate cost to Departments.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost of air travel for civil servants employed by his Department travelling between Northern Ireland and each of Great Britain's airports via *(a)* Belfast City Airport and *(b)* Belfast International Airport was in each of the last three years. [165775]

Mr. Pearson: The cost of air travel for civil servants employed by the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Civil Service and the Northern Ireland Office travelling between Northern Ireland and each of Great Britain's airports for each of the last three years is set out in the table.

£

	Belfast City	*Belfast International*
2001–02	2,418,932	990,101
2002–03	3,983,798	239,348
2003–04	3,154,379	210,216

These figures relate only to flights booked through the NICS and NIO contracted travel agency services and do not include any journeys undertaken and which were booked through other channels, as to obtain this information would be at disproportionate cost to Departments.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants flew from Belfast International Airport to *(a)* London Luton, *(b)* London Stansted and *(c)* London Gatwick in each of the last three years; and what the average return fare was. [165776]

Mr. Pearson: The number of civil servants who flew from Belfast International Airport to *(a)* London Luton, *(b)* London Stansted and *(c)* London Gatwick in each of the last three years is set out below along with the average return fare in each case.

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
(a)			
London Luton	7	92	309
Air fair (return)	£59.92	£77.94	£105.53
(b)			
London Stansted	23	19	359
Air fair (return)	£66.78	£95.75	£104.23
(c)			
London Gatwick	640	12	206
Air fair (return)	£159.48	£88.27	£76.08

These figures relate only to flights booked through the NICS and NIO contracted travel agency services and do not include any journeys undertaken and which were booked through other channels, as to obtain this information would be at disproportionate cost to Departments.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants flew from Belfast City Airport to *(a)* London Heathrow and *(b)* London Gatwick in each of the last three years; and what the average return fare was. [165777]

Mr. Pearson: The number of civil servants who flew from Belfast City Airport to *(a)* London Heathrow and *(b)* London Gatwick in each of the last three years is set out below along with the average return fare in each case.

Flights from Belfast City Airport

	2001–02	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
(a)			
London Heathrow	2,776	7,771	9,898
Air fare return	£139.75	£183.03	£183.88
(b)			
London Gatwick	2,333	2 619	1,456
Air fare return	£227.77	£16).90	£175.58

These figures relate only to flights booked through the NICS and NIO contracted travel agency services and do not include any journeys undertaken and which were booked through other channels as to obtain this information would be at disproportionate cost to Departments.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list for each civil service grade within his Department, the total number of staff employed, broken down by *(a)* gender, *(b)* ethnic group, *(c)* registered disabled and *(d)* age group. [166402]

Mr. Pearson: At 1 January 2004 the total number of staff in the Northern Ireland Departments and the Northern Ireland Office was 31,439. The following tables show the breakdown, for each grade level, by *(a)* gender, *(b)* ethnic origin, *(c)* those who have declared a disability, and *(d)* age group:

(a) Permanent staff by grade level and gender

	Gender		
Grade level	*Female*	*Male*	*Total*
Grade 5 and above	56	229	285
Grade 6/7	409	1,020	1,429
Deputy Principal	838	1,700	2,538
Staff Officer	1,099	1,887	2,986
Executive Officer I/II	4,528	4,511	9,039
Administrative Officer	6,735	2,506	9,241
Administrative Assistant	1,968	1,214	3,182
Industrial	67	2,672	2,739
Total	15,700	15,739	31,439

(b) Permanent staff by grade level and ethnic origin

	Ethnic origin								
Grade level	*White*	*Black African*	*Black Caribbean*	*Bangladeshi*	*Chinese*	*Indian*	*Pakistani*	*Other*	*Total*
Grade 5 and above	263	0	1	0	0	2	0	0	266
Grade 6/7	1,295	1	0	0	2	1	0	2	1,301
Deputy Principal	2,309	1	0	0	2	1	1	3	2,317
Staff Officer	2,675	2	0	1	0	3	2	0	2,683
Executive Officer I/II	7,699	3	3	0	0	3	2	6	7,716
Administrative Officer	7,863	4	3	0	0	1	0	4	7,875
Administrative Assistant	2,855	6	0	0	1	2	0	2	2,866
Industrial	1,555	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1,555
Total	26,514	17	7	1	5	13	5	17	26,579

Note:
For 4,860 of the 31,439 staff (15.5 per cent.) no ethnic origin information has been provided.

(c) Permanent staff by grade level and declared disability

Grade level	*Declared disabled*
Grade 5 and above	8
Grade 6/7	44
Deputy Principal	102
Staff Officer	107
Executive Officer I/II	385
Administrative Officer	362
Administrative Assistant	164
Industrial	106
Total	1,278

Note:
For 4,540 of the 31,439 staff (14.4 per cent.) no disability information has been provided.

(d) Permanent staff by grade level and age group

	Age						
Grade level	*16 to 19 years*	*20 to 29 years*	*30 to 39 years*	*40 to 49 years*	*50 to 59 years*	*60 plus years*	*Total*
Grade 5 and above	0	0	17	93	167	8	285
Grade 6/7	0	11	195	589	607	27	1,429
Deputy Principal	0	107	654	978	768	31	2,538
Staff Officer	0	360	751	1,147	702	26	2,986
Executive Officer I/II	1	1,053	3,374	3,306	1,237	68	9,039
Administrative Officer	86	2,951	2,806	2,406	856	136	9,241
Administrative Assistant	184	1,423	619	528	330	98	3,182
Industrial	7	183	643	941	745	220	2,739
Total	278	6,088	9,059	9,988	5,412	614	31,439

Civil Service Pay Offer

Mr. Kevin McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the 5.57 per cent. civil service pay offer made to the trade union NIPSA for 2003 had Treasury approval. [164943]

Mr. Pearson: It is not the Government's practice to discuss the internal processes that underlie the handling of pay negotiations. All concerned within Government are working together to take forward the Government's firm and fair approach to civil service pay, which is that pay should not jeopardise the imperative of improving services, but should take account of the need to retain, recruit and motivate staff within the spending and delivery plans set in the Northern Ireland Budget.

Complementary Medicine

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the budget for complementary medicine in the National Health Service in Northern Ireland was in 2003. [165997]

Angela Smith: The Department did not make any specific resources available for Complementary Medicine in 2003.

It is a matter for HPSS clinicians or healthcare professionals with lead clinical responsibility for the individual patient to decide whether an individual patient could benefit from the use of a particular therapy.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what *(a)* renovation and *(b)* maintenance projects

on buildings (i) owned and (ii) rented by his Department were undertaken in each of the last five years; and what the associated costs were of each. [163947]

Mr. Pearson: Due to the number of buildings involved and the differing methods of recording by the various Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration and the Northern Ireland Office, disaggregation of the figure-work by project and between owned and rented buildings in line with the question would involve disproportionate cost. The table below gives the information for renovation and maintenance expenditure on both owned and rented buildings for each year.

£

Year	*Value of internal renovation/alteration/ refurbishment undertaken*	*Value of maintenance work carried out*
1999–2000	412,790.22	7,985,123.65
2000–2001	737,131.85	7,721,766.60
2001–2002	1,067,010.50	6,411,959.63
2002–2003	1,412,010.30	8,016,377.12
2003–2004	1,661,491.60	9,890,600.50

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166368]

Mr. Pearson: The Northern Ireland Civil Service makes extensive use of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in carrying out its day-to-day business.

The 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration have an ongoing programme for updating their computer hardware and software. In the case of PCs and associated office automation software the average period between updates is three to four years; for application servers it is currently five to seven years.

A separate programme is under way to provide a common operating system platform for the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration.

The Northern Ireland Office is modernising its office IT system (covering hardware and software) through a programme called Flax.

Departmental Efficiency Savings

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to pursue efficiency savings in each of the Northern Ireland Departments similar to those proposed in the Efficiency Reviews outlined in the recent Budget. [165949]

Mr. Pearson: A similar focus on promoting efficiency within the public sector will be applied in Northern Ireland, with the aim of releasing resources for reallocation to front line services. This will be a central theme to the Northern Ireland Priorities and Budget process, running throughout 2004.

Drug Rehabilitation

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research has been undertaken to ascertain the level of *(a)* need and *(b)* demand for a dedicated drug rehabilitation service in Northern Ireland. [164539]

Angela Smith: There has been no research undertaken to establish the level of need or demand for a dedicated drug rehabilitation service in Northern Ireland.

The need for such research was identified as one of a number of research priorities within the Regional Drug and Alcohol Action Plan and the intention was to provide a report to the Department by October 2003. However, a previously commissioned Audit of Statutory Addiction Services which would inform the needs assessment proposal took longer than anticipated and the final report was not received in the Department until early March 2004. At its next meeting in May 2004, the Treatment Working Group will consider their priorities for the coming year, including the needs assessment for a rehabilitation service, and will make decisions about such priorities within available resources.

I will write to the hon. Lady after this meeting to inform her of the outcome.

Employment Statistics

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* males over 65 years and *(b)* females over 60 years are in full-time employment in Northern Ireland. [165778]

Mr. Gardiner: It is not possible to provide separate estimates from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) for *(a)* males over 65 years and *(b)* females over 60 years of age in full-time employment only, because the estimates at Autumn 2003 do not reach the minimum threshold level required for a sufficiently reliable estimate to be quoted. However, the LFS does provide sufficiently reliable estimates of the total number of males over 65 years and females over 60 years of age in employment (full-time and part-time) of which there were 16,000 at Autumn 2003. The estimated number of females over 60 years of age in employment (full-time and part-time) at this time was 10,000.

Energy Costs

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he has secured European Commission approval for his proposal to commit public expenditure to reduce the costs of energy to business. [166015]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment is working, in conjunction with the Department of Trade and Industry, on the preparation of an application to the European Commission for the required State Aid clearance of the proposed financial intervention.

Falls

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people over 60 years were admitted to long-term care following a fall in each of the last three years, broken down by health trust area. [165768]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Fishing Industry

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 18 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 1078W, on the fishing industry, if he will set out a timescale for the *(a)* recommencement and *(b)* completion of a Strategic Review of the Northern Ireland Fishing Industry. [165945]

Mr. Pearson: The Taskforce for South Down and the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit have both reported on the strategic context for Northern Ireland's fishing industry. These exercises have both entailed considerable consultation, research and analysis. I have decided not to undertake another review but rather to focus on implementing the recommendations of the South Down Taskforce and to move ahead, in consultation with local interests, to address the implications for Northern Ireland of the Strategy Unit's Report, "Net Benefits".

Health Board Funding

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action he has taken to attempt to redress the imbalance of funding through the Eastern Health Board's Capitation Formula. [166047]

Angela Smith: Equity in resource allocation within a Board area is a matter for the Board concerned. The Eastern Board is working with all of its HSS Trusts to ensure that, within the resources available, the issue of equity is addressed throughout all its local populations.

A review of the Capitation Formula, currently used to allocate the available resources to HSS Boards, is due to be published for consultation in May 2004. This may alter the equity position to some extent within the Eastern Board localities.

The Department will continue to work closely with the Eastern Board on this matter.

Health Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what plans he has to provide a specialist paediatric epilepsy nurse in the Province; [164913]

(2) if he will make a statement on the provision of paediatric nurse specialists for the NHS. [164923]

Angela Smith: The Department has invested over a number of years in the provision of paediatric nursing in the community. The aim of community paediatric nursing service is to provide a range of professional skills to meet the needs of children, e.g. asthma/ respiratory care, diabetes, behaviour management, epilepsy, pain management, nutrition and constipation and palliative care. The service is aimed at those children with disability, chronic and life limiting illness.

Traditionally, access to a specialist epilepsy nurse was through a regional service, but the increasing prevalence of this condition has required Boards to commission a more locally based service from within the community paediatric service. The development of this service means that only in exceptional circumstances should a child have to attend the regional service, thereby not interrupting school and normal activities of living.

Boards are continuing to review and invest in paediatric community services.

Housing

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Housing Executive single homes in Northern Ireland have been adapted for disability use in each of the last five years. [165735]

Mr. Spellar: The Housing Executive carries out both major and minor adaptations for its tenants. Information relating to dwellings occupied by single persons, which have been adapted for disability use, is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. However the following tables show the numbers of completed adaptations in individual properties for each of the five years from 1998–99 to 2002–03 and the year 2003–04, to the end of February 2004.

	Major works	*Minor works*
1998–99	2,006	8,243
1999–2000	2,297	8,060
2000–01	2,548	6,855
2001–02	3,981	8,543
2002–03	4,053	8,049
2003–04	3,174	7,527

Labour Statistics

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the percentage unemployment level is in *(a)* Coleraine, *(b)* Derry (city), *(c)* Strabane, *(d)* Omagh, *(e)* Dungannon, *(f)* Cookstown, *(g)* Eniskillen, *(h)* Armagh (city), *(i)* Portadown, *(j)* Newry and *(k)* Lisburn. [165344]

Mr. Gardiner: Claimant Count unemployment rates are not available at a town or city level, but can be provided at District Council Area level. The Claimant Count rates at February 2004 for the District Council Areas which contain the specified towns and cities are provided in the table below.

Claimant count unemployment rate by District Council Area at February 2004

District Council Area	*Percentage Rate*
Coleraine	3.4
Derry	5.7
Strabane	5.5
Omagh	3.3
Dungannon	2.1
Cookstown	1.9
Fermanagh	4.0
Armagh	2.4
Craigavon	2.8
Newry and Mourne	3.2
Lisburn	2.2
Northern Ireland	3.2

Landfill

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what amount of industrial and commercial waste was sent to landfill in 2003, expressed as a percentage of the 1998 level. [165948]

Angela Smith: The most recent survey figures available relate to the 2002 Survey "Industrial and Commercial Waste Production in Northern Ireland" commissioned by the Department of the Environment's Environment and Heritage Service. This survey reported that approximately 635,000 tonnes of industrial and commercial waste were generated, of which 40 per cent. (252,000 tonnes) went to landfill.

The 1998 survey "Development of a Waste Arisings Database for Northern Ireland—Pilot Survey and Database Design" initiated by EHS showed 700,000 tonnes of industrial and commercial waste were generated, of which 57 per cent. (399,000 tonnes) went to landfill.

The amount of such waste sent to landfill in 2003 was, therefore, 63 per cent. of the 1998 figure, which equates to a reduction of some 37 per cent.

Copies of both documents have been placed in the Library.

MRI Scanners

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average waiting time for an MRI scan is in each of the hospitals providing such treatment in Northern Ireland. [165734]

Angela Smith: The information requested could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

NHS Dentistry

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many National Health Service dentists have been working in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [165992]

Angela Smith: The information requested is as follows General Dental Practitioner headcount by year.

Year[1]	*Headcount*
2004	720
2003	696
2002	689
2001	673
2000	661

[1] Figures are at 1 April for each year.
Source:
Central Services Agency

Nursing

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many student nurses *(a)* commenced and *(b)* completed training in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [165791]

Angela Smith: The information requested is provided in the following tables.

Numbers who commenced training in each of the last 10 years

Year 1 April–31 March	*Number commencing training*
1994–95	663
1995–96	733
1996–97	711
1997–98	749
1998/99	617
1999–2000	562
2000–01	614
2001–02	856
2002–03	770
2003–04	864

Note:
2004 figure includes 30 Open University students.

Number of students who became eligible for First Level Registration

Year 1 April–31 March	*Number*
1994–95	779
1995–96	827
1996–97	626
1997–98	716
1998–99	599
1999–2000	612
2000–01	508
2001–02	454
2002–03	449
2003–04	490

Ofcom

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with OFCOM on unsolicited telephone calls for commercial purposes. [166049]

Mr. Gardiner: The level of complaints in Northern Ireland concerning unsolicited calls has been small and as such I have not intervened directly in this matter.

The use of telephones for unsolicited commercial, particularly direct marketing, reasons is covered by Directive 2002/58/EC on privacy and electronic communications. The Regulations came into force on 11 December 2003 and are enforced by the Information Commissioner's Office, rather than OFCOM. The regulations work on the principle of opt-out rules on unsolicited direct marketing by phone; it is a breach of the regulations to make an unsolicited direct marketing call to any subscriber who has either told that caller not to ring, or who has been registered on the Telephone Preference Service (TPS) for at least 28 days. Currently only individual subscribers have the right to register on the TPS but in response to a Government consultation undertaken last year this will be opened to corporate subscribers also as of 25 June 2004.

Parenting Initiatives

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much funding has been made available to education and library boards in Northern Ireland specifically for parenting initiatives in each of the past five years; what plans he has to increase the current level of funding for parenting initiatives; and if he will make a statement. [165726]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department of Education recognises the importance of engaging parents in their children's learning. Over the last five years the allocations to Education and Library Boards specifically for parenting initiatives were as follows:

£000

	Amount
1999–2000	[1]131
2000–01	207
2001–02	212
2002–03	217
2003–04	238

[1] part year

There are no plans to increase the current level of earmarked funding which the Department of Education makes available to Education and Library Boards for this purpose. However, Boards are free to supplement this funding by allocating further resources from within their overall block grant.

Personal Debt

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to address the dangers of increasing personal debt in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [165779]

Mr. Gardiner: The Consumer Strategy for Northern Ireland was published in March 2002. As a result, the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment commissioned research into the provision of a suitable framework for the delivery of effective debt/money advice in Northern Ireland. This is now being taken forward within the context of the Department for Social Development's proposed new Information and Advice Strategy which is scheduled to be published for consultation in May 2004.

The Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister is currently representing Northern Ireland on a UK cross-departmental officials' group on over-indebtedness. The findings of this group may also impact on the money advice initiative in Northern Ireland.

Prescriptions

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what the cost to the public purse of free prescriptions issued in Northern Ireland has been in each of the last five years; [166002]

(2) how many *(a)* paid-for and *(b)* free prescriptions were issued in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [166003]

Angela Smith: The information is not available in the form requested.

The total number of prescription items, and the number for which the full prescription charge was paid, in each of the last five calendar years is given below. Based upon sample analyses, it is estimated that 5 per cent. of prescription items are partly paid-for by pre-payment certificates (PPCs), which allow the patient to obtain as many prescription items as necessary during the four or 12 month validity of the certificate for a set fee. Consequently, about 89 per cent. of Health Service prescription items are dispensed free of charge to patients. Estimated figures for the latter two categories are calculated as follows:

£million

	Total Items	Charge Paid	Est. 5 per cent. PPCs	Est. 89 per cent. Free
1999	23,247,901	1,341,795	1,162,395	20,743,711
2000	23,663,632	1,409,347	1,183,182	21,071,103
2001	24,551,125	1,472,666	1,227,556	21,850,903
2002	25,419,957	1,545,007	1,270,998	22,603,952
2003	26,399,016	1,552,296	1,319,951	23,526,769

The total cost of Health Service prescription items in Northern Ireland in each of the last five calendar years (most recent figures available) and the estimated costs of those items dispensed free, are as follows:

(£000)

Year	Total Gross Cost	89 per cent. (Cost of Free Items)
1999	262,822	233,912
2000	273,977	243,840
2001	295,607	263,090
2002	323,651	288,049
2003	354,339	315,362

Property Demolition

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in relation to proposed action to be taken against those allegedly responsible for the demolition of properties for which no planning permission was sought. [165999]

Angela Smith: Consent is required for the demolition of listed buildings and for the demolition of unlisted buildings within a Conservation Area.

If a building is demolished without the necessary consent being obtained, enforcement action will be taken. Prosecution action will also be pursued if appropriate, as is currently happening in relation to the demolition of two listed buildings in the hon. Gentleman's constituency last summer.

Public Sector Housing

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the breakdown by community background in numbers and percentages is of those waiting for public sector housing in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Belfast areas in (i) 2000, (ii) 2001, (iii) 2002 and (iv) 2003. [166044]

Mr. Spellar: The Northern Ireland Housing Executive, under its Section 75 Equality duties, is developing a comprehensive approach to record keeping and monitoring in relation to religious affiliation. The information requested is only available for the last two financial years in respect of those waiting to be allocated properties by either the Northern Ireland Housing Executive or a registered housing association and is a snapshot of the waiting list at 31 March in each of the years.

	2001–02		2002–03	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Northern Ireland				
Protestant	12,268	47	12,237	47
Catholic	10,180	39	10,512	40
Undisclosed/ Unavailable	2,350	9	2,103	8
Other	1,305	5	1,394	5
Total	26,103		26,246	
Belfast				
Catholic	3,728	48	3,187	44
Protestant	3,029	39	3,125	43
Undisclosed/ Unavailable	648	8	567	8
Other	345	4	387	5
Total	7,750		7,266	

The breakdown is based on answers, as stated on the General Housing Application Form, to a question about the religion of the respondent and the raw data are still subject to testing for reliability and validity. The question was answered by over 91 per cent. of applicants.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the breakdown by community background in numbers and percentages is of those allocated public sector housing in *(a)* Northern Ireland and *(b)* the Belfast areas in (i) 2000, (ii) 2001, (iii) 2002 and (iv) 2003. [166045]

Mr. Spellar: Housing is allocated on the basis of need and not religious affiliation. The Northern Ireland Housing Executive, under its Section 75 Equality duties, is developing a comprehensive approach to record keeping and monitoring in relation to religious affiliation. The information requested is only available for one financial year 1 April 2002–31 March 2003 and the cumulative total for the year in respect of those allocated Northern Ireland Housing Executive properties is as follows:

	Number	Percentage
Northern Ireland		
Protestant	4,959	54
Catholic	3,258	35
Undisclosed/ Unavailable	530	6
Other	471	5
Total	9,218	
Belfast		
Protestant	1,331	64
Catholic	579	28
Undisclosed/ Unavailable	104	5
Other	73	3
Total	2,087	

The breakdown is based on answers, as stated on the General Housing Application Form, to a question about the religion of the respondent. The question was answered by over 91 per cent. of applicants. The proportionately lower level of allocations to Catholic applicants in Belfast reflects the lower stock turnover in Catholic areas.

Pulmonary Hypertension

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on provision in Northern Ireland for sufferers of pulmonary hypertension. [165934]

Angela Smith: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave on 30 March 2004 (*Official Report*, column 1332W).

Redundancies (Foyle)

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many redundancies there were in the Foyle constituency in the past 36 months. [165395]

Mr. Gardiner: In the past 36 months, to 29 February 2004, there were 1,436 redundancies in the Foyle Constituency confirmed to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment.

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the education and retraining specifically tailored for textile workers who have been made redundant. [165396]

Mr. Gardiner: Staff from the Department for Employment and Learning, supported by colleagues from the Social Security Agency, Inland Revenue and local training and Further Education providers, have delivered Redundancy Counselling for those textile workers affected by the recent closures. An important aspect of this service is to promote available education and training opportunities.

In the North West the Further Education sector has been particularly proactive and offers a full range of provision including training in new skills and assistance in the start-up of businesses. In addition, a joint application has been made by the Department for Employment and Learning and FAS, the training authority in the Republic of Ireland, for funding to the European Structural Fund's Interreg Programme, to address the reskilling of redundant workers.

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many new jobs were created in the Foyle constituency in the past 36 months; and how many of those new jobs are still in existence. [165397]

Mr. Gardiner: There were 2,624 job gains by Invest NI clients within Foyle Parliamentary Constituency Area over the three-year period to March 2003. However, there were also 3,991 job losses by clients during this period resulting in a net loss in employment of 1,367. In addition to this, 322 offers of assistance were made through the 'Start a Business' Programme and the estimate of job creation resulting from these is 531. It is not possible to state specifically which of the new jobs created remain in existence.

Information on the total number of jobs created is not available. Total employee jobs data at Parliamentary Constituency level are only available from the biennial Census of Employment and the most recent figures relate to September 2001. At September 2001, the Census of Employment showed that there were 39,063 employee jobs in Foyle Parliamentary Constituency Area. This represented an increase of 515 (1.3 per cent.) from the previous Census figure (September 1999).

Rolling Stock

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the new rolling stock being tested by Translink will be used on the whole rail network. [166001]

Mr. Spellar: The first of the 23 new trains is due to be delivered this month. After a period of commissioning and testing it is expected that the first train will be in passenger service by the late autumn of this year, with the remainder coming into service progressively through 2004 and 2005.

Translink is currently considering how the trains can best be deployed on the Northern Ireland railway network and will announce its decision when this is complete.

Royal Mail

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland for what reasons Royal Mail has been denied permission to erect a post box at Lansdowne Road, Newtownards. [165865]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written to the hon. Lady in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mrs. Iris Robinson, dated 6 April 2004:

You tabled a Parliamentary Question asking for what reasons Royal Mail has been denied permission to erect a post box at Lansdowne Road, Newtownards. As the issues fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service, I have been asked to reply.

I understand that Royal Mail submitted a written request on 7 January 2004 seeking permission to locate a post box at Lansdowne Road, Newtownards. The proposed location of the box was shown to be 5 metres from the junction of Lansdowne Road and Ten Acre (a side road leading to houses occupied mainly by elderly people).

Following discussions with the Traffic Police, our local Section Engineer replied to Royal Mail on 16 January 2004 indicating that the proposed location was not suitable due to concerns that vehicles stopping so close to the junction to post mail would have compromised traffic safety. However, it was suggested that if the box could be located a minimum of 15 metres from the junction, at the back of the footway, this would be acceptable. This distance ties in with the minimum length of waiting restriction commonly marked on the ground at road junctions to reinforce current law (i.e. it is an offence to park a vehicle within 15 metres of a junction regardless of whether the road is marked with double yellow lines).

It would appear that Royal Mail has somehow misinterpreted the content of our reply, which clearly indicates that Roads Service would grant approval for an alternative location close to that initially proposed. I have asked our Section Engineer to contact the Royal Mail to clarify the position so that the post-box can be provided as soon as possible.

School Bags

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) how many complaints have been received in the last five years by the Department of Education from parents concerned at the excessive weights children carry in school bags; and if he will make a statement; [165782]

(2) what plans he has to introduce, as standard practice, personal lockers for children in schools in the Province in order to limit the amount of books carried in school bags; [165783]

(3) what guidelines he has issued on limits to the amount of weight a child should carry to and from school; and if he will make a statement; [165786]

(4) what assessment has been made of the medical risks associated with children carrying excessive weights in school bags. [165787]

Mr. Gardiner: One parent has complained to the Department of Education about the weight of schoolbags. The Department has not issued guidelines or carried out a medical assessment on this matter. There are no plans to introduce, as standard practice, the provision of personal lockers for school children. The Department's School Building Handbook provides for either cloakroom space or moveable lockers in schools. It is, however, a matter for school authorities to decide what provision should be made at a particular school. Also, parents have a responsibility to protect the health and welfare of their children by ensuring that only essential materials are carried in schoolbags. Similarly, pupils are also responsible for making decisions as to the books and learning materials they need to carry to and from school each day.

St. Mary's Primary School

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to develop a strategy and action plan to phase out racially segregated primary education of Traveller children at St. Mary's Primary School, Belfast. [165855]

Mr. Gardiner: St. Mary's Primary School is not a designated "Traveller school" and there are no such schools in Northern Ireland. St. Mary's is a Catholic Maintained school which, as is the case with all grant-aided schools in Northern Ireland, is open to all children.

The Department of Education is required by law to have regard to the general principle that pupils shall be educated in accordance with the wishes of their parents. It is the case that many parents of Traveller children wish to have them educated in St. Mary's. While it is the Department's policy to encourage the integration in school of Traveller children with other children, there are no plans to phase out provision at St. Mary's for so long as there is a demand for places in the school from the parents of Traveller children.

Suicide

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many suicides there were in each of the last 20 years; and if he will make a statement. [164917]

Mr. Pearson: The following table gives the number of deaths registered in Northern Ireland per annum from 1984 to 2003 caused by "suicide and self-inflicted injury"[1] and the number of registered deaths due to "undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted"[2].

The Promoting Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan published last year includes a specific section on preventing suicide. Preventative action includes promoting coping skills in the general population, suicide awareness programmes and targeted work with vulnerable groups. In addition action is also being taken under the Drug and Alcohol Strategies to support and counsel those affected by addiction problems.

[1] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes X60-X84, Y87.0 for years 2001–03 and Ninth Revision codes E950-E959 for years 1983–2000.

[2] International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision codes Y10-Y34, Y87.2 for years 2001–03 and Ninth Revision codes E980-E989 for years 1983–2000.

Table: Number of registered deaths by year in Northern Ireland resulting from by suicide and self-inflicted injury or undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted

Registration year	*Suicide and self-inflicted injury*	*Undetermined injury whether accidentally or purposefully inflicted*	*Total deaths*
1984	109	14	123
1985	117	40	157
1986	145	29	174
1987	86	36	122
1988	153	30	183
1989	116	18	134
1990	158	10	168
1991	129	19	148
1992	107	21	128
1993	129	22	151
1994	138	13	151
1995	122	24	146
1996	124	19	143
1997	120	18	138
1998	126	24	150
1999	121	33	154
2000	163	22	185
2001	141	17	158
2002	162	21	183
2003 (Provisional)	132	12	144

Sunbeds

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he has taken to ensure that sunbed users in Northern Ireland are made aware of the health risks arising from sunbed use; and if he will make a statement. [164660]

Mr. Gardiner: The Health and Safety Executive in Great Britain has published guidance for operators and customers of solaria. Included in that advice is that people under 16 years old should not use sunbeds and that a limit of 20 sessions per year should be observed. This advice was developed after consultation with leading experts, is equally applicable to the Northern Ireland situation and is referred to by Health and Safety Inspectors here as illustrating good practice. The guidance "Controlling Health Risks from the use of UV Tanning Equipment" can be accessed via HSENF's website.

In addition, UK Health Departments (including DHSSPSNI) are currently funding a SunSmart Campaign run by Cancer Research UK. Campaign leaflets and posters were sent to all GP surgeries, secondary schools and health promotion departments.

Tax Discs

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many tax discs were issued for vehicles in Northern Ireland in each of the last 10 years. [165730]

Angela Smith: The information is as follows.

	Number
1993–94	833,142
1994–95	838,952
1995–96	864,706
1996–97	900,397
1997–98	993,066
1998–99	984,502
1999–2000	1,007,788
2000–01	950,598
2001–02	1,051,654
2002–03	1,045,538
2003–04	[1]1,176,000

[1] Provisional outturn

TK-ECC Plant

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to bid to retain the vacant TK-ECC factory premises at Dundonald to encourage reinvestment into the area. [165910]

Mr. Gardiner: TK-ECC purchased the factory, freehold, from IDB in 1995 as part of a major disposal programme of fully developed estates. Invest NI has no plans to buy the factory back should it come onto the market.

The land is zoned as "existing employment/industry" and Invest NI will oppose any attempt to change that zoning and will seek to work with the private sector to obtain new tenants and encourage reinvestment in the area.

Travellers

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to ensure Travellers have equal access to training as education and youth workers. [165856]

Mr. Gardiner: Access to courses of training for education or youth workers is open to all students who meet the requirements for entry to the respective courses. The arrangements for remission of tuition fees apply equally to students from the Traveller community as they do to students from other low income families. Students in higher education who satisfy residency requirements and whose family incomes are less than £20,970 do not pay anything towards their tuition fees. Likewise, Traveller students have the same access to student loans as other students. Where family income is under £20,000, they are eligible to receive non-refundable bursaries of up to £2,000 thereby reducing the amount of student loan they need to borrow. Supplementary grants such as Disabled Students' Allowance and childcare grants are also available.

Windfarm (Tunes Plateau)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of

the responses to the application for the establishment of a windfarm at the Tunes Plateau off the coast of Northern Ireland. [165736]

Mr. Gardiner: Pending completion of various technical and feasibility studies the development consortium has not yet made an application for the establishment of a wind farm at the Tunes Plateau.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Council Tax Benefit

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are *(a)* eligible to receive and *(b)* receiving council tax benefit in (i) the constituency of Weston-super-Mare and (ii) the north Somerset unitary authority. [165681]

Mr. Pond: Information about the number of people who are eligible to receive Council Tax Benefit is not available below national level. At August 2003, there were 9,000 Council Tax Benefit recipients in north Somerset.

Notes:

1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person, couple or family.

2. The figure is rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.

3. Council Tax Benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.

4. Information about the number of people receiving Council Tax Benefit is not

available at constituency level.

Source: Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System

Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many individuals in *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* Dumfries and Galloway are in receipt of council tax benefits. [165979]

Mr. Pond: The information is in the following table.

Council Tax Benefit recipients in Scotland and Dumfries and Galloway:

	Thousand
Scotland	523.9
Dumfries and Galloway	12.2

Notes:

1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person, couple or family.

2. The figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.

3. Council Tax Benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.

Source:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in August 2003.

Departmental Industrial Action

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost was of the two days' industrial action taken in February by staff in his Department; and what the cost was of moving priority work to other locations. [165825]

Mr. Pond: It is not possible to estimate the financial cost without incurring disproportionate costs. Any costs incurred for example in extra overtime payments to staff, would be offset by the savings made on staff salaries. The Department's businesses routinely move work around locations in order to optimise their services. Our information technology enables this to be done without incurring extra costs. There was no significant movement of work during the strike action. Our contingency arrangements allowed us to minimise the disruption to services to the most vulnerable members of society for whom the Department's services exist.

Departmental Policies (Sustainable Development)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what target is set by his Department for the *(a)* completion and *(b)* publication of Health and Safety Executive reports into leaks at the UK chemical plants; and if he will make a statement. [165666]

Jane Kennedy: DWP does not set targets for the completion and publication of HSE reports into incidents at chemical plants. The length of time for publication of reports is dependent on the nature and complexity of the incident and the action that was taken.

Employment (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Birkenhead over the last seven years. [166510]

Jane Kennedy: The UK has one of the strongest labour markets in the world. We have the highest employment and the lowest unemployment of the major industrialised countries. Employment is high across the UK: every region and country has an employment rate above the EU average. Claimant long term (one year plus) unemployment has been virtually eradicated for young people and has fallen by three-quarters for adults.

Specific information for Birkenhead is in the following table.

Birkenhead	*February 1997*	*February 2004*	*Change*
Total claimant unemployment	5,227	2,540	-51%
Unemployment as a proportion of the working age population	11.4%	5.6%	-5.8 points
Aged 18–24 unemployed for more than 1 year[1]	392	18	-95%
Aged 25 and over unemployed for more than 1 year	1,682	371	-78%

Free TV Licences

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many people resident in Dumfries and Galloway are in receipt of a free television licence; [165980]

(2) how many residents of Dumfries and Galloway he estimates are over 75 years old. [165981]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested.

The number of households with at least one resident aged 75 or over in the Dumfries and Galloway local authority is 9,665. These households would therefore be eligible to receive a free TV licence.

We cannot accurately estimate how many residents of Dumfries and Galloway are over 75 year old. However, since the number of people in Dumfries and Galloway local authority aged 75 or over who received a winter fuel payment for winter 2002- 2003 was 12,175, this is an indication of the number of such people.

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.

2. Any residence found to have 4 or more occupants is not included in these figures as it is assumed to be Residential Care Nursing Home.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, Winter Fuel Payment data Winter 2002–2003, 100 per cent. sample.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many workers in Birkenhead have benefited from the national minimum wage. [166512]

Mr. Boateng: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Frank Field, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question about the number of workers in Birkenhead who have benefited from the national minimum wage (NMW). (166512)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) calculates estimates of the number of jobs paid less than NMW rates for the United Kingdom and Government Office Regions. A guide to measuring low pay and associated articles and data can be found on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 5837&Pos = 1&ColRank = 1&Rank = 272

Estimates for Parliamentary Constituencies are not available.

New Performance and Development System

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reasons the new performance and development system for his Department does not allow staff a grievance hearing and the right to be accompanied by a trades union representative when challenging a decision on their designated performance level; whether the system is comparable to that in other Government departments; and what best practice models were used as the basis for the system. [165847]

Mr. Pond: The Department has set out clear arrangements within the Performance and Development System guidance for allowing staff to raise issues about their appraisal and about their performance mark. This guidance also makes clear that individuals do have the right to be accompanied by a colleague, or Trade Union representative, where a member of staff raises a disagreement. PDS was developed using the best features from previous systems, in line with Cabinet Office recommendations and with the input of managers, staff and Trade Unions. It is similar to that used by some other Government Departments, including Treasury and Cabinet Office and by outside organisations. We were supported in the research by consultants specialising in appraisal systems.

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what evidence has been gathered by his Department to show that the new Performance and Development System will improve staff *(a)* performance and *(b)* motivation. [165899]

Mr. Pond: The Performance and Development system was developed with input from staff, managers and Trade Unions, and in line with Cabinet Office recommendations. It was supported by independent consultants who researched and advised on best practice in both public and private sectors. The system provides a fair and objective assessment of performance against that of people at the same level doing similar work, a stronger focus on personal development, and more regular feedback, all of which is intended to improve motivation and performance.

This is only the end of the first year of the system, it is therefore too early to have tangible evidence of the results on motivation and performance. But experience in other organisations shows that the steps outlined above, coupled with planned work in the summer on continuous improvement, provide a sound basis for the future.

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the administrative and implementation costs are for the Performance and Development System for his Department, broken down by the costs of *(a)* compulsory interim reviews, *(b)* compulsory self reviews, *(c)* compulsory personal development plans, *(d)* preparation and *(e)* training of the new staff. [165900]

Mr. Pond: The Performance and Development System (PDS) replaced seven legacy systems. Most of the features of PDS are not new, and existed in previous legacy arrangements. These have not been costed previously, all good employers have appraisal arrangements in line with Investors in People standards. While there have been additional costs this year, as there would be in any organisation introducing a new policy these have not been excessive, around 2–3 hours for each member of staff. We expect this investment in performance management and training (mostly using e-learning) to result in improved performance.

Norwich Pension Centre

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many applications are waiting to be processed at the Norwich Pension Centre. [166381]

Malcolm Wicks: As at 2 April, there were 6,228 applications for Pension Credit waiting to be processed at Norwich Pension Centre, of which 3,142 were awaiting further information or evidence from the customer. This represents a normal head of work.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many letters and e-mails from customers were awaiting a response at the Norwich Pension Centre on 1 April. [166382]

Malcolm Wicks: Norwich Pension Centre is the largest Centre in the country, having a Pension Credit case load alone of 184, 000.

The centre currently receives on average 11,490 written customer communications per week, consisting chiefly of notifications of changes of individual circumstances, but including customer complaints. While not all of these communications necessitate a reply to the customer, most will require an intervention to the computer records in order to assess any action that may be required.

Norwich Pension Centre currently has 22,082 of these notifications outstanding, which for this particular Pension Centre, represents a normal two weeks head of work.

Over-70s

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the total number of pensioner households with one or more householders over the age of 70 years, within the constituency of Middlesbrough, South and Cleveland, East, who will benefit from the Chancellor's recently announced council tax allowance. [165867]

Malcolm Wicks: The latest available data shows 7,870 households in the parliamentary constituency of Middlesbrough, South and Cleveland, East with at least one resident aged 70 or over. We expect the 2004–05 figures to be similar.

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.

2. Any residence found to have 4 or more occupants is not included in these figures as it is assumed to be a Residential Care Nursing Home.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, winter fuel payments data winter 2002–03 100 per cent. sample.

Over-80s

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioner households with one or more householders over the age of 80 years, within the constituency of Middlesbrough, South and Cleveland, East, have received the £300 winter fuel allowance. [165866]

Malcolm Wicks: The information requested is not yet available. However 3,385 people aged 80 or over in the parliamentary constituency of Middlesbrough, South and Cleveland, East so far have received a winter fuel payment this winter 2003–04.

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest five.

2. Please note that these figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run ie they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claims had not been received by the Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

Pension Credit

Mr. David Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the cost is of the recent "Pick it Up, It's Yours" Pension Credit advertising campaign, broken down by *(a)* television, *(b)* radio, *(c)* newspaper, *(d)* poster and *(e)* other forms of advertising. [166475]

Malcolm Wicks: The total cost of publicity for the "Pick It Up, It's Yours" campaign was £15,580,000 for the 2003–2004 financial year. This included the following advertising media costs:

TV	3,570,864
National and regional press	6,086,146
Radio	123,168

The campaign also included other communications media. Commercial poster sites have not been used for this campaign. However, local publicity posters, e.g for display in community premises have been produced. The costs for these cannot be disaggregated.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average cost was for a full page pension credit advertisement in each publication used during the "Pick it Up, It's Yours", advertising campaign. [166540]

Malcolm Wicks: The advertising media for the "Pick It Up, It's Yours" campaign was procured using the Government's publicity agency COI Communications. This achieves maximum value for money by exploiting economies of scale across Government departments to negotiate the most favourable rates.

The average cost for a full page advertisement is therefore commercially confidential and is not disclosed in line with Part 2, Paragraph 13 of the Code of Practice on access to Government information.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which advertising agency was used for the recent "Pick It Up, It's Yours" pension credit advertising campaign; and how much they received in payment for their services. [166541]

Malcolm Wicks: The advertising agency used for this campaign is Delaney Lund Knox Warren (DLKW). They received an estimated £815,171.06 (ex VAT) for their services. This figure, however, is based upon aggregate spending across all advertising managed by COI Communications, the Government's publicity agency. It will not be finalised until an overall agency reconciliation is completed at the end of May 2004.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 19 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 1081W, on pension credit, how much of the estimated expenditure for 2004–05 represents back-dated entitlement for 2003–04; and what assumptions are made about the basis on which the savings credit threshold will be uprated in 2005. [166648]

Malcolm Wicks: It is estimated that in 2004–05, £190 million will be spent on backdated Pension Credit relating to 2003–04 entitlement.

For the purposes of expenditure planning it has been assumed the Savings Credit Threshold will be increased in line with the Retail Prices Index. The actual uprating of Pension Credit will be determined in the annual uprating order.

Pension Forecasts

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many automatic state pension forecasts his Department has issued to the self-employed since May 2003. [166236]

Malcolm Wicks: To date 864,901 automatic state pension forecasts have been issued to the self-employed since the exercise began in May 2003.

Pensions

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on his Department's policy on encouraging people already receiving benefit to apply for their retirement pension. [166477]

Malcolm Wicks: We write to people already receiving benefit around four months before they reach State Pension age to invite them to claim State Pension. However, the responsibility for claiming State Pension lies with the person concerned.

The benefit already in payment may be affected when the person reaches State Pension age. It may be replaced by State Pension once claimed, or be adjusted to take account of the State Pension.

If the claim for State Pension is not made in time then a claim can be made subsequently and entitlement backdated for up to three months.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Birkenhead have made use of the Sure Start maternity grant. [166514]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the following table.

Sure Start Maternity Grants for Wirral Social Fund District/ Jobcentre Plus District

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	1,445	1,240
2001–02	1,704	1,388
2002–03	1,956	1,597
2003–04	1,945	1,568

Notes:
1. Data is not available by Parliamentary Constituency. Birkenhead Parliamentary Constituency is part of Wirral Jobcentre Plus District, which was previously Wirral Social Fund District.
2. Sure Start Maternity Grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 has been excluded for data protection reasons.
3. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.
Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Birkenhead have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [166509]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of people who have benefited from a Winter Fuel Payment in the Birkenhead constituency is in the following table. Figures for 1997–98 and 1998–99 are not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	12,610
2000–01	13,845
2001–02	13,960
2002–03	14,240
2003–04	14,375

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five.
2. Please note that these figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.
3. Figures are not held for the first two years of the scheme as payments were only made to those on certain benefits. Figures have been kept since it was known the scheme would be extended to all those aged 60 or over.
Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample.

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Servants

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many established civil servants were appointed in March. [165505]

Mr. Alexander: Data on civil servants recruited during a specific month is not collected centrally.

Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service is collected from Departments and Agencies twice yearly, in april and October.

Public Service Employers Forum

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the *(a)* resource budget, *(b)* administration costs and *(c)* staff numbers were for 2003 of the Public Service Employers Forum. [165123]

Mr. Alexander: The Public Service Employers' Forum brings together around 15 senior employers from across the public sector to share good practice on pay and workforce reform in order to improve the delivery of public services. It meets quarterly and is supported by 0.3 Full time equivalent member of staff provided by the Office of Public Services Reform. Additional administration and resource costs in 2003 were minimal as meetings were generally held within the Cabinet Office and those attending did so on a voluntary basis.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Capital Modernisation Fund

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money was allocated to Birkenhead from the capital modernisation fund. [166324]

Alan Johnson: The Department for Education and Skills does not hold this information centrally. Capital Modernisation Fund is allocated by project and not by area.

School Closures

David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many rural schools have closed in each year since 1997. [165588]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not have reliable data on the number of rural school closures in England for individual years before 1998. The number of rural small schools approved for closure from 1998, when the presumption against closure of rural schools was introduced in England, is as follows:

Year	*No.*
1998	5
1999	2
2000	2
2001	3
2002	5
2003	12
2004	6

In 2003 a new, wider, definition of rural was introduced with the result that the proportion of schools in England classified as rural has increased.

The Secretary of State's guidance makes clear that there should be a presumption against the closure of rural schools. This does not mean that no rural school should ever close, but the case for closure should be strong and the proposals clearly in the best interests of educational provision in the area.

School Computers

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Birkenhead in each of the last seven years. [166321]

Alan Johnson: My department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However Birkenhead is in Wirral LEA and since 1998–99, schools in Wirral have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

Year	*Allocation to Wirral LEA*
1998–1999	671,532
1999–2000	468,826
2000–2001	1,077,224
2001–2002	1,529,393
2002–2003	2,117,961
2003–04	2,197,120

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Wirral, South in each of the last seven years. [166622]

Alan Johnson: My department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However Wirral, South is in Wirral LEA and since 1998–99, schools in Wirral have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

Year	*Allocation to Wirral LEA*
1998–1999	671,532
1999–2000	468,826
2000–2001	1,077,224
2001–2002	1,529,393
2002–2003	2,117,961
2003–2004	2,197,120

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in each local education authority had special educational needs in the latest year for which information is available, broken down by *(a)* statemented special educational needs and *(b)* non-statemented special educational needs. [165585]

Margaret Hodge: The data requested are shown in the following table.

All schools[1]: number of pupils with special educational needs—January 2003—by local education authority area

	Number of pupils with a statement of SEN	*Percentage pupils with a statement of SEN*	*Number of pupils with SEN without a statement*	*Percentage pupils with SEN without a statement*
England	250,545	3.0	1,169,780	14.0
North East	13,933	3.2	61,807	14.2
Darlington	527	3.1	2,248	13.2
Durham	3,103	3.8	12,593	15.5
Gateshead	819	2.6	3,885	12.3
Hartlepool	431	2.6	2,612	15.6
Middlesbrough	950	3.8	4,428	17.8
Newcastle upon Tyne	1,044	2.3	6,094	13.7
North Tyneside	1,131	3.4	4,333	13.2
Northumberland	1,713	3.3	5,182	9.9
Redcar and Cleveland	656	2.6	4,389	17.5
South Tyneside	803	3.2	3,388	13.4
Stockton-on-Tees	1,078	3.2	4,284	12.7
Sunderland	1,678	3.4	8,371	17.0
North West	38,164	3.2	159,160	13.5
Blackburn with Darwen	919	3.2	4,486	15.5
Blackpool	745	3.3	4,005	17.7
Bolton	1,572	3.1	6,939	13.9
Bury	991	3.1	4,045	12.7
Cheshire	3,614	3.1	11,525	10.0
Cumbria	2,701	3.3	10,707	13.2
Halton	937	4.6	2,846	14.1
Knowsley	1,101	3.9	5,868	20.9
Lancashire	7,248	3.9	23,566	12.6
Liverpool	2,229	2.8	14,744	18.5
Manchester	2,199	3.0	11,194	15.1
Oldham	752	1.8	5,116	12.0
Rochdale	1,172	3.2	4,838	13.1
Salford	925	2.5	5,150	13.8
Sefton	1,283	2.5	6,773	13.4
St. Helens	1,199	4.0	3,843	12.7
Stockport	1,384	2.9	6,632	13.7

All schools[1]: number of pupils with special educational needs—January 2003—by local education authority area

	Number of pupils with a statement of SEN	Percentage pupils with a statement of SEN	Number of pupils with SEN without a statement	Percentage pupils with SEN without a statement
Tameside	1,095	2.9	4,790	12.5
Trafford	863	2.2	4,494	11.6
Warrington	1,060	3.2	3,971	12.1
Wigan	2,041	4.1	7,181	14.3
Wirral	2,134	3.7	6,447	11.3
Yorkshire and the Humber	26,253	3.0	112,944	13.1
Barnsley	1,084	3.1	5,125	14.4
Bradford	2,620	2.8	14,266	15.5
Calderdale	1,136	3.1	3,556	9.7
Doncaster	1,914	3.7	5,584	10.7
East Riding of Yorkshire	1,425	2.7	5,038	9.5
Kingston upon Hull, City of	1,035	2.4	5,954	13.9
Kirklees	2,540	3.8	8,820	13.2
Leeds	3,800	3.2	14,644	12.2
North East Lincolnshire	1,034	3.7	5,640	20.0
North Lincolnshire	969	3.8	4,524	17.6
North Yorkshire	2,541	2.6	10,575	11.0
Rotherham	1,948	4.2	7,074	15.1
Sheffield	2,058	2.6	12,827	15.9
Wakefield	1,450	2.5	6,039	10.4
York	699	2.6	3,278	12.1
East Midlands	19,412	2.7	98,678	13.7
Derby	1,448	3.5	5,291	12.9
Derbyshire	4,163	3.4	12,841	10.5
Leicester	1,874	3.7	9,179	17.9
Leicestershire	3,088	3.0	10,702	10.4
Lincolnshire	3,452	3.2	15,499	14.4
Northamptonshire	3,350	2.9	20,615	18.0
Nottingham	582	1.3	7,938	17.6
Nottinghamshire	1,278	1.0	15,928	12.6
Rutland	177	2.5	685	9.7
West Midlands	29,853	3.2	127,594	13.7
Birmingham	6,120	3.3	26,426	14.1
Coventry	1,564	2.9	8,702	16.3
Dudley	1,269	2.5	7,104	13.8
Herefordshire	918	3.5	4,027	15.2
Sandwell	1,456	2.8	9,238	17.8
Shropshire	1,471	3.2	6,129	13.4
Solihull	858	2.1	4,764	11.7
Staffordshire	5,741	4.2	14,504	10.6
Stoke-on-Trent	1,424	3.7	5,539	14.5
Telford and Wrekin	1,278	4.4	4,334	14.8
Walsall	1,391	2.7	6,579	12.9
Warwickshire	2,577	3.1	13,984	16.6
Wolverhampton	1,214	2.7	4,785	10.8
Worcestershire	2,572	2.8	11,479	12.7
East of England	24,498	2.7	120,301	13.1
Bedfordshire	2,360	3.3	8,872	12.5
Cambridgeshire	2,918	3.4	10,761	12.4
Essex	4,663	2.2	25,280	11.8
Hertfordshire	4,249	2.1	23,855	11.9
Luton	789	2.4	5,071	15.4
Norfolk	3,661	3.0	19,899	16.5
Peterborough	1,021	3.5	5,299	18.0
Southend-on-Sea	824	2.9	3,508	12.2
Suffolk	3,421	3.1	13,779	12.4
Thurrock	592	2.6	3,977	17.4
London	34,601	2.9	186,697	15.5
Inner London	12,962	3.0	74,111	17.1
Camden	882	3.1	4,329	15.0
City of London	3	0.2	87	4.4
Hackney	929	2.9	6,613	20.5
Hammersmith and Fulham	833	3.6	3,901	17.1
Haringey	1,006	2.8	7,010	19.2
Islington	741	3.0	5,015	20.5
Kensington and Chelsea	309	1.4	2,050	9.5
Lambeth	1,068	3.4	6,054	19.5
Lewisham	1,252	3.3	7,042	18.3
Newham	1,112	2.2	8,115	15.9
Southwark	1,394	3.3	7,649	18.2
Tower Hamlets	1,490	3.9	5,813	15.2
Wandsworth	1,310	3.4	6,742	17.7
Westminster	633	2.4	3,691	13.9
Outer London	21,639	2.8	112,586	14.6
Barking and Dagenham	877	2.9	4,207	13.7
Barnet	1,443	2.7	9,251	17.0
Bexley	1,227	3.0	5,934	14.4
Brent	1,131	2.7	7,330	17.5
Bromley	1,720	3.3	6,545	12.5
Croydon	1,193	2.0	8,030	13.4
Ealing	1,259	2.6	7,780	16.0
Enfield	1,282	2.5	8,279	16.4
Greenwich	1,402	3.7	7,906	20.8
Harrow	910	2.7	5,045	15.0
Havering	987	2.6	3,437	9.0
Hillingdon	1,503	3.2	5,379	11.6
Hounslow	1,247	3.4	6,738	18.2
Kingston upon Thames	544	2.2	2,949	11.9
Merton	891	3.3	4,120	15.3
Redbridge	1,092	2.3	5,526	11.5
Richmond upon Thames	626	2.2	2,544	9.0
Sutton	975	3.0	3,655	11.1
Waltham Forest	1,330	3.5	7,931	21.0
South East	40,074	3.0	197,052	14.9
Bracknell Forest	479	2.7	2,266	12.7
Brighton and Hove	1,360	3.8	5,425	15.0
Buckinghamshire	2,420	2.9	9,813	11.6
East Sussex	2,462	3.3	11,078	14.7
Hampshire	4,663	2.4	28,494	14.8
Isle of Wight	785	3.8	2,978	14.5
Kent	7,956	3.4	42,742	18.3
Medway	1,480	3.2	9,645	20.7
Milton Keynes	1,200	3.2	5,175	14.0
Oxfordshire	2,526	2.5	11,789	11.7
Portsmouth	738	2.5	5,092	17.5
Reading	613	3.0	2,710	13.3
Slough	617	3.0	3,350	16.1
Southampton	590	1.8	7,163	22.5
Surrey	5,579	3.1	24,073	13.4
West Berkshire	1,144	4.1	3,296	11.8
West Sussex	3,940	3.3	15,853	13.4
Windsor and Maidenhead	657	2.6	3,395	13.5
Wokingham	865	3.2	2,715	10.0
South West	23,757	3.0	105,547	13.3
Bath and North East Somerset	860	2.9	3,249	10.9
Bournemouth	377	1.7	3,301	14.4
Bristol, City of	1,897	3.2	8,210	14.0
Cornwall	3,139	4.1	11,837	15.4
Devon	3,280	3.0	12,127	11.3
Dorset	1,937	3.1	10,077	16.3
Gloucestershire	2,730	2.9	13,253	13.9
Isles of Scilly	5	1.8	23	8.5
North Somerset	883	3.0	3,708	12.7
Plymouth	1,581	3.8	5,732	13.7
Poole	572	2.7	3,083	14.8
Somerset	1,808	2.2	9,607	11.8
South Gloucestershire	1,217	2.9	4,951	11.7
Swindon	876	3.0	4,339	14.7
Torbay	843	4.1	2,911	14.1
Wiltshire	1,752	2.4	9,139	12.5

[1] Includes maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, pupil referral units, independent schools, City Technology Colleges, City Academies and non-maintained special schools.

TRANSPORT

Airport Capacity (South-East)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the first new runway to be available to serve the south-east of England. [166543]

Mr. Darling: "The Future Development of Air Transport" White Paper explains that the Government support the development as soon as possible (we expect around 2011–12) of a wide-spaced second runway at Stansted, as the first new runway in the south-east. It will be for airport operators to decide how to take forward plans for airport expansion in the light of the framework set out in the White Paper.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether comprehensive simulation of the airspace management implications of possible runway development options for the south-east of England was undertaken prior to the publication of the Aviation White Paper on 16 December 2003; and what plans *(a)* National Air Traffic Services and *(b)* the Civil Aviation Authority have to undertake such a simulation. [166544]

Mr. Darling: Yes. CAA/DAP and NATS undertook as part of the SERAS Study preliminary high-level airspace modelling, simulating potential airport development packages. The broad conclusion reached from the modelling work was that for all scenarios considered the additional ATMs could be accommodated with changes envisaged to the structure and management of airspace within the London Terminal Control Area (LTMA).

Office of the Traffic Commissioner (Eastbourne)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many cases have been investigated by the Office of the Traffic Commissioner in Eastbourne following anonymous tip-offs in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003. [164478]

Mr. Jamieson: Investigations are carried out on behalf of the Traffic Commissioner in Eastbourne by the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency's (VOSA).

In 2003 VOSA received 22 anonymous tip-offs. All such information received is investigated by VOSA's Intelligence Officers and appropriate action taken. This may involve reference to the Office of the Traffic Commissioner for further action. VOSA does not hold information on the number of anonymous tip-offs for 2001 and 2002.

Crossrail

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when he expects to announce his decision on the Crossrail project; and if he will make a statement; [166455]

(2) when he will publish the Montague Report into the Crossrail project; and if he will make a statement. [166456]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 18 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 404W, to the hon. Member for Romford (Mr. Rosindell).

Cycle Lanes

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Wirral, South since 1997. [166633]

Mr. McNulty: 8.34 miles of new cycle lanes have been constructed in Wirral, South since 1997.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166365]

Mr. McNulty: The Department reviews its software and hardware assets regularly to ensure they meet the organisation's business needs.

Office Automation and Desktop Software:

The Department is currently undertaking a project to upgrade our Microsoft Windows NT and Office 97 software to the XP versions. Licences to use the software have already been purchased under the Office of Government Commerce's (OGC's) Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with Microsoft.

Electronic Document and Record Management (EDRM):

We are negotiating a site licence for the Oracle relational database software to support the DfT system. We intend to use the OGC MOU with Oracle for this purchase. This will licence the use of the standard Oracle software for all DfT users.

Other software:

The SAP Finance system, the Peoplesoft HR system and our Group Wise e-mail system are all covered by support agreements that include software upgrades and helpdesk support.

Hardware:

It is expected that the move to Windows XP will not require any fundamental change to PC hardware, which will continue to be replaced on an "as needs" basis, with desktop hardware replaced when it has reached the end of its useful life.

Driving Instructors

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will lay before the House regulations requiring approved driving instructors to pass a hazard perception test. [166763]

Mr. Jamieson: As announced in the Adjournment debate on 14 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 936–40, we plan to lay regulations before the House towards the end of the year to introduce the computer-based assessment for approved driving instructors.

East London Line

Jim Dowd: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to give final approval for the construction of the East London Line extensions. [166483]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Battersea (Mr. Linton) on 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1159W.

Highways Budgets (Compensation Payments)

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much local authorities with highway responsibilities paid in claims for personal injury or liability, as a proportion of their total highways budgets, in 2002–03. [165895]

Mr. McNulty: This information is not collated centrally from local authorities, although we are looking at whether and how we could do so in the future.

However, the Department for Transport carried out a survey last year. This found that at present local authorities do not collect information on compensation paid on a consistent basis. The best estimate from the survey was that between £50 million and £75 million was paid by local authorities in respect of compensation claims related to highway maintenance in 2002–03. This represents between 2 per cent. to 3 per cent. of the total capital and revenue funding of £2.53 billion made available for local highway maintenance in 2002–03 (not including PFI credits).

Light Rail Schemes

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 26 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 36W, on light rail schemes, if he will list the light rail schemes that he expects will be under construction by 2010, with their expected *(a)* cost, *(b)* construction start dates and *(c)* completion dates; and what the stages of (i) appraisal, (ii) assessment and (iii) procurement will be. [166005]

Mr. McNulty: Five schemes are currently under development. Of these two have received provisional approval from my Department. They are:

Midland Metro extension—Birmingham to Five Ways and Wednesbury to Brierley Hill (estimated total cost £227 million; expected construction start 2005 and expected completion 2008); and

Merseytram Line 1 (estimated total cost £225 million; expected construction start 2005 and expected completion 2007).

Three schemes have received approval but the estimated cost subsequently increased. The value for money of the schemes therefore needs to be reappraised. They are:

Manchester Metrolink Phase 3;

South Hampshire Rapid Transit System; and

Leeds Supertram.

Bids have also been received for Merseytram Line 2 and extensions to the Nottingham Express Transit. The Department is also in discussions with promoters about further extensions to the Midland Metro, Sheffield Supertram, Tyne and Wear Metro, Merseytram, Manchester Metrolink.

Currently the Department's approach to the assessment of appraisals of light rail schemes includes:

Promoters of major local transport schemes submit their bids for central funds as part of their Local Transport Plan (LTP).

The business case supporting the bid should be written in accordance with the Department's New Approach to Appraisal (NATA), details of which can be found on the Department's appraisal website: www.webtag.org.uk. NATA involves assessing the impact of the proposal against the Government's five objectives for transport: economy, safety, integration, accessibility, and the environment. The NATA approach includes the analysis of both monetised and non-monetised costs and benefits.

The Department's officials examine the case presented for funding, including the benefits, costs, risks, affordability and public acceptability. This usually requires a period of dialogue with the promoters in addition to the information submitted through the written business case.

The Department issues guidance to promoters of schemes to help them prepare a business case that meets the Department's requirements.

A pre-procurement business case is needed to secure Provision View for funding, which is dependent on the necessary statutory powers being obtained, and the scheme design or costs not changing substantially as a result of further work to obtain powers and the procurement process.

Once statutory powers have been obtained and tender received from bidders an updated business case is needed if details of the scheme have changed to secure Full Approval for scheme funding.

The Department leaves the choice of procurement method to the promoter of a scheme, although on larger schemes it will usually consult with the promoter on the approach being taken from an early stage. Promoters may present a case for PFI or capital funding via the same business case process. Capital funding for public transport schemes is usually split between section 56 grant and borrowing approvals.

Maidenhead/Twyford Stations

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many passengers use *(a)* Maidenhead and *(b)* Twyford stations at (i) morning peak, (ii) evening peak and (iii) off-peak hours. [165858]

Mr. Darling: The latest data collected for the 2001 London Area Transport Survey are as follows:

Number of passengers boarding trains at each station

	Maidenhead	*Twyford*
Morning peak (06:00–10:00)	2,171	1,017
Evening peak (17:00–20:00)	1,034	172
Off-peak	2,172	353
Total	5,377	1,542

National Air Traffic Services

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the reasons for the resignation of the Chief Executive of National Air Traffic Services; and how much time was left to run on the former Chief Executive's contract of employment; [166527]

(2) what payments have been made to the former Chief Executive of National Air Traffic Services on his early departure; [166528]

(3) if he will make a statement on the relevant experience of the new Chief Executive of National Air Traffic Services, with particular reference to *(a)* the air transport industry and *(b)* air traffic control services. [166529]

Mr. Darling: The current contract of the Chief Executive of National Air Traffic Services Ltd ends in June. He will leave the company then and be replaced by

Paul Barron. Decisions on necessary skills, qualifications and disbursements are matters for the NATS Board.

Navigational Aids

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much was contributed by the General Lighthouse Fund to navigational aids in the territorial waters of the Republic of Ireland in each of the last 10 years; and what the future estimate is of contributions over the next three years. [166056]

Mr. Jamieson: The contribution from the General Lighthouse Fund to the provision of navigational aids in the Republic of Ireland is as follows:

	GBP £ million
1994–05	4.8
1995–06	4.7
1996–07	4.3
1997–08	4.0
1998–09	4.3
1999–2000	4.9
2000–01	4.4
2001–02	5.5
2002–03	5.8
2003–04	5.9
Average	4.8

The contribution is expected to be in the region of £6 million to £7 million per annum over the next three years dependent on exchange rates and decisions on capital investment.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress has been made with negotiations with the Irish Government on the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [166057]

Mr. Jamieson: We accept that the Republic of Ireland should meet the full costs of provision of their aids to navigation. We remain committed to renegotiating the current agreement to achieve this and are arranging to meet the Irish Government in May to take the matter forward.

Road Safety

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will allow safety camera partnerships in Suffolk to release funding raised from speed cameras for local road safety projects that do not involve speed camera installations; and if he will make a statement. [165583]

Mr. Jamieson: I have no plans to change the current policy that receipts from conditional offer fixed penalty speeding fines may be used only for the installation and operation of approved safety cameras. Other investment in road safety measures is funded within local authorities' and national road programmes.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries there were in road traffic accidents in Suffolk in each year since 1997. [165584]

Mr. Jamieson: The following table shows numbers of deaths and serious injuries in road accidents in Suffolk in each year from 1997 to 2002. Figures for 2003 are not yet available.

	Killed	*Seriously injured*
2002	43	360
2001	53	415
2000	56	468
1999	48	432
1998	23	364
1997	43	440

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 18 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 408W, what percentage of the money raised from speed cameras within Suffolk since April 2003 were *(a)* used for the installation and operation of approved safety camera installations and *(b)* passed to the Consolidated Fund. [165689]

Mr. Jamieson: Safety camera partnership accounts are audited annually. This information will be available when the audited accounts for the Suffolk partnership are completed later this year.

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many accidents have occurred on the A4 between Maidenhead and Reading in each year since 1995; how many resulted in *(a)* personal injuries and *(b)* death; how many involved drunk driving; how many resulted in prosecution and how many of the casualties were pedestrians. [165859]

Mr. Darling: The following table shows the number of accidents on the A4 between Maidenhead and Reading which resulted in either personal injury or death; the number of accidents where at least one driver was found to be over the drink drive limit on taking a roadside breath test; and the number of pedestrian casualties in accidents on this stretch of the A4, in each year from 1995 to 2002.

We cannot identify how many of the drivers over the drink drive limit were prosecuted as the Home Office does not provide prosecution data for individual roads.

	All accidents		*Drink/drive accidents*		
	Fatal	*Involving personal injury but not death*	*Fatal*	*Involving personal injury but not death*	*Pedestrian casualties*
1995	0	33	0	3	1
1996	0	25	0	2	0
1997	1	18	0	1	1
1998	0	27	0	0	0
1999	0	22	0	0	2
2000	0	27	0	0	1
2001	1	13	0	0	1
2002	1	15	0	0	0
All	3	180	0	6	6

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many injuries have been experienced by pedestrians as a result of accidents with cyclists in the last three years. [165961]

Dr. Howells: The following table shows the number of pedestrian casualties who were struck by cyclists in road accidents for the last three years for which figures are available. These figures are published each year in Table 23 of "Road Casualties Great Britain: the Annual Report".

Number of pedestrian casualties who were hit by pedal cycles: 2000–02

	2000	*2001*	*2002*
Killed	3	0	4
Seriously injured	66	60	47
Slight	225	198	158
Total	294	258	209

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries of pedestrians have been caused by accidents with buses in the last three years. [165962]

Dr. Howells: The following table shows the number of pedestrians who were killed or seriously injured when struck by a bus or a coach in a road accident in each of the last three years for which figures are available. These figures are published each year in Table 23 of "Road Casualties Great Britain: the Annual Report".

Pedestrian casualties by severity in accidents with buses: 2000–02

	2000	*2001*	*2002*
Killed	60	79	55
Seriously Injured	356	351	384

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 18 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 408W, on safety camera partnerships, if he will amend the rules of the safety camera partnerships so that funding can be released to fund local road safety projects, including Bikesafe; and if he will make a statement. [166034]

Mr. Jamieson: Investment in road safety projects is funded within local authorities' and national road programmes. I have no plans to amend rules for the safety camera cost recover scheme in order to broaden the scope of what can be funded from the fine receipts.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 22 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 1377W, on the road network, what the *(a)* date and *(b)* location of the most recent Government funded trial of anti-glare devices undertaken in the UK was. [166102]

Mr. Jamieson: The most recent Government funded trial of anti-glare devices in the UK on trunk roads and motorways was undertaken

(a) between 1 February 1974 and 31 January 1977

(b) on the M6 between junctions 1 and 4.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many sites there are on the UK motorway and trunk road network of chevron markings, designed to ensure motorists keep their distance from the car in front; and what their locations are. [166317]

Mr. Jamieson: There are chevron markings at six sites, namely:

M5 J22–21 Northbound carriageway between Somerset/North Somerset border south of Weston super Mare.

M62 Westbound between J23–22.

M6 J18–19 Northbound and Southbound carriageways.

M56 J12–14 Northbound and Southbound carriageways.

M6 J32–33 Southbound carriageway only.

M1 J16–17 Southbound carriageway only.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what research his Department has commissioned into the effectiveness of chevrons designed to encourage motorists to keep their distance from one another. [166318]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department of Transport commissioned TRL in the early 1990s to undertake two trials to investigate the effectiveness of using 'Chevron' guidance markings on the road surface to encourage motorists to maintain a safe distance from one another. The research showed that they were effective in reducing vehicles following too closely. The chevron markings and their associated signs are prescribed in the Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2002.

Network Rail

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his future plans for Network Rail. [R] [166532]

Mr. McNulty: I refer the hon. Member to the Statement made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State on 19 January 2004. He will publish his proposals in the summer.

Speed Cameras

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much revenue has been raised in fines imposed as a result of speed cameras in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough since 1997. [162332]

Mr. Jamieson: Information is not available on the amount of fines paid following speed offences detected by camera, the following table shows the number of fixed penalties and court fines ordered to be paid for the offence of 'speeding detected by camera' in the calendar years 1997 to 2001, for the Metropolitan and City of London police forces combined. It is not possible from the data collected centrally to identify each London borough. Not all fines and fixed penalties will have been paid.

Fixed penalty and court proceedings data for speeding offences detected bycameras[1, 2] within Greater London[3], 1997–2001

	Fixed Penalties		Court Proceedings[4]		
	Number of tickets[5]	Estimated fines[6] (£)	Number of fines	Total amount of fine (£)	Average fine[5]
1997	15,300	612,900	2,500	259,600	102
1998	14,200	566,200	2,900	356,800	125
1999	13,000	521,900	2,600	288,400	111
2000	44,100	1,910,700	2,200	256,700	115
2001	52,100	3,128,600	4,500	513,700	114

[1] Automatic cameras until 1998, all camera types from 1999.
[2] Offences under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 and The Motor Vehicles (Speed Limits on Motorways) Regulations 1973.
[3] The Metropolitan and City of London police combined.
[4] Includes cases where fixed penalty notices were originally issued but not paid and subsequently referred to court.
[5] Paid i.e. no further action.
[6] Estimate based on £40 fixed penalty charge to October 2000. From November 2000 the penalty was raised to £60.

Home Office information for 2002 will be available in late spring 2004.

Station Improvements

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 26 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 41W, on station improvements, what plans the Government have for delivering improvements to the stations not addressed by the Modern Facilities at Stations scheme and which were identified as being in need of improvement in the Strategic Rail Authority's original target to improve 1,000 stations by 2004. [166006]

Mr. McNulty: Any extension of the Modern Facilities at Stations Scheme (MFAS) beyond the 68 stations referred to in my previous answer is a matter for the SRA, which would consider such an extension along with their other priorities.

Transport Services (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Birkenhead has been since 1997. [166496]

Dr. Howells: The available information relates to local authority areas. For Wirral metropolitan district, which includes the constituency of Birkenhead, the number of deaths in road accidents rose by 20 per cent. from 10 in 1997 to 12 in 2002, the latest year for which information is available; and the number of serious injuries fell by 3 per cent., from 178 in 1997 to 173 in 2002. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituencies will become available in the summer. I shall write to my right hon. Friend with figures for Birkenhead and place a copy of the letter in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rural bus services in Birkenhead are supported by rural bus grants. [166498]

Dr. Howells: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is paid to local transport authorities, in the case of Birkenhead this is the Merseyside Passenger Transport Executive (PTE). It is for the authority to decide which services should be supported with the grant. We understand from the PTE that no rural bus services in Birkenhead are provided by RBSG.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of Birkenhead. [166500]

Dr. Howells: Merseytravel Passenger Transport Executive (PTE) is responsible for improving services and facilities for passengers on the Merseyrail network. Network Rail is responsible for maintaining and renewing the infrastructure.

The PTE has plans for a number of improvements over the next 10 years. These include refurbishment of Hamilton Square station and enhancement of bus/rail interchange facilities; major rebuild of Bidston, making the station fully accessible and developing a strategic park and ride site served by the station; electrification of the line between Bidston and Woodchurch including upgrade of Upton Station and introduction of associated park and ride facilities; and investigation into making Birkenhead North, Birkenhead Park, Rock Ferry and Green Lane stations fully compliant with the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

A new waiting room and Customer Information Services at Birkenhead Central, together with new Customer Information Services at Green Lane, are being provided through the Strategic Rail Authority's Modern Facilities at Stations Programme. In addition, Merseyrail rolling stock will be fully refurbished by the end of 2004. The refurbishment includes the provision of CCTV, dedicated wheelchair spaces and cycle racks.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many responses he has received to his consultation on the implementation of the Working Time Directive for mobile workers in the transport sector. [165972]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has received 105 responses to the consultation exercise, from both sides of industry and other interested stakeholders.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

British Coal Corporation

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether, following the dissolution of the British Coal Corporation on 26 March, all the corporation's liabilities will be fully met by her Department. [164949]

Mr. Timms: I can confirm that upon the dissolution of the British Coal Corporation on 27 March all its remaining liabilities were transferred to the Department of Industry, which will now have direct responsibility for their timely discharge.

Broadband

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment has been made of the implications for energy demand of the rolling out of the broadband communications programme. [166227]

Mr. Timms: Under the Market Transformation Programme (MTP), which is managed by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra), the Government has issued a Briefing Note to provide a basic analysis and projections for the energy consumption of Broadband technologies in the UK market.

The Briefing Note (BNBROAD1: Energy requirement implications of broadband communication technology 2003–2010) is published on the MPT website: http://www:mtprog.com/approvedbriefingnotes/EnergyRequirementImplicationsofBroadbandCommunicationTechnology20032010.aspx?kintUniqueID=254.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in her Department. [166371]

Ms Hewitt: Updating the computer hardware and standard software packages in my Department is the responsibility of our ICT Service Provider. My Department has outsourced the provision of ICT services under a PFI contract. This provides for the updating of computer hardware to an agreed schedule, and the updating of standard computer software packages to keep them to a level that is supported by software suppliers.

Energy Supplies

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment she has made of *(a)* gas and *(b)* oil reserves in the North Sea. [165079]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* The Department carries out an annual exercise to assess the likely levels of remaining North Sea oil and gas reserves. The results of this exercise are published on DTI's Oil and Gas website at www.og.dti.gov.uk.

The latest estimates are as at the end of 2002 and total remaining reserves (including the undiscovered) are estimated to lie in the range of some 934—2984 billion cubic metres of gas and 951—3606 million tonnes of oil.

Updated estimates, of remaining reserves as at end 2003, are due to be published on the website this summer.

Export Assistance

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how her Department assists North West businesses to export. [154338]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Government assistance is provided by UK Trade & Investment, a joint DTI and FCO organisation with its own Chief Executive. I have Ministerial responsibility, reporting to the Secretaries of State for both Departments.

UK Trade & Investment delivers through Business Links in the English Regions. Companies which would benefit from export support can access a full range of services from market research to grants to exhibit at trade fairs and exhibitions overseas via their local Business Link International Trade Team. In doing so they gain access to UK Trade & Investment's Global Network of over 200 offices in 137 countries.

A key programme, "Passport to Export", aimed at new to export companies, has proved particularly successful. It provides a framework that guides businesses through a structured series of activities including a diagnostic or business healthcheck, bespoke export training, initial market research and a first market visit. Currently around 500 North West companies are on this programme.

Manufacturing

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people were employed in the manufacturing sector in the East Riding of Yorkshire in each year since 1999. [165048]

Jacqui Smith: Latest published data for employment in the manufacturing sector in the East Riding of Yorkshire for years since 1999 is as follows:

Year	*Manufacturing Employment*
1999	21,181
2000	20,536
2001	18,314
2002	17,717

Source:
Annual Business Inquiry

Data for 2003 will be published in December 2004.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Birkenhead have benefited from the national minimum wage. [166494]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for Birkenhead. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999.

The DTI estimates that between 210,000 and 240,000 people in the North West stand to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the National Minimum Wage.

Nuclear Decommissioning

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effect of the cost of nuclear decommissioning over the next 10 years on the price of energy to consumers. [165501]

Mr. Timms: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1180W.

Nuclear Materials (Security)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions she has had with the Office of Civil Nuclear Security in respect of the adequacy of security arrangements *(a)* at nuclear installations and *(b)* for nuclear materials in transit. [166037]

Mr. Timms: My officials are in frequent contact with the Office for Civil Nuclear Security about security arrangements at civil nuclear sites and in respect of nuclear materials in transit.

It is not Government policy to disclose the substance of those discussions since such information may be of potential use to terrorists. However, the Director of Civil Nuclear Security publishes an annual report on the state of security in the civil nuclear industry and the effectiveness of security regulation, and meets me to discuss this. His next report is due this summer.

Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the role of the International Atomic Energy Agency in the verification of the nuclear safeguard arrangements required under the Non-Proliferation Treaty. [165803]

Nigel Griffiths: The DTI provides the UK Governor to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and through membership of the IAEA Board of Governors the UK takes a full part in considering the implementation and development of IAEA safeguards. Since weaknesses in the then existing system of safeguards were exposed in the early 1990s, I am advised the IAEA has developed new and powerful safeguards measures, in particular to strengthen its ability to detect undeclared nuclear activities in non-nuclear weapon states. Such measures include those specified in the Model Additional Protocol to safeguards agreements, approved by the Board of Governors in May 1997. The UK has fully supported the work of the IAEA in this regard and our assessment continues to be that its safeguards verification activities are the cornerstone of the global nuclear non-proliferation regime and that a Comprehensive Safeguards Agreement in combination with an additional protocol thereto, should be considered the new verification standard for non-nuclear weapon states under the Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Tribunals

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if she will issue guidance to tribunals on the test of reasonableness in relation to the award of costs between parties; [165695]

(2) what plans she has to review the guidance she gives to tribunals on costs where an employee wins the case but is left with costs higher than the compensation awarded; and if she will make a statement. [165696]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Costs are not awarded at employment tribunals, except in cases where a party or a party's representative has, in conducting the proceedings, acted vexatiously, abusively, disruptively or otherwise unreasonably, or where the bringing or conducting of the case has been misconceived. The awarding of costs is a matter for the employment tribunals themselves, acting in their capacity as independent judicial bodies and in accordance with their regulations and rules of procedure. It is not for my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State to issue guidance on the level of costs that should be awarded in specific cases.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Derelict Land

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will estimate the number of sites designated as derelict land, broken down by region; and what the area of each such site is. [165738]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply.

The table shows the number of derelict land sites reported by local authorities to the 2002 National Land Use Database of Previously Developed Land. It also shows estimated areas of derelict land, after making an allowance for incomplete returns. Because of this allowance average site sizes cannot be calculated by dividing the estimated areas by the numbers of sites reported.

Derelict land and buildings: numbers of sites and area, England 2002

Region	*Number of Sites reported*	*Estimated total area (hectares)*
North East	560	1,630
North West	1,970	5,610
Yorkshire & the Humber	900	3,270
East Midlands	770	2,470
West Midlands	870	1,710
East of England	630	1,740
London	490	460
South East	610	1,430
South West	680	1,630
England	7,470	19,960

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Welfare

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to introduce a ban on animal testing in connection with *(a)* household cleaning products and *(b)* ingredients used in household cleaning products; and if he will make a statement. [165437]

Caroline Flint: The Government currently have no plans to introduce a ban on the use of animals in assessing the safety of household cleaning products and their ingredients.

National and international regularly bodies require that the chemical ingredients used in a range of household products should be tested to assess the risk they might pose to man (both the workforce and consumers) and the environment. Under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 such testing using animals can only be licensed when the information to be obtained is considered essential to the required risk

assessment, and when it cannot be obtained by non-animal methods. Unfortunately there are in some cases still no reliable alternatives to this kind of animal testing if the necessary safety data is to be generated.

Credit Card Fraud

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) how much he estimates businesses have lost through credit card fraud committed *(a)* in general transactions, *(b)* over the internet and *(c)* over the telephone in each year since 1990; [164842]

(2) what police help is offered to businesses who are victims of fraud of less than £500,000; and whether the police are obliged to take action in the case of fraud involving less than £500,000; [164843]

(3) what action his Department is taking to combat and prevent credit card fraud committed over the internet; [164844]

(4) if he will introduce a national initiative on internet and credit card fraud to increase awareness amongst the police and the general public about combating fraud; [164845]

(5) what support his Department is offering to businesses who are repeatedly targeted by fraudulent use of credit cards over the internet. [164846]

Ms Blears: The Government do not collect figures on the cost of credit card fraud. The Association for Payment Clearing Services (APACS) has estimated the total cost of losses due to credit card fraud (as reported by card issuers) over the last 10 years as:

	£ million
1994	96.8
1995	83.3
1996	97.1
1997	122.0
1998	135.0
1999	188.4
2000	317
2001	411.5
2002	424.6
2003	402.4

(Specific figures for costs to businesses are not available)

The decision on whether and how to investigate alleged criminal offences is an operational matter for the relevant chief officer of police. The decision will take account of national and local policing priorities as well as the resources available.

We have recently boosted the resources available to police to tackle fraud. In the recent Green Paper on "Policing, Building Safer Communities Together", we signalled our intention that some forces should develop expertise in certain specialist types of investigation and play a lead role in those areas. The City of London Police will become the first such lead force tackling fraud. The Home Office and the Corporation of London have each agreed to contribute £1 million per year towards the cost of an expanded City of London Police fraud squad. The Home Office will also meet capital start-up costs of the new unit.

This arrangement will allow the City of London Police to significantly expand its fraud squad enabling it to take a lead role in the investigation of fraud in London and the south east. We will need to assess the additional achievements that result from providing these new arrangements before considering any further additional funding.

In October 2003 the National Hi-Tech Crime Unit (NHTCU), APACS (the Association for Payment Clearing Services) and the BBA (British Bankers' Association) issued a checklist for UK consumers to help protect themselves against the Internet fraudster. The Home Office has also recently launched a website to combat internet fraud. The 'e-tailing mini site' forms part of the Crime Reduction website and provides information to help both businesses and consumers protect themselves when using the internet.

The Home Office is also represented on an APACS led Steering Group which aims to tackle 'Card Not Present' (CNP) fraud. This includes fraud over the internet. We support practical measures being introduced by the industry to increase levels of security for internet transactions. These include Address Verification Services (AVS), Card Security Code (CSC), Mastercard Secure Code and Verified by Visa. There is also a manual ("Spot & Stop Card Fraud Retailer Pack") resulting from the CNP Steering Group's Work which aims to educate merchants on the dangers of CNP fraud and the steps which can be taken to prevent it.

We are about to publish, jointly with APACS, a leaflet for members of the public to raise awareness about safe credit card use. The leaflet will include a section on using cards safely over the internet. Supplies of the leaflet are being sent to all police forces in England and Wales.

The Home Office does not operate any specific support schemes for repeat victims of credit card fraud, however the schemes outlined above to tackle CNP fraud are already making a significant impact in preventing this type of fraud.

Crime (Humberside)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on crime trends within the Humberside police authority area. [165037]

Ms Blears: There were 132,734 offences recorded in the Humberside police force area in 2002–03 which was an increase over the previous year. However, figures were affected by the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) which Humberside adopted in April 2002. For total crime in this force, the Home Office estimated the NCRS had a 9 per cent. impact for 2002–03.

NCRS was introduced across England and Wales in April 2002. Broadly, the NCRS had the effect of increasing the number of crimes recorded by the police. Therefore, following the introduction of the Standard, numbers of recorded crimes are not directly comparable with previous years.

The table gives a quarterly breakdown of the most recently published statistics. It is an extract from the new Home Office website: www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Recorded offences in the Humberside police force area 2002–03

Month	*Total number of offences*	*Offences per 1,000 population*
April to June 2002	31,284	36.0
July to September 2002	29,854	34.4
October to December 2002	33,567	38.6
January to March 2003	38,029	43.8

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many burglaries per 1,000 households there have been in the Humberside police authority area in each year since 1999; and what the detection rate for burglaries in homes was. [165046]

Ms Blears: The available information is given in the table.

Burglary in a dwelling in the Humberside police force area

	Number of burglaries in a dwelling per 1,000 households	*Detection rate for burglary in a dwelling (percentage)*
1999–2000	n/a	10
2000–01	n/a	11
2001–02	32	10
2002–03[1]	33	11

n/a = Not available.

Forensic Science Service

Mr. Pound: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the savings that would result from the privatisation of the Forensic Science Service in England and Wales in *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06 and *(c)* 2006–07. [165521]

Ms Blears: It is not intended to privatise the Forensic Science Service, but to develop it as a public private partnership (PPP).

Work is under way to prepare an outline business case that will include a financial analysis of the impact of the proposed change in status.

Mr. Pound: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Forensic Science Service in respect of the applications by *(a)* Turkey and *(b)* Croatia to join the European Network of Forensic Science Services. [165522]

Ms Blears: Turkey and Croatia are already members of the European Network of Forensic Science Institutes. No discussions have taken place between the Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Forensic Science Service regarding the applications by Turkey and Croatia to join the European Network of Forensic Scientists

Mr. Pound: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the European Network of Forensic Science services in connection with the possible privatisation of forensic science services in England and Wales. [165523]

Ms Blears: It is not intended to privatise the Forensic Science Service (FSS), but to develop it as a public private partnership (PPP).

Informational discussions between Home Office officials and the chair designate and secretariat of the European Network of Forensic Sciences Institutes (ENFSI) about the future status of the FSS took place in November 2003.

Gurkhas

Miss Widdecombe: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department further to the answer of 15 January 2004, *Official Report*, columns 886–7W, on Gurkhas, what progress has been made on the review of immigration laws as applied to Gurkhas. [164339]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 29 March 2004]*: Officials in the Home Office, Ministry of Defence and Foreign and Commonwealth Office have continued their work to find a satisfactory and sustainable way forward. A further meeting took place on 30 March and officials will report to Ministers shortly.

Lancashire Police Authority

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department by how much in *(a)* percentage and *(b)* cash terms Lancashire police grant has increased in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement on the financial position of Lancashire Police Authority. [156129]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the table.

	General Government grants[1] (£ million)	*Annual percentage change in general Government grants*	*Specific grants and capital provision[2] (£ million)*	*Total (£ million)*	*Annual percentage change in all Government grants*
1997–98	146.9	—	2.2	149.1	—
1998–99	153.6	4.6	2.4	156.0	4.6
1999–2000	155.9	1.5	2.2	158.1	1.3
2000–01	162.2	4.0	6.6	168.8	6.8
2001–02	168.1	3.6	18.2	186.3	10.4
2001–02[3]	164.0	—	18.2	182.2	—
2002–03	168.7	2.9	15.1	183.8	09
2003–04	177.1	4.9	15.4	192.5	47
2004–05	182.9	3.3	15.8	198.7	32

[1] General Government grants comprise Home Office Police grant, ODPM Revenue Support Grant and National Non-Domestic Rates.

[2] Includes funding from the Crime Fighting Fund, Rural Policing Fund, Basic Command Unit funding, Street Crime Initiative, Community Support Officer funding, Special Priority Payments, the DNA Expansion Programme, capital grant, Airwave and the Premises Improvement Fund. Total for specific grants in 2004–05 are an estimate.

[3] Figures for 2001–02 are not directly comparable with 2002–03 due to the change in funding arrangements of NCS/NCIS. Adjusted figures for 2001–02 are therefore included.

Lancashire Police Authority have set a final budget of £229.5 million for 2004–05, and increase of £12.7 million or 5.9 per cent. over this year.

Parliamentary Ombudsman

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons he rejected the recommendations of the Parliamentary Ombudsman in his report, ref.C.923/03 relating to the complaint of a constituent, ref.R333021/2. [164679]

Mr. Browne: We have not rejected the recommendations of the Parliamentary Ombudsman. The Ombudsman made only one formal recommendation in this case—that if Mr. Colman's constituent made an application for British Citizenship it should be considered promptly. The Ombudsman has been informed that such an application will be considered in accordance with the rules and in the light of individual circumstances. So far, no application has been received.

Parliamentary Questions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many Parliamentary Questions have been tabled to his Department since 1 January 2003, broken down by *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day; what percentage in respect of *(a)* were answered within 10 working days; and what percentage in respect of *(b)* were answered by the specified date. [157741]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Home Office does not maintain records in such a way that provides the information in the format requested without incurring disproportionate cost. The last published performance figures for the Home Office showed that 39 per cent. of all Parliamentary Questions (PQs) were answered within parliamentary deadlines.

Every effort is made to reply to PQs within the parliamentary deadlines wherever possible. Consequently the Home Office is currently in the process of introducing a new PQ system, the electronic Parliamentary Questions system (ePQS) to better monitor and manage the Department's performance.

The ePQS monitoring system has identified the bottlenecks in the PQ process and remedial action is being taken. As is usual with the introduction of any new IT system, performance has shown an initial decline. The benefits of ePQS are now being realised across the Department and performance is improving.

Police Pensions

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department at what age police officers are able to retire on a full pension; and if he will make a statement. [165478]

Ms Blears: Under the current Police Pension Scheme officers may build up a maximum pension after 30 years' service. This means that an officer who joined the police service at age 18½—the earliest age at which it is possible to start as a police officer—could be entitled to retire at age 48½ with a full pension.

The Government are considering options for the modernisation of police pensions to make them more flexible and affordable for future entrants. We have concluded a UK-wide consultation exercise on proposals for a new police pension scheme, to be introduced by April 2006, and are considering the responses. Key features of the proposed scheme for new entrants are a maximum pension after 35 years and a minimum pension age of 55.

Prisons

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many hours on average adult prisoners spent on *(a)* education, broken down by (i) literacy, (ii) numeracy and (iii) other education-related activities, *(b)* exercise, *(c)* vocational work and *(d)* community work in the last year for which figures are available. [161789]

Paul Goggins: The average number of hours for each activity is as follows:

	Hours
	Number
(a) Education	3.4
(b) Exercise	2.0
(c) Vocational work	1.6
(d) Voluntary work	0.2
(e) Time spent in work/workshops	12.1

In spite of the considerable population pressures the average time spent on purposeful activity is 23.1 hours per week.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost was of the movement of all prisoners from the two prisons that have been re-roled. [166424]

Paul Goggins: No final date has yet been fixed for the re-role of Edmunds Hill prison and so no women prisoners have been moved.

The cost of moving prisoners from Winchester prison totalled £5,550.00.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the prisoners who were moved from the two prisons that have been re-roled were informed they were being moved; and whether notification was given to their families. [166425]

Paul Goggins: The re-role of Her Majesty's Prison Winchester West Hill has taken place. Prisoners were informed on 11 March that they would be moving to other establishments. All prisoners were able to inform their families that they would be moving. The moves took place between 15 and 25 March.

The re-role of Her Majesty's Prison Edmunds Hill has not yet taken place. It is anticipated that prisoners will transfer out from June 2004. Prisoners there know of the

re-role, and, in the case of those prisoners who will still be in custody in June 2004, discussions about future destinations have begun.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women prisoners have been transferred from the two prisons that have been re-roled; what the length of the sentences they had left to serve were on the date of transfer; and to which prisons they were transferred. [166346]

Paul Goggins: Her Majesty's Prison Edmund's Hill has not yet been re-roled, and no final date has been set. Three of the female prisoners held at the West Hill Wing of Her Majesty's Prison Winchester were released before the transfers took place, as they had reached the end of their custodial sentences.

Table 1 shows the destinations of the remaining prisoners.

Table 1: destinations of female prisoners transferred from Her Majesty's Prison Winchester

Destination establishment	*Number transferred*
Her Majesty's Prison Eastwood Park	19
Her Majesty's Prison Foston Hall	1
Her Majesty's Prison Downview	11
Her Majesty's Prison Send	40
Her Majesty's Prison Askham Grange	1

Table 2 shows the length of time these prisoners had remaining on their transfer date.

Table 2: remaining sentences

Length of sentence remaining	*Number of prisoners*
Convicted but unsentenced	1
Less than 12 months	32
One to four years	29
Four years or more	10

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress has been made in recording allegations and incidents of threatening and intimidating behaviour of staff towards prisoners at HM Prison Wormwood Scrubs; how the incidents are broken down for statistical analysis; and what the figures are for incidents in the last three years for which figures are available. [155658]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 2 March 2004]:* The Investigation Support Section of the Prison Service Professional Standards Unit monitors all incidents in the prison service that result in formal investigations being commissioned. The main categories of investigations that record unprofessional behaviour of staff towards prisoners are racist abuse, inappropriate treatment of prisoners and assault on prisoners.

Monthly reports are prepared for Governors and Area Managers that include, for each prison; numbers of investigations carried out, categories of investigations, overdue investigations and emerging themes.

Wormwood Scrubs operates systems to ensure that any complaints of mistreatment from prisoners are referred to the Deputy Governor, who decides whether to commission a full investigation under the Prison Service Code of Discipline or conduct a simple inquiry for more minor issues. The Race Relations co-ordinator also reviews data from a wide range of sources to establish if any ethnic minority group is disproportionately represented. For the last three years, the number of complaints from prisoners within the above categories that resulted in investigations being commissioned at Wormwood Scrubs were:

Number of complaints from prisoners that resulted in investigations being commissioned at Wormwood Scrubs

	Simple inquiries	*Disciplinary investigations*
2001–02	49	30
2002–03	44	32
2003–04[1]	27	21

[1] As at 11 February 2004.

Additionally, annual reviews are conducted by staff from the London Area Office to assess the efficiency and effectiveness of monitoring arrangements concerning treatment of prisoners by staff in each London prison. These reviews also seek assurance that local arrangements for acting on any allegations of mistreatment by prisoners, from any source, are consistent with prison service policy and that any subsequent investigations are conducted in a timely and consistent manner.

Probation Areas (Budgets)

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which probation areas will be financially penalised during the next financial year as a consequence of failing to meet 2003–04 targets; and what size the penalty will be in each case. [160468]

Paul Goggins: £15 million of the probation areas' budget for 2004–05 has been retained by the Home Office to be distributed to areas as performance bonuses. On the basis of information for the first three-quarters of 2003–04, it is expected that about £12 million will be distributed to areas. It is not yet possible to provide a list of areas and the size of the amount in each case as this will not be known until all the performance data for 2003–04 has been collected and analysed.

Current information indicates that 17 probation areas will receive their full performance bonuses that will result in them having greater than 100 per cent. of their expected budget for 2004–05. A further 11 will receive performance bonuses that result in them receiving at least 99.5 per cent. of their expected budget. The remaining 14 areas will receive at least 97.5 per cent. of their expected budget.

Programme Funding

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding has been allocated to *(a)* building safer communities, *(b)* drug action teams, *(c)* Frameworks for Regional Employment and Skills Action, *(d)* Positive Futures and *(e)* the Youth Inclusion Programme in (i) 2004–05, (ii) 2005–06 and (iii) total. [163719]

Ms Blears: Funding in 2004–05 for the initiatives named is shown in the table:

	2004–05
Building Safer Communities	£74 million
Drug Action Teams	£386,600
Positive Futures	£5 million Home Office £1 million Football Foundation
Youth Inclusion Programme (Total YIP funding 1999–06 £39.24million)	£7 million

There is no direct Government Funding for Frameworks for Regional Employment and Skills Action (FRESAs). FRESAs are the way in which key regional partners led by the RDA develop and deliver an agreed plan to address skills and employment needs of employers and individuals within the region. The resources which partners bring to the table in respect of agreed priorities in the FRESA will vary from region to region.

Funding allocations for 2005–06 are still being discussed and levels of funding will be made known as soon as they are agreed.

Sex Offenders

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has a strategy for targeting the re-allocation of sex offenders to a limited number of bail hostels. [166476]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* No. Such a strategy would not be conducive to public protection, nor would it be in the best interest of victims of serious crime.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Diamond/Uranium Mining (Africa)

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his Department's policies are on *(a)* the upholding of human rights and *(b)* minimising the environmental impact in the course of diamond and uranium mining in African countries. [166490]

Mr. MacShane: Extractives industries (including diamonds and uranium) should be the engines of growth and development in countries endowed with significant mineral resources, but too often the sector is associated with conflicts and corruption that derail progress towards sustainable development and poverty reduction. We believe that companies are responsible for not acting in a way that impairs the human rights of their employees or of those on whom their activities have an impact, and should act in a way that promotes their enjoyment of human rights. We also believe companies should act in a way which contributes to environmental progress with a view to achieving sustainable development. For that reason, we are actively engaged in initiatives to improve governance, including environmental and social management of the sector, while recognising that regulation of these industries is the responsibility of the host governments concerned.

For example, the Government is a founding participant in the process to develop and promote the Voluntary Principles on Security and Human Rights in the extractives sector. The Voluntary Principles are designed to provide practical guidance that will strengthen human rights safeguards in company security arrangements. The Government also actively promote the UN Global Compact and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Guidelines for Multinational Enterprises, both of which promote principles of business behaviour designed to ensure respect for human rights and protection of the environment.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he expects to receive the next report of the Iraq Survey Group on Iraqi weapons of mass destruction. [165154]

Mr. Rammell: We received a copy of the latest Iraq Survey Group Interim Report on 30 March. A copy has been placed in the Library of the House.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which British members of UNSCOM were transferred to work in the Iraq survey group. [165567]

Mr. Hoon: I have been asked to reply.

No British members of the United Nations Special Commission (UNSCOM) have transferred directly to the Iraq Survey Group. UNSCOM was withdrawn from Iraq in December 1998. Thirteen British servicemen and civil servants who served with UNSCOM between 1991 and 1998 have subsequently served with the Iraq Survey Group since June 2003.

Afghanistan

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1031W, on Afghanistan (1) if he will list the *(a)* names and *(b)* locations of voter registration offices (i) already open in Afghanistan and (ii) due to open in Afghanistan before the September 2004 elections, broken down by province; [166123]

(2) how many people *(a)* have been registered to vote in the Afghan September 2004 elections since 1 December 2003 and *(b)* the voter registration offices will aim to register by the Afghan September 2004 elections; [166124]

(3) what assessment he has made of the *(a)* effects of the change in date of the Afghan presidency and parliamentary elections from June 2004 to September 2004 and *(b)* the reasons for the change. [166125]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Since the start of the registration process the UN has opened 232 registration sites in 8 regional centres (Kabul, Jalalabad, Kandahar, Herat, Konduz, Jalalbad, Mazer, Bamiyan). Many of these have now closed, having registered voters in their

particular area. Voters are currently registering at 83 offices in these 8 regional centres. The UN hopes to have used a total of 5040 registration centres across the country by August. No breakdown by province is currently available.

Up to 14 April, 1,812,815 people have been registered since December 2003. The UN hopes to register 10 million voters by September 2004.

The Afghan presidential and parliamentary elections will be held in September 2004 in order to allow sufficient time for voter registration and other electoral preparations in a country whose infrastructure and human capital have been decimated by three decades of conflict. I remember attending voter registration for the Loya Jirga elections last year at the football stadium in Mazar-e-Sharif and I was very impressed with the enthusiasm of the many people who were queuing to register—they wanted to vote.

Cyprus

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice to travellers to Cyprus was being issued on the Foreign Office website on 24 September 2002. [166431]

Mr. MacShane: On 24 September 2002 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office travel advice for Cyprus read as follows:

"Most visits to Cyprus are trouble-free.

Safety and security

Crimes against tourists are rare. Visitors should, however, safeguard passports, money and other valuables by using hotel safety deposit boxes.

Be aware of strong seas and undertows. Always heed warning signs and swim only from approved beaches.

Travellers are not generally at risk in Cyprus.

Terrorism

There have been a number of car bombs in the Limassol area and Nicosia over the past few years. Although the perpetrators have not been identified, these activities are restricted for the most part to in-fighting amongst the criminal fraternity.

Local laws and customs

Cyprus has a strict zero tolerance policy towards drugs. Being caught in possession of any type of narcotic will usually lead to a prison sentence or a hefty fine.

Driving standards in Cyprus are poor. Seat belts and crash helmets must be worn. You could be fined up to C£500 if you are caught not wearing a seat belt.

It is illegal to work in Cyprus without a work permit. Obtaining such a permit is the responsibility of the prospective employer. People caught working without a valid permit have received custodial sentences and large fines. Carefully check any suggested contract.

When hiring a car, moped, boat, jet ski or other vehicle, you should check that it is road or sea worthy and that there is appropriate insurance cover, and safety equipment. Observe safety rules.

Do not try to make fraudulent claims on your insurance policy. The police investigate such claims and prosecute tourists for this offence. Prison sentences and heavy fines have been imposed.

Entry requirements

A British passport holder does not need a visa prior to travelling to Cyprus. A tourist will be permitted to enter for a maximum period of three months.

Health

Cyprus and the UK do not have reciprocal health agreements and therefore all health care has to be paid for. As Cyprus is not a member of the European Union, the form E111 is not recognised. Adequate health insurance should be taken out prior to travelling to Cyprus, as hospital fees can be expensive. You will not normally be allowed to leave Cyprus if you have not settled your medical bill.

Visits to North Cyprus

The British Government does not recognise the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus". Visitors arriving in the north should not attempt to cross into the south. If they do, they are liable to arrest and possible imprisonment.

It is possible to travel to the north of Cyprus from the south by crossing at the United Nations-controlled Ledra Palace checkpoint in Nicosia. But tourists may only cross between 0800–1300 and must return by 1700 the same day. You may not take a hire car through the checkpoint, although it is possible to hire one once you have crossed into the north. Goods bought in the north may be confiscated at the checkpoint on return to the south.

Buying property

The non-recognition of the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus" and the possibility of a future political settlement in Cyprus could have implications for those considering buying property in the north. Before purchasing a property you are advised to apprise yourself fully of the situation and to seek legal advice.

General

Time-share operatives tout for business in Cyprus, especially in the Paphos area. Before signing a contract, you should read the small print very carefully. Under Cyprus law, you are entitled to a 15-day cooling off period, during which, if you change your mind, you should receive a full refund.

We strongly recommend that all travellers abroad take out adequate comprehensive insurance.

Contact details

British High Commission, Alexander Pallis Street, (PO Box 21978), 1587 Nicosia, (tel: +357 2 861 100 (working hours); +357 2 861 277 (outside working hours); 0997 7677 (consular hotline in Nicosia); 228 3862 (from the north); e-mail: ukconsul@cylink.com.cy infobhc@cylink.com.cy"

European Constitution

Mr. Dorrell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which member states of the European Union are committed to holding a referendum on the proposed European Constitution. [166119]

Mr. MacShane: A new EU treaty would need to be ratified according to the individual constitutional traditions and requirements of each of the member states. All 25 member states would have to ratify before a Constitutional Treaty would come into effect. Only a few member states have made a formal announcement on whether they intend to hold a referendum on the outcome of the Intergovernmental Conference. Of these, three have declared they will hold a referendum: Ireland. Denmark and Luxembourg. Most countries have yet to make a decision.

Georgia

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Georgian Ambassador concerning the current dispute between the Ajara region and the Government of Georgia; and if he will make a statement. [165017]

Mr. Rammell: Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials have raised with the new Georgian Ambassador the dispute between the central authorities in Tbilisi and the regional Ajaran leader Aslan Abashidze, which came to a head after President Saakashvili was denied access to Ajara on 14 March. Neither I nor my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary have yet met the Ambassador, who presented his credentials to HM The Queen on 23 March.

EU Heads of Mission in Tbilisi, including the UK Chargé d'Affaires raised Ajara with the Georgian Foreign Minister on 25 March. They stressed their strong support for Georgia's territorial integrity; expressed their concern at the recent increase in tensions between Tbilisi and Batumi and urged both sides to refrain from actions likely to increase tensions further; and to engage in dialogue with a view to a peaceful resolution of the differences. Similar messages were given to Aslan Abashidze when Heikke Talvitie, the EU Special Representative, met him on 31 March accompanied by representatives of the local EU Troika (including the UK).

We welcome the agreements reached between President Saakashvili and Asian Abashidze when they met in Batumi on 18 March. It is important for Georgia's stability and prosperity that the Ajaran region contributes to central budgetary funds.

We welcome the fact that Georgian parliamentary elections held on 28 March passed off peacefully in the Ajaran region.

Israel

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance he has given to Israel to help defend itself against terrorist attacks from the West Bank and Gaza. [165391]

Mr. Rammell: The UK supports all Israel's efforts to defend itself against terrorism which are consistent with international law.

The UK has taken action against numerous terrorist groups, including those involved in attacks in Israel. In 2001, we proscribed Palestinian Islamic Jihad and the military wing of Hamas. In September last year, the EU took action to freeze the assets of the whole of Hamas and, on 24 March this year, my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer announced a freeze on the UK assets of five leading members of Hamas.

We have publicly condemned the terrorist atrocities committed against Israeli civilians and urged the Palestinian Authority to take immediate steps to stop violence and improve security. We are supporting the Palestinians in their efforts through provision of advice and non-lethal equipment and we have assisted the Israeli authorities' investigations into terrorist attacks against Israel by UK nationals.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is on the steps Israel can legitimately take to defend herself against terrorist attacks from the West Bank and Gaza; and if he will make a statement. [165393]

Mr. Rammell: Israel can take all steps open to governments to defend themselves against terrorism which are consistent with their international obligations.

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the basis is for his view that those sections of the Israeli security fence that have been constructed in the Occupied Territories are illegal. [165683]

Mr. Rammell: The construction of the barrier in the Occupied Territories is in violation of the Hague Regulation of 1907 and Article 53 of the 4l Geneva Convention, because the confiscation of Palestinian land and destruction of agriculture and buildings is not militarily necessary. The barrier could and should be built on or within the Green Line.

Kosovo

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the NATO Secretary General's message to the Prime Minister of Kosovo on the responsibility of the Kosovar Albanian leaders for the upsurge of violence in Kosovo. [166029]

Mr. MacShane: The NATO Secretary General condemned the inter-ethnic violence in Kosovo in his statement of 17 March and urged all ethnic communities to act responsibly to avoid further escalation. He also saluted the courage and professionalism of the Kosovo Force soldiers on the ground, operating at great personal risk, to stop the violence and uphold law and order.

I endorse the Secretary General's call for all regional political leaders to encourage tolerance and condemn acts of violence. As I stated in the House on 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1408–11, we need to encourage a new dialogue between responsible politicians both in Belgrade and Pristina. That

relationship must be formed on the basis of common European values, the rule of law and democracy, and above all respect for minorities. I will reinforce this message during my visit to the region this week.

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement about the recent upsurge in violence in Kosovo. [166030]

Mr. MacShane: The international community will not tolerate inter-ethnic violence in Kosovo nor tolerate attacks on the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo and the Kosovo Force. The United Kingdom is committed to a peaceful, stable, democratic European future for the Balkans.

I also refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave in the House to the hon. Member for Isle of Wight (Mr. Turner) on 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1408–11. There have been no further developments.

Mrs. Mahon: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) whether he has received a copy of the report of the UNESCO Director-General's expert mission to Kosovo in 2003 to evaluate the state of monuments there and propose a plan of action to safeguard them; and if he will make that report available to hon. Members; [166031]

(2) if he will make a statement on the enforcement of the Hague Convention of 1954 on the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict and other pertinent international normative instruments in the case of Kosovo; [166032]

(3) if he will make a statement on the UK's financial contribution to the urgent operations recommended by the UNESCO Director-General's expert mission to Kosovo to safeguard cultural and religious monuments. [166033]

Mr. MacShane: The report of UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) Director-General's expert mission to Kosovo is not yet available but I have been assured that it will be made public in the near future. The UK has not been asked for any extra-budgetary funds following this mission. The UK already contributes over £11 million a year to UNESCO's regular budget, making us the fourth largest contributor.

Within Kosovo, the UN mission in Kosovo is responsible for applying those provisions of the 1954 Hague Convention on the Protection of Cultural Property applicable outside of recognised armed conflict. Recent events in Kosovo give this responsibility even greater pertinence. I will visit Kosovo this week and I will make the point that that part of Europe's history deserves our special attention and protection. The UK's continued commitment to the Convention was made clear at the International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 2003, where we co-signed a pledge supporting the 1954 Hague Convention with the Government of Serbia and Montenegro.

Middle East

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with EU member states on the road map for a peaceful solution between Israel and Palestine. [165716]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary discussed the prospects for progress on the Middle East Peace Process with EU Foreign Ministers at the European Council on 25 March. The EU expressed its concern at the deepening conflict but confirmed its conviction that the roadmap remains the basis for reaching a peaceful settlement and that current initiatives which are consistent with the road map can help advance the peace process.

Nepal

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the political and security situation in Nepal; and if he will make a statement. [166197]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Newbury (David Rendel) on 9 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1436W.

We are closely monitoring the political and security situation in Nepal. The increased violence evident in recent weeks is of great concern. We continue, in our contacts with all parties, to urge an end to the conflict in order that Nepal can achieve a lasting peace and a return to democracy.

Overseas Representation

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in which countries the Department is represented, including those with regional consulates; how many staff are employed in each location, broken down by *(a)* UK nationals and *(b)* locally employed; what the annual cost of maintaining representation in each of the countries was in 2003–04; and what the total expenditure by his Department on overseas representation was in (i) 2001, (ii) 2002 and (iii) 2003. [166211]

Mr. Straw: I have placed copies of the table showing countries in which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) is represented together with the location of both UK based and locally employed staff in the Library of the House. The annual cost of maintaining representation in each of these countries for 2003–04 has not yet been ascertained. The total expenditure by the FCO on overseas representation for previous years was as follows; 2001–02, £747 million 2002–03, £797 million.

UK/Caribbean Forum

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what organisations and individuals are entitled to attend the forthcoming UK/Caribbean Forum meeting in May. [165678]

Mr. Rammell: The UK/Caribbean Forum is a meeting of Foreign Ministers set up as a means of strengthening and institutionalising the close relationship that exists between the UK and Caribbean countries. Ministers

from other Government Departments will also attend. In addition, a wide range of organisations with an interest in the Caribbean, both UK-based and from the region, have been invited to participate in some or all of the Forum.

Uzbekistan

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the statement by the authorities in Uzbekistan that terrorist attacks in late March were linked to Hizb-ut-Tahrir; and if he will make a statement. [165691]

Mr. Rammell: The Uzbek authorities have yet to conclude their investigations into the terrorist attacks in late March. Their preliminary findings appear to suggest that the perpetrators received training in camps outside Uzbekistan, and may have been influenced by the radical Islamist propaganda of Hizb ut-Tahrir. However, while we believe that this is certainly a possibility, we have yet to see convincing evidence that Hizb ut-Tahrir as an organisation advocates violence or terrorism. Nor are we aware of any co-operation between it and Al Qaeda.

We strongly believe that a proportionate response is necessary in combating terrorism in order to avoid alienating wider sections of the population, and that permitting free expression of religious belief is the best means of combating the attractiveness to some of the more radical and extremist ideologies.

In a press release issued on 30 March, I stated that "We condemn these appalling acts of violence and send our condolences to the families of those innocent victims. Terrorism is a menace which we face in common with countries around the world, and must combat in common. At the same time it is necessary to ensure that our responses are measured and proportionate, so that the disease is isolated and eliminated rather than faced with conditions where it is possible to spread further."We remain willing to receive additional information from the Uzbek authorities as their investigations continue, particularly concerning the alleged role of Hizb ut-Tahrir.

DEFENCE

Atomic Co-ordinating Offices

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the role and function of the Atomic Co-ordinating Offices in London and Washington. [166582]

Mr. Ingram: The role of the Atomic Control Office, London and the Atomic Co-ordinating Office, Washington is to facilitate the conduct of bilateral business with the United States under the provisions of the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement.

Defence Medical Centre (Birmingham)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when the new Defence Medical Centre at Birmingham will be operational. [166111]

Mr. Caplin: The Centre for Defence Medicine was formally opened and became operational on 2 April 2001. It was renamed the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine in April 2002.

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the defence medical facilities that will be replaced by the new Defence Medical Centre at Birmingham. [166112]

Mr. Caplin: The Centre for Defence Medicine, now the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine (RCDM), was formally opened and became operational on 2 April 2001. It replaced the Royal Defence Medical College that was located in Gosport and was formally closed at the end of March 2002. The Operational Health Research Division, the academic focus for defence medicine created in April 2004 embraces professional and academic staff based in Birmingham who were part of the Royal Defence Medical College. The Defence Post Graduate Medical Deanery, which was located in Portsmouth, is also based in Birmingham, but does not form part of RCDM. In addition 110 military medical personnel are working within the MOD Hospital Unit at the University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust (UHBT), delivering health services to military and civilian patients.

UHBT is also the focus for the MOD's aeromedical evacuation capability. Transfer of other functions from Portsmouth, which are under the control of RCDM, such as radiology and telemedicine, are being considered as part of the option to move all medical training to Birmingham.

Since September 2001, military nurse training has also been progressively transferred from Portsmouth to the Defence School of Healthcare Studies, located at the University of Central England in Birmingham. We expect to deliver all our nurse training at the University of Central England by academic year 2006–07.

On current plans around 900 military medical personnel will be based in Birmingham by 2006.

Iraq

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence on what date he was first informed that Dr. Brian Jones of the Defence Intelligence Staff had submitted reservations about the Government's dossier, Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction. [165685]

Mr. Hoon: I became aware in July 2003, in preparation for my evidence session with the ISC, that Dr. Brian Jones had, in September 2002, expressed concern to his immediate line manager about the precise wording of some parts of the Government's dossier on Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction prior to its publication.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 12 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1773W, when he expects the Royal Military Police's Special Investigations Branch to complete its investigation into the deaths of the six Royal Military police officers from the Colchester garrison who were killed in Iraq; when he expects the report to be presented to him; when he will publish the

report; whether the report to be published in full; whether families will be given *(a)* a full and *(b)* an edited version; and if he will make a statement. [166070]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 945W, by my right hon. Friend the Member for East Kilbride (Mr. Ingram). The families of the six dead soldiers will be given a further update on the findings of the Special Investigation Branch (SIB) investigation once they have completed their work. Although extensive inquiries have been undertaken, the investigation is still under way. It is not normal practice to make public the findings of SIB investigations.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the total volume of depleted uranium shells used in Iraq since March 2003. [166417]

Mr. Ingram: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence gave on 4 June 2003, *Official Report*, column 445W. I also refer my hon. Friend to the answer of 12 June 2003, *Official Report*, column WA 62, given by my noble Friend the Lord Bach to Baroness Miller of Chilthorne Domer.

Members of Parliament (Military Visits)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether hon. Members are required to obtain permission from his Department to visit military bases in their constituencies; and if he will make a statement. [166383]

Mr. Caplin: Yes.

Nuclear Contingent Liability Arrangements

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what developments have taken place in respect of the proposals made on 11 March to alter the contingent liability arrangements covering the submarine reactor fuel core factory and Neptune test reactor; and if he will place in the Library the new documentation produced on this matter. [166038]

Mr. Ingram: No objections were raised against the contingent liability arising from non-insurance that was proposed in the Departmental Minute dated 11 March 2004.

The Rolls-Royce Core Factory and Neptune facility continue to be fully covered by commercial third party nuclear insurance. When the commercial insurance ends in 2005, the facilities should then be indemnified by the Crown by means of clauses within procurement contracts for submarine reactor fuel and related services. The contracts include details of sensitive nuclear materials and industrial processes and I am withholding them in accordance with Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (which relates to defence, security and international relations).

Private Military Companies

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will estimate how many army officers have requested early leave from their contracts to work for private military companies. [166135]

Mr. Caplin: Army officers apply for early release through the Army Retirements Board. In the last six months the total number of officers requesting Premature Voluntary Retirement has been 346. There is no requirement to specify future employment intentions but we are aware that at least three of the 346 have applied to leave with the intention of joining private military companies other than the United Kingdom defence industry.

Reservists

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons mobilised reservists are not receiving timely pay statements; how many reservists are affected; and what steps he is taking to ensure that all reservists receive timely pay statements. [165140]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* We accept that some reservists' pay statements did not get delivered on time during Op Telic. This meant that some reservists did not know they were being paid or how much they were being paid. Late or non-delivery of pay statements was attributable to delays in the administrative process of taking the reservist on strength at the Theatre unit.

This issue was identified during the Op Telic lessons identified process and action is in hand to improve the administrative systems in use. We have witnessed a significant improvement in the administrative process of taking the reservist on strength as units move into permanent infrastructure and improved communication links. In the main members of the TA called out for Op Telic 4 are now joining their respective units in their peacetime locations and administrative procedures are now being completed prior to deployment which minimises the shortcomings experienced with IT in Theatre.

While there is no central record of the number of individuals who did not receive pay slips or who experienced delays in their delivery, I understand that the extent of the problem was limited and that the vast majority of reservists did receive pay slips on time.

Tain Air Weapons Range

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many hours the Tain Air Weapons Range was in use for training operations in 2003 and in each of the preceding four years. [166068]

Mr. Caplin: The following table shows the number of hours aircraft operated over Tain Air Weapons Range in the requested years.

	Hours in use
1999	946
2000	833
2001	616
2002	788
2003	770

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many sorties were undertaken using the Tain Air Weapons Range in 2003 and each of the

preceding four years, indicating *(a)* those flown by RAF aircraft and *(b)* those flown by non-RAF aircraft. [166069]

Mr. Caplin: The following table shows the total number of passes made by aircraft at Tain Air Weapons Range, broken down by RAF and non-RAF aircraft, in the requested years. The number of sorties undertaken, each of which could involve one or more passes, is not recorded.

	Number of RAF aircraft passes	*Number of non-RAF aircraft passes*
1999	23,479	213
2000	20,709	484
2001	13,651	1,026
2002	21,743	755
2003	22,875	1,302

War Pensioners

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he is having with the Royal British Legion on the subject of the proposed Armed Forces Compensation Scheme for war pensioners. [166459]

Mr. Caplin: Ministers and officials have maintained a regular dialogue with the Royal British Legion during the development of the new Armed Forces Compensation Scheme. As detailed scheme rules are developed, this dialogue will continue. The MOD recognises the value of the experience and expertise offered by ex-Service organisations such as the Royal British Legion.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Allotments

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department provides to councils regarding budget allocations for allotments. [166055]

Keith Hill: It is for each allotment authority to decide for itself how much of its resources to devote to allotments. Revenue Support Grant is an unhypothecated block grant and this means that authorities may use it for any purposes. In most cases, rent will be the only income from an allotment site and the level of these is a matter for the relevant allotment authority to determine, taking into account the cost of managing the site, local needs, any special circumstances and the requirements of the Allotments Act 1950.

The publications "Growing in the community: a good practice guide for the management of allotments", and "Allotments: a plot holders' guide", provide comprehensive advice and good practice, including that concerning rents, for local authorities and allotment plot holders and were distributed to a wide audience.

Asbestos

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of buildings occupied by *(a)* staff of the Department and *(b)* staff of the Department's executive agencies have been surveyed for the purpose of identifying the presence of asbestos prior to implementation of the control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002. [159372]

Yvette Cooper: The proportion of buildings of the Deputy Prime Minister surveyed for the purpose of identifying the presence of asbestos are:

(a) Seven of the 11 buildings occupied by ODPM staff

(b) 77 of the 96 buildings occupied by staff of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's executive agencies and Government offices.

Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government Offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

Not all buildings are required to be surveyed as the use of asbestos in buildings has been prohibited since 1992. The Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 do not require surveys in such cases.

Some of the surveys noted above are not yet complete in that the final reports are still awaited. However all asbestos surveys in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister occupancies required by the Regulations will have been completed by 21 May 2004.

BACS

Brian White: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress his Department has made to manage the changeover from the Bank Automated Clearing System to the new BACSTEL-IP system for electronic payments. [164321]

Yvette Cooper: Discussions are under way, with our current supplier, regarding a number of options for managing the changeover from the Bank Automated Clearing System (BACS) to the new BACSTEL-IP system for electronic payments.

Charity Shops

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations his Department has received regarding the concessionary rate reduction allowed for charity shops. [165355]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister receives on an intermittent basis correspondence both in favour and against the rate relief granted to charity shops. We have at present no proposal to change the rules governing rate relief for charities. However, as stated in the White Paper Strong Local leadership—Quality Public Services (2001), we will monitor closely the various rate relief schemes.

Coastal Marinas

Mr. Moss: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many planning applications for coastal marinas in England have been *(a)* submitted, *(b)* granted and *(c)* refused in each of the last five years. [165928]

Keith Hill: This information is not collected centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Community Cohesion and Regeneration

Mr. Doug Henderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what resources his Department has put into community cohesion and regeneration through sport and physical activity based programmes in the last five years. [164685]

Yvette Cooper: Most Neighbourhood Renewal Unit (NRU) programmes and funding streams are allocated at local level. Therefore the exact amount of, for example, the Community Empowerment Fund or Neighbourhood Renewal Fund that have been spent on sports related interventions cannot be calculated.

Mr. Doug Henderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment his Department has made of the effectiveness of sports and physical activity-based interventions in community cohesion and regeneration. [164687]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not made an independent assessment but relies on the monitoring and evaluation carried out by lead Departments.

Health

The Department of Health guidance is that adults participate in 30 minutes of moderate physical activity at least five times a week. Reaching this outcome will contribute to reducing health inequalities.

Community Safety

The Youth Justice Board has analysed the lives of young offenders in the communities where they live. They recommend an increase in interventions that 'demand healthy standards and the use of social and reasoning skills, provide opportunities for involvement, due praise and recognition'. The Neighbourhood Renewal Unit supports sports projects that meet these conditions.

Community Cohesion

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has worked with the Home Office Community Cohesion Cultural Practitioners Panel to understand the skills and competencies needed for sports workers who need to promote cohesion as part of their job.

Computer Misuse

Mr. Webb: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many cases of computer misuse there were in *(a)* the predecessors to his Department in each year between 1997 and 2000 and *(b)* his Department in 2003, broken down by each category of misuse; and how many of those cases resulted in disciplinary action. [163197]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the number of cases in predecessor Departments could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

No cases have been raised since the introduction on the new policy (on 29 May 2002).

Council Housing (East Yorkshire)

David Davis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the total of unpaid council house rents in the East Riding of Yorkshire in each year since 1997. [165041]

Keith Hill: The total of unpaid council rents in the East Riding of Yorkshire for each financial year from 1997/8 to 2002/3 is tabled below. Also shown is the total of unpaid rents expressed as a percentage of total collectable rent.

Financial Year	[1] *Collectable Rent (£000)*	[2] *Unpaid rents for the year (£000)*	*Unpaid rents as a percentage of total collectable rents*
1997–1998	22,644,000	310,000	1.4
1998–1999	22,993,000	182,000	0.8
1999–2000	23,727,000	285,000	1.2
2000–2001	24,709,000	427,000	1.7
2001–2002	25,690,000	940,000	3.7
2002–2003	26,701,000	656,000	2.5

[1] The maximum that the authority could expect to have collected during each year i.e. the total value of rent roll less rent deductions and refunds and rent loses on vacant/void dwellings.

[2] The arrears of rent that fell due during the year and remained outstanding at the end of the year. In other words, the rent that should have been received during the year but wasn't.

Note:

The figures supplied by the East riding of Yorkshire have, for presentation purposes, been rounded to the nearest £1,000. They are not necessarily audited.

Source:

Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Local Authority Housing Division Housing Revenue Account: Second Subsidy Claim Form

Demotion Orders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what response his Department received from Merseyside's local authorities regarding demotion orders. [165918]

Mr. Raynsford: Neither the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, which leads on demotion policy nor the Home Office, which leads on anti-social behaviour policy more generally, are aware of any correspondence with Merseyside's local authorities relating to the subject of demotions orders. Should the hon. Member wish to bring any issue relating to demotion to my attention, I should be happy to bring it to the attention of the appropriate Minister.

Department Branding

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much his Department and its predecessors spent on branding the Department between 1997–98 and 2003–04, broken down by *(a)* consultancy fees, *(b)* design and orders for new stationery, *(c)* website design and *(d)* other material featuring new logos. [154065]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002. From this point ODPM used the Royal Coat of Arms and the words Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as the main part of its corporate identity and incurred no 'design' costs as such. A nominal amount was been spent on originating artwork for print and electronic publishing.

Cost breakdown is as follows:

(a) logo—£525 + vat

(b) stationery—£7, 400 including value of existing stock

(c) signage—£3,600 + vat

(d) website—£3,145.

The figure of £3,145 for the website represents half the cost of dividing one site into two sites. The other half of the cost is attributable to the Department for Transport. On the development of a revised visual identity for the ODPM in 2003 and its implementation in 2004, a sum of £27,110 has been spent on branding, broken down as follows:

(a) consultancy fees: £17,152;

(b) design and orders for new stationery: £4,400—there are minimal stationery write off costs as the revised identity introduction has been phased and new letterheads are created from centralised staff PC templates;

(c) website design: £325; and

(d) other material: office signage featuring new logos between 2003–04—£5233.

Contractors carried out the work under our normal framework agreements for design and print of paper and electronic publications.

Departmental Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many staff are employed in the Department to work in the communications field, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others; [158154]

(2) what the total expenditure on communications for the Department has been in 2003–04, broken down by expenditure on *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others. [158191]

Yvette Cooper: As at 1 March 2004 there were 51 GICS staff and 21 administrative staff employed in the Directorate of Communications for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. Of these, 23 are press officers and 49 provide a range of communications and administrative support functions. From 1 April 2003 to 29 February 2004 the pay cost of these staff was £2.5 million, of which £0.96 million was for press officers.

There are four GICS staff employed within line divisions of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister who perform a range of communication functions, as well as a small number of non-GICS staff whose role may encompass a proportion of communications related work. Detailed information on the latter is not maintained centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

The Special Advisers' Code of Conduct sets out the sort of work a special adviser may undertake on behalf of their Minister. This includes communications activity. Details of the costs of Special Advisers are given on an annual basis. Information for the financial year 2003–04 will be published in due course.

Disabled Facilities Grants

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make changes to the eligibility for disability facilities grants, with particular reference to means-testing; and if he will make a statement. [165506]

Keith Hill: The Government has increased the funding for the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) from £57 million in 1997 to £101.5 million in 2004–05. In spite of this there is still a high demand for the grant and the means test is in place to ensure that resources go to those in greatest need. Any relaxation of it would have budgetary implications or would lead to longer waiting lists.

The Government has also announced a review of the DFG programme.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, jointly with the Department of Health, will be reviewing the disabled facilities grant programme, including the operation of the means test, in the context of the Spending Review 2004. We will announce our conclusions later this year. The position in Wales is, of course, a matter for the Welsh Assembly, but we are led to believe that it will also be undertaking a review of this important issue this year.

Mr. Swire: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the total specified capital grant awarded in disabled facilities grants is for *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 in each region of England; [165011]

(2) what courses of action are available to local authorities to make up any differences between required expenditure and disabled facilities grants to comply with Government directives; [165012]

(3) what discussions his Department has had with local authorities to ascertain their expenditure plans to adapt people's homes before the awarding of disabled facilities grants; [165013]

(4) on what basis his Department calculated the disabled facilities grant in each region of England; [165014]

(5) what assessment his Department made of *(a)* local authorities' housing strategies and *(b)* house condition surveys prior to calculating disabled facilities grants. [165015]

Keith Hill: The allocation of specified capital grant (SCG) for disabled facilities grant (DFG) to each region of England for the years 2003–04 and 2004–05 are tabled as follows:

£000

Region	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
London	15,399	15,282
East of England	10,182	9,978
North East	4,454	4,365
North West	15,738	17,360
West Midlands	11,778	11,542
South West	8,558	8,387
South East	15,690	17,211
Yorkshire/Humber	10,747	10,707
East Midlands	6,454	6,325

The SCO for DFGs is paid to local authorities to contribute towards 60 per cent. of local authority expenditure incurred on mandatory DFGs up to the limit of the allocation made to each local authority at the beginning of the financial year. Local authorities must find, from their own capital resources, funding for the remaining 40 per cent. of total DFG expenditure,

100 per cent. of any excess expenditure on mandatory DFGs above the allocation limit and any discretionary expenditure incurred by them in carrying out housing adaptations for disabled people. As DFG is a mandatory grant for eligible applicants, local authorities must make adequate financial provision within their budgets to meet these expenditure demands.

Local authorities are asked to submit to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister every year, in the Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix to their Housing Investment Programme, their planned expenditure on mandatory DFG.

The allocation of the national budget of SCG for DFGs to each region is made on the basis of a formula. This formula comprises indices constructed according to the number of people in each region in receipt of disability living allowance and attendance allowance and also an adjustment for the regional differences in building costs. These indices are updated annually. The allocation according to the formula is limited to the total amount that the authorities in each region have said they need to cover 60 per cent. of their planned expenditure on DFGs. If the formula allocates more than this amount the residual sum is reallocated to other regions in proportion to their need. For the 2004–05 allocations, a further damping mechanism was used to ensure that no region had a cut of more than 2 per cent. in its allocation compared with the previous year.

Once the regional allocation of SCG has been established the allocation to individual local authorities is made by the Government Offices in each Region. 80 per cent. of the regional total is allocated using the same indices of need as for the regional allocation. The remaining 20 per cent. is allocated entirely at the discretion of the Government Office who can take into account any relevant local evidence of need and policy performance including an assessment of an authority's housing strategy and the role played by housing adaptations.

Environmental Health Officers

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what change in the number of environmental health officers the Government estimates will be needed in England and Wales as a result of the provisions contained within the Housing Bill; in what time frame the Government estimates that additional environmental health officers required as a result of the provisions contained within the Housing Bill will be recruited and trained; how much he estimates such recruitment will cost; how such costs will be met; and what money central Government will provide. [166295]

Keith Hill: The Government does not expect the provisions of Part 1 of the Housing Bill to require the employment of additional environment health officers. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister indicated during the Committee Stage of the Bill that the Government would meet local authorities' start-up costs associated with the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, and that these costs were estimated at £4–5 million.

Implementation of the licensing provisions in Parts 2 and 3 need not in itself require the recruitment of staff as specialist environmental health officers. The number of staff required and the time frame within which they are recruited and trained will be a matter for local authorities to determine. The Government is in discussions with the Local Government Association on these matters and although licensing should be self financing it is proposed to set aside £13 million to meet local authorities' start-up costs.

Fire Services

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister at what age firefighters are able to retire on a full pension; and if he will make a statement. [165465]

Mr. Raynsford: The maximum pension is payable after 30 years' service from age 50.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if the Government will ensure that firemen have adequate insurance cover for *(a)* themselves and *(b)* their families against the risk of being injured or killed as a result of responding to a terrorist attack. [163119]

Mr. Raynsford: There are provisions within the conditions of service and the fire fighters pensions scheme for awards for injury and death benefit. However, the office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made aware that some insurance companies have been attempting to limit the amount of personal cover available to the fire fighters who may be required to respond to emergencies as a result of terrorist attack. The Government recognise the importance of ensuring that fire responders, including the fire and rescue service, are able to respond with confidence to a full range of emergency situations. That is why the Civil Contingencies Secretariat in the Cabinet Office is currently working with the relevant Departments to establish the extent of the problem and to examine the implications for the emergency services.

Football Stadium, Falmer

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the further representations he intends to take into account in respect of the planning application for a football stadium at Falmer, East Sussex, will be limited to *(a)* those commenting on the report by his planning inspector on the draft Brighton and Hove Local Plan and *(b)* those who had already made formal representations at or before the public inquiry into the football stadium application. [165688]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister will take into account all representations made to him, as far as they are relevant, in making his decision on the applications for a football stadium at Falmer, East Sussex.

It will be clear from the decision letter when issued what matters have been taken into account and the weight that has been attached to any particular matter.

Government Offices for the Regions

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many people were employed in each of the Government offices for the regions in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* each of the last three years; and how many are budgeted for the next year. [164808]

Yvette Cooper: The number of staff working in Government offices has increased as more Departments have devolved more work to be carried out in the regions. The figures for February 2004 and in each of the last three years are as follows:

Staff Employed in the Government Offices for the Regions

GO Region	*February 2004*	*March 2003*	*March 2002*	*March 2001*
GO South East	327	277	274	239
GO South West	344	309	294	248
GO London	321	282	258	280
GO North West	356	351	340	377
GO North East	325	296	267	258
GO East Midlands	281	277	253	221
GO West Midlands	318	301	286	289
GO East	268	235	190	172
GO Yorkshire and the Humber	310	283	267	255
Total	2,850	2,611	2,429	2,339

The figures for 2001–04 include all permanent, casual and fixed term appointments who were in post in the Government offices, but exclude those on secondment, career break, maternity leave or special leave without pay. The figure given in my answer of 26 January for staff then in post in the Government office for north-east should have been 322. Staffing in the Government offices for 2004–05 has been budgeted to cover the same number of staff as are currently employed.

Green Belt

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to allow planning applications for replacement on a one-for-one basis in the green belt where the previous buildings have been removed for safety reasons; and if he will make a statement. [165376]

Keith Hill: National policy on development in green belts is set out in Planning Policy Guidance note (PPG) 2. This states that save for a few specific exceptions the construction of new buildings inside the green belt is inappropriate development. One exception is made for the replacement of an existing dwelling, which need not be inappropriate, providing the new dwelling is not materially larger than the dwelling it replaces.

In other cases where a new building, including a replacement building, is proposed, and the building is not covered by one of the exceptions in PPG2, the onus is on the applicant to demonstrate that very special circumstances exist to justify inappropriate development. It will have to be shown that these clearly outweigh the harm by reason of inappropriateness, and any other harm, that the development will cause to the green belt.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his written statement of 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 73WS, on green belt statistics, when he decided to proceed with the designation of the New Forest as a national park. [165898]

Keith Hill: No decision has been made. I am advised that the Inquiry Inspector's report is currently with Defra Ministers who alone must decide whether to confirm, modify, or reject the Designation Order that the Countryside Agency made in 2002.

Gypsies/Travellers

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities have taken *(a)* legal action and *(b)* eviction proceedings against Gypsies and Travellers in the last year for which figures are available. [164095]

Yvette Cooper: This information is not being held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Housing

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 9 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1227W, on HMOs, if he will place copies of the responses to Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation in England, A Consultation Paper in the Library. [165708]

Keith Hill: Further to the commitment I gave on 9 February in response to a question from the hon. Member for Kingston and Surbiton to make copies of the responses to the 1999 consultation on Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation in England in the Library, I can confirm that on 19 March 2004 these were made available in the Library of the Houses.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for what reason his analysis of responses to the consultation paper on licensing houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) in England and Wales did not include an analysis of the responses to the proposal to introduce a duty of care on the owners and managers of HMOs to ensure the health and safety of their tenants; and if he will publish an analysis of these responses. [166199]

Phil Hope: The analysis of the responses to the consultation paper on licensing of houses in multiple occupation, which was made available in the Library on 19 March 2004, was a summary analysis. A full analysis of the responses has now been made available in the Library, including that on the proposal to introduce a duty of care on owners and managers of HMOs to ensure the health and safety of their tenants.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many respondents to the consultation paper on licensing houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) *(a)* supported, *(b)* opposed and *(c)* did not express an opinion about the proposal to introduce a duty of care on the owners and managers of all HMOs to ensure the health and safety of their tenants. [166200]

Phil Hope: A total of 579 responses were received to the 1999 consultation paper on Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation in England.

A majority of the respondents—363 did not express any views on the proposal to introduce a duty of care on the owners and managers of HMOs. Five respondents were opposed to the proposal, 211 were in favour.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what research has been undertaken to assess bad management practices within houses of multiple occupation in areas of *(a)* high and *(b)* low demand since 2001; and what the results have been. [166283]

Keith Hill: The Government has not undertaken any specific research into management practices within houses in multiple occupation since 2001.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Government estimates will be the cost of an adequate monitoring scheme of licensing of houses of multiple occupation. [166286]

Phil Hope: The Government has undertaken to review the scope and operation of licensing of houses in multiple occupation within three years of its implementation. It will consult the Local Government Association and stakeholders (including landlord representative organisations) as to what tools for monitoring need to be in place, and the costs involved, to assist in carrying out the review.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what consultations he has had with landlords and landlords' representatives regarding licensing of houses of multiple occupation; and what the outcomes were. [166294]

Phil Hope: Landlords and their representatives were consulted on the draft Housing Bill and were subsequently invited to present evidence to the Select Committee that scrutinised the Bill. Ministers and officials have had a number of meetings with landlords' representatives on the provisions of the Bill and its implementation. The views of landlords and their representatives (including the evidence given to the Select Committee) have been taken into consideration in developing the scheme for licensing of houses in multiple occupation in the Housing Bill. The Government is committed to continue consultation with stakeholders (including landlords) on the implementation of the licensing provisions in the Bill and it hopes to meet landlords' representatives as soon as possible to discuss this further.

A list of all individual consultations that have been carried out cannot be provided other than at disproportionate cost.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent representations he has received on affordable homes in the Vale of York. [166534]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend has received three letters about affordable housing in the Vale of York from the hon. Member since November 2002. In addition, affordable housing features in discussions that the Government Office has with local authorities in the area, and appeared in their comments on the draft regional housing strategy last year. Local partnerships in the Vale of York are currently discussing three affordable housing proposals for Regional Housing Board funding in 2005–06 with the Board.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the *(a)* number and *(b)* proportion of houses in multiple occupation with three or more storeys which have four or fewer occupants. [162718]

Keith Hill: According to the English House Condition Survey 1996, there are 622,000 buildings in England which can commonly be described as houses in multiple occupation and which are occupied by four or fewer persons. The Government have made no estimate as to the number of those HMOs that are three storeys or more.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how *(a)* the Starter Homes Initiative and *(b)* the Abandoned Homes Initiative have benefited the residents of Birkenhead. [166281]

Phil Hope: Since September 2001, the Starter Home Initiative (SHI) has been helping key workers into home ownership in areas where the high cost of housing serves to undermine recruitment and retention of skilled staff in our key public services. It has not been available to key workers in the North West. The SHI was superseded from 1 April by a new key worker housing programme—Key Worker Living. This is also not available in the North West.

I am not aware of an Abandoned Homes Initiative. However, our Market Renewal Pathfinders are a comprehensive programme to tackle low demand and abandonment in nine areas of England. The area of the Merseyside Pathfinder includes parts of, Liverpool, Sefton and Wirral, including part of Birkenhead. The Pathfinder has been allocated a total £90 million of the Market Renewal Fund for the period up until March 2006. This includes £4 million for "early actions" announced on 3 April 2003, *Official Report*, column 65 Written Statements, and a further £86 million which was announced on 2 February in my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister's publication 'Making it happen: The Northern Way', *Official Report*, column 26WS. It is for the Pathfinder to make decisions about how it spends this allocation in line with our aim to tackle low demand and abandonment.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the environmental sustainability requirements are for *(a)* new build housing and *(b)* major renovation of housing. [165266]

Phil Hope: The environmental requirements for both new and renovated housing are currently limited to the conservation of energy and water. Significant improvements in the energy performance of all building were made with the revision of Part L of the Building Regulations in 2002. Part L is now being reviewed to address the requirements of the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and the Energy White Paper. Water conservation is currently being evaluated to see how it can be incorporated in the Building Regulations.

In addition all new developments that are publicly funded through the Housing Corporation must comply with the Corporation's published Scheme Development Standards (April 2003).

From April 2003 all new homes funded by the Housing Corporation are required to achieve a BRE EcoHomes environmental assessment rating of "pass" as a minimum essential condition of grant. Registered Social Landlords are encouraged to aim for the higher 'good' rating and receive an increase of 1–2 per cent. in their Total Cost Indicator (TCI) where such certification is obtained in conjunction with 'Secured by Design' certification. From April 2005 "good" will be the minimum requirement, with "very good" becoming a recommended item.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his latest estimate is of the number of new housing units that will become available in the London Borough of Islington in *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06, broken

down by (i) council, (ii) housing association and (iii) co-operatives; and what his estimate is of the number of private dwellings for sale that are likely to become available in the same period. [166358]

Keith Hill: Provisional information from the Housing Corporation states that the number of housing association dwellings to be provided in Islington in the two years 2004–06 is 1229. There will be no council houses built and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not have information on cooperatives.

As regards new private housing for sale, the Office of the Deputy Minister does not have precise estimates. The London Plan target for Islington is 900 new "homes" Annually, or 1800 over two years, including supply from all sources. New private housing for sale will be a major component, but the figure includes the housing association dwellings the Office of the Deputy Minister has just referred to, reduction in vacancies and additional non-self contained accommodation.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures are in place to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Housing Act 1996; and what their findings are. [166336]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister considers any relevant provisions of the Act as part of different aspects of housing policy, and has amended these where appropriate. Changes include:

new provisions for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) in the current Housing Bill,

which also amends Part 5 of the 1996 Act to allow introductory tenancies to be extended.

Part 2 of the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 amended provisions made by the 1996 Act about service charges and leasehold enfranchisement.

Part 2 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 has replaced the 1996 Act provisions about anti-social behaviour injunctions and made new provision (demoted tenancies) designed to control anti-social behaviour by tenants of social landlords.

the Homelessness Act 2002 made substantial amendments to Parts 6 and 7 of the 1996 Bill.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures are in place to assess the impact of the Housing Act 1996 on the housing market; and what their findings have been. [166337]

Phil Hope: The Housing Act 1996 made a range of provisions concerning the social rented sector (including the role of the Housing Corporation and tackling anti-social behaviour). It also covered the private rented sector (including the registration of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs), and the creation of a system whereby Assured Shorthold Tenancies became the standard form of letting in the Private Rented Sector), leasehold reform and homelessness. No comprehensive assessment of the impact of the Act has been carried out. However its effects can be assessed from data provided by the Survey of English Housing. For example this has shown the proportion of households renting privately remaining static at around 10 per cent. of the housing market.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures are in place to assess the effectiveness of the registration schemes provided by the Housing Act 1996; and what their findings have been. [166338]

Keith Hill: When the Housing Act 1996 was enacted, the previous administration did not put in place any measures to assess the effectiveness of its provisions for registration schemes for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). These provisions fell short of the present Government's commitment to introduce the mandatory licensing of HMOs and the repeal of the provisions of the 1996 Act. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is committed to reviewing the effectiveness and scope of licensing within three years of implementation.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the capacity of the labour market in the nine housing market renewal pathfinder areas to provide the skilled tradespeople needed to deliver the programmes. [165464]

Keith Hill: Each of the pathfinders, as part of their strategy for turning around areas of low demand, is looking at the skills and capacity requirements necessary to deliver their programmes.

More widely, the Government is firmly committed to supporting initiatives to improve recruitment and training and is:

Funding the new Sector Skills Council, Construction Skills. This is the lead agency delivering recruitment and also addressing management issues.

Funding the Ambition Construction programme aimed at training young people in the various construction trades.

Working with the Strategic Forum and industry to encourage innovation to foster improvement and increased productivity, and supporting Constructing Excellence to encourage best practice in training and in engagement of supply chains by main contractors.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether registration schemes provided under the Housing Act 1996 will retain their legal status under the provisions of the Housing Bill. [166282]

Keith Hill: The provisions in the Housing Act 1996 for registration schemes for Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) will be repealed by the Housing Bill. Under the transitional arrangements for which the Bill provides, however, registered HMOs that meet the requirements of the new licensing arrangements will become licensed for the remaining term of their existing registration.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what average annual real terms increase in the 2004–05 management and maintenance allowance would be required for the average allowance in England to reach, by the Decent Homes target year 2010–11, the real terms level of management and maintenance expenditure needed as set out in the Estimate of the Need to Spend on Maintenance and Management in Local Authority Housing published in June 2003. [166615]

Keith Hill: Based on the stock of English local authority housing at April 2003, an annual real increase of around 8.9 per cent. in management and maintenance allowances would be required for the six years 2005–06 to 2010–11 for allowances to reach the estimate of need.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister by how *(a)* many percentage points and *(b)* much the average 2001–02 management and maintenance allowance would have had to increase to reach the level of the need to spend on management and maintenance indicated by

the findings in "Estimate of the Need to Spend on Maintenance and Management in Local Authority Housing", published in June 2003. [166636]

Keith Hill: The average management and maintenance allowance per dwelling of English local authorities was £1,030.64 in 2001–02 (in 2001–02 prices) and is £1,316.35 for 2004–05 (in 2004–05 prices). The need to spend is estimated at £2,193.92 in 2004–05 prices. Hence the 2004–05 level of allowances would have to increase by about 67 per cent. in real terms to reach the estimated level of need.

Land Use

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total area designated for urban land use in *(a)* 1974, *(b)* 1984, *(c)* 1994 and *(d)* 2003 was in England. [165753]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. The information available for designated urban land areas with populations of 1,000 or more in census years:

	Million hectares
1981	1.035
1991	1.087
2001	1.159

These figures are for built-up areas, irrespective of administrative boundaries.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* Band D council tax and *(b)* average council tax paid in (i) Plymouth, (ii) Torbay, (iii) Torridge, (iv) West Devon, (v) South Hams, (vi) Exeter, (vii) Teignbridge, (viii) Mid Devon, (ix) East Devon and (x) North Devon were in financial year 2004–05, including all precepts. [165194]

Phil Hope: The figures are available from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website at www.localodpm.gov.uk/finance/ctax/ctax045.htm.

On the website, figures for own Band D council tax and average area council tax can be found, for all authorities, in Table 2—2004–05 Council taxes (average per dwelling and Band D for two adults): individual local authorities.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the percentage council tax change has been in *(a)* Plymouth, *(b)* Devon and *(c)* Torbay in each of the past three years. [165195]

Mr. Raynsford: The increase in average area council tax for Plymouth, Devon and Torbay in each of the last three years is tabled as follows.

Percentage

	Plymouth UA	*Torbay UA*	*Devon*
2002–03	13.4	16.8	7.1
2003–04	11.6	12.0	10.1
2004–05	10.1	18.3	6.0

Devon has been taken to comprise the area of Devon's eight district councils but exclude the areas of Plymouth and Torbay unitary authorities.

David Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* new advice he has given to and *(b)* new requirements he has imposed on billing authorities in relation to the council tax payment dates for 2004–05. [165326]

Mr. Raynsford: The Council Tax (Administration and Enforcement) (England) Regulations 1992 (SI 1992/613 as amended) set out the statutory position as to the administration of council tax. Regulation 21 in particular deals with council tax payments. No new advice or requirements have been given to or imposed on billing authorities in relation to payments dates for council tax for 2004–05.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the level of council tax receipts collected by local authorities was irrespective of the financial year to which they relate in *(a)* Suffolk, *(b)* Norfolk, *(c)* Essex and *(d)* Cambridgeshire in each year from 1996–97 to 2002–03; and what the population of each authority was in each year. [165582]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is tabled as follows.

Council tax receipts collected by local authorities[1]: 1996–97 to 2002–03

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–200*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Cambridgeshire							
Cambridge	18,519	19,607	20,614	22,253	24,985	27,199	29,929
East Cambridgeshire	10,786	11,813	13,811	15,261	16,879	18,405	22,345
Fenland	11,914	13,069	14,516	16,488	17,789	19,688	22,869
Huntingdonshire	24,753	27,067	31,686	35,909	39,958	43,414	48,650
Peterborough	21,347	22,541	27,826	31,097	34,579	36,909	40,978
South Cambridgeshire	23,850	25,976	28,537	34,169	37,745	40,766	46,754
Essex							
Basildon	30,337	32,897	37,088	40,287	44,713	48,163	52,304
Braintree	22,820	25,301	29,700	32,410	35,693	38,993	43,439
Brentwood	16,390	17,827	20,537	21,436	23,950	25,898	28,232
Castle Point	16,590	17,676	20,226	21,705	23,781	25,987	28,663
Chelmsford	31,969	34,352	39,304	42,469	46,379	50,374	55,369
Colchester	27,293	29,209	33,585	36,401	39,672	42,344	48,006
Epping Forest	26,835	29,252	33,855	36,516	39,123	42,798	47,398
Harlow	13,976	14,890	17,991	19,607	20,871	67,748	24,413
Maldon	10,993	12,252	14,413	15,964	17,575	19,230	21,597

Council tax receipts collected by local authorities[1]: 1996–97 to 2002–03

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–200*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Rochford	15,278	17,154	20,029	21,771	23,467	25,425	27,954
Southend-on-Sea	27,114	30,184	32,066	33,733	36,304	38,883	41,640
Tendring	24,015	25,956	29,717	31,216	34,503	36,805	41,452
Thurrock	21,826	23,940	24,425	26,629	28,806	31,478	35,136
Uttlesford	15,419	17,037	19,724	21,523	22,855	25,030	29,564
Norfolk							
Breckland	18,389	19,208	21,630	24,299	26,305	29,636	33,139
Broadland	20,820	22,404	26,455	29,796	32,225	35,286	39,413
Great Yarmouth	13,099	14,153	16,340	17,648	19,308	21,069	23,424
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk	22,456	24,348	28,129	30,870	33,188	35,909	40,753
North Norfolk	18,804	20,423	23,805	26,081	28,142	29,969	33,767
Norwich	18,090	19,459	21,420	24,121	25,919	27,815	30,928
South Norfolk	20,317	22,126	25,542	28,649	31,036	33,544	37,810
Suffolk							
Babergh	15,701	17,637	19,489	21,144	22,523	24,351	27,731
Forest Heath	7,339	8,142	9,026	9,838	10,636	11,717	13,360
Ipswich	19,449	21,329	24,588	25,118	26,985	29,130	33,004
Mid Suffolk	16,412	18,177	20,118	22,117	23,473	25,129	29,093
St. Edmundsbury	17,326	19,007	21,212	23,456	25,102	27,325	31,361
Suffolk Coastal	23,075	25,019	27,766	30,469	32,154	34,877	40,063
Waveney	17,183	18,343	20,718	22,533	23,865	26,192	29,821

[1] Irrespective of the finance years to which they relate.

Source:
QRC4 returns to ODPM

Mid-year population estimates 1996–2002

	1996	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Cambridgeshire							
Cambridge	107,989	107,853	108,828	109,272	109,107	110,091	110,656
East Cambridgeshire	66,408	68,572	70,709	71,343	72,751	73,411	74,419
Fenland	79,337	80,480	81,715	82,630	83,084	83,687	84,335
Huntingdonshire	151,923	154,818	154,308	155,796	157,353	157,189	157,899
Peterborough	157,978	156,206	156,380	156,033	155,936	157,587	157,962
South Cambridgeshire	125,727	128,040	129,196	128,995	128,901	130,476	131,014
Essex							
Basildon	162,100	162,968	164,107	164,673	165,203	165,895	166,397
Braintree	124,210	125,398	127,453	129,160	131,306	132,482	134,488
Brentwood	69,919	69,541	69,204	68,770	68,646	68,483	68,592
Castle Point	85,623	85,401	85,784	86,041	86,418	86,673	87,186
Chelmsford	156,723	155,737	155,603	155,664	156,228	157,269	157,527
Colchester	151,904	153,031	152,112	154,123	154,822	156,016	155,427
Epping Forest	119,235	119,379	119,944	120,576	120,754	120,972	121,338
Harlow	74,182	75,385	76,596	77,732	78,530	78,799	78,538
Maldon	54,702	55,309	56,270	57,488	58,715	59,589	60,399
Rochford	75,864	76,067	76,557	77,391	78,240	78,650	79,265
Southend-on-Sea	163,415	165,089	164,101	163,108	161,743	160,362	158,760
Tendring	131,718	132,700	134,917	135,771	137,486	138,802	139,995
Thurrock	135,041	135,675	137,766	139,895	141,735	143,297	145,235
Uttlesford	67,549	67,630	67,733	68,323	68,708	68,969	69,256
Norfolk							
Breckland	112,642	114,847	116,758	118,736	120,543	121,585	122,153
Broadland	112,166	113,866	115,440	116,937	117,878	118,814	119,048
Great Yarmouth	89,428	89,218	89,805	90,157	90,600	90,945	91,549
Kings Lynn and West Norfolk	131,362	132,008	133,164	133,660	134,961	135,565	137,409
North Norfolk	95,071	96,147	97,482	97,820	98,297	98,495	98,847
Norwich	123,753	122,644	121,305	120,749	121,054	122,465	121,643
South Norfolk	105,397	106,246	107,476	108,788	110,187	110,848	112,117
Suffolk							
Babergh	80,138	80,488	81,444	82,097	82,980	83,538	84,669
Forest Heath	63,627	64,626	61,872	62,212	62,060	56,223	55,505
Ipswich	115,165	114,848	116,134	116,594	116,758	117,156	117,298
Mid Suffolk	81,177	82,209	84,069	85,008	85,953	87,015	87,647
St. Edmundsbury	93,578	93,925	96,338	96,795	97,875	98,323	98,459
Suffolk Coastal	114,204	116,061	115,114	114,858	115,629	115,239	114,983
Waveney	108,481	108,633	109,981	110,560	111,645	112,497	113,370

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of council tax was collected within the North Somerset unitary authority in each year since 1997; and what the total cost of administering council tax payments was in each year. [165680]

Phil Hope: The information requested is tabled as follows.

North Somerset Council

£ million

	Percentage of council tax collected in-year[1]	*Council tax collection costs*
1997–98	96.9	0.755
1998–99[2]	96.7	—
1999–2000	96.6	1.071
2000–01	96.7	1.139
2001–02	97.0	1.198
2002–03	97.1	1.811
2003–04[3]	—	1.674

[1] Amount of council tax for the year received by the end of the financial year as a percentage of the net collectable debit for the year.

[2] The collection costs figure was reported as zero: the costs are assumed to have been recorded elsewhere on the RO 6 return.

[3] The collection rate figure is not yet available, and the collection cost figure is a budget figure that includes business rate collection costs (in excess of the allowance) and the costs of rate and community charge collection

Sources:
Council tax collection rates—ORC4 returns to ODPM
Council tax collection costs—RO6 returns to ODPM for 1997–98 to 2002–03; RA return to ODPM for 2003–04.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average household council tax level was in the North Somerset unitary authority in each year since 1997. [165682]

Phil Hope: The average area council tax per dwelling for North Somerset in each year since 1997–98 is tabled as follows:

	Average council tax per dwelling (£)
1997–98	551
1998–99	600
1999–2000	655
2000–01	689
2001–02	721
2002–03	816
2003–04	969
2004–05	1,049

Mr. Swire: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of *(a)* council tax and *(b)* council house rents was collected in (i) Devon and (ii) Cornwall in each of the last seven years. [164790]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is tabled as follows.

In-year council tax collection rate[1]

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Cornwall	95.8	96.9	96.2	96.6	97.0	97.2	97.5
Caradon	96.1	96.8	92.8	95.1	96.4	97.9	98.1
Carrick	95.6	97.3	96.9	96.3	97.3	97.8	97.7
Kerrier	92.9	95.1	95.3	96.1	96.6	95.3	96.7
North Cornwall	96.2	97.1	97.5	98.1	97.2	97.5	97.3
Penwith	98.5	98.8	97.7	96.8	97.4	97.4	98.1
Restormel	96.4	96.9	97.1	97.2	97.1	97.3	97.5
Devon	95.0	94.5	95.0	95.7	95.1	95.2	96.1
East Devon	97.0	98.3	98.6	98.5	98.4	98.4	98.5
Exeter	96.9	95.2	95.0	93.7	94.9	95.2	95.9
Mid Devon	97.0	97.1	97.4	97.8	98.3	98.3	98.7
North Devon	95.7	96.2	96.8	97.0	97.0	97.5	97.3
Plymouth	89.1	89.9	90.6	90.0	90.1	90.5	92.0
South Hams	98.1	98.3	98.0	98.3	98.3	98.8	98.9
Teignbridge	94.2	95.5	95.9	96.2	97.2	97.7	97.9
Torbay	96.8	96.9	96.3	95.2	95.9	96.3	96.6
Torridge	97.0	95.3	96.5	97.3	95.8	92.1	97.1
West Devon	96.9	97.3	97.7	98.0	98.1	98.3	98.6

Percentage of housing rent collected[2]

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–013*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Cornwall districts							
Caradon	99.5	99.6	98.3	97.6	96.9	97.1	98.8
Carrick	100.0	100.7	97.6	97.2	[4]97.8	[4]98.33	98.6
Kerrier	98.5	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—
North Cornwall	98.7	99.6	99.1	98.8	98.1	98.2	97.70
Penwith	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—
Restormel	98.8	99.1	92.8	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—
Devon districts							
East Devon	99.5	99.8	99.4	99.0	[5]97.6	[5]97.2	[5]97.8
Exeter	100.2	99.2	98.7	96.2	[5]94.2	[5]96.1	98.4
North Devon	98.6	99.1	96.6	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—

Percentage of housing rent collected[2]

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–013*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Plymouth	98.4	99.1	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—
South Hams	99.3	99.2	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—
Teignbridge	98.2	98.4	99.9	100.6	[5]99.2	[4]99.9	99.6
Mid Devon	99.8	99.1	99.3	99.0	98.1	98.6	98.7
Torbay	90.8	96.3	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—	[6]—
Torridge	98.2	98.2	98.9	99.2	97.7	96.6	96.7
West Devon	103.0	99.6	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—	[4]—
Plymouth UA	[6]—	[6]—	98.7	97.4	95.4	94.0	95.9
Torbay UA	[6]—	[6]—	97.3	94.7	[7]—	—	—

[1] As reported on QRC4 forms. Council tax collection continues after the end of the financial year to which amounts relate and so the final percentage collected is higher than the figures shown, which exclude amounts for earlier years.
[2] Data collected by the Audit Commission as Audit Commission or Best Value Performance Indicators. Figures for the whole of Cornwall and Devon are not readily available.
[3] The definition of rent collected changed in 2000–01 (from indicator B7 to indicator BV66a) and so figures are not comparable.
[4] These figures may not be reliable.
[5] Large scale stock transfer has taken place.
[6] Not applicable: data are not comparable before and after Plymouth and Torbay because unitary authorities as a result of local government reorganisation.
[7] Data not collected.

Mobile Phone Masts

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out the procedures of the appeals process for applications for mobile telephone transmitting masts. [165559]

Keith Hill: Section 78 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1990 sets out an applicant's right to appeal against planning decisions made by a local planning authority (including those for mobile telephone transmitting masts) and the failure of the local planning authority to take such decisions. There are three methods of appeal—written representation, hearing, and inquiry—and the procedures to be followed are contained with DETR Circular 05/2000. The time limit for making an appeal is three months for those applications registered by the local planning authority on or after 5 September 2003, and six months for those registered prior to that date.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many applications for telephone masts he has *(a)* rejected and *(b)* approved during the last 12 months. [165560]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. Therefore, the following information relates to appeal decisions about telecommunications development generally.

	1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004
Received	608
Withdrawn	31
Allowed	211
Dismissed	163
Total decided	374
In hand	203

Note:
All figures relate to the period in which the appeal was received, not necessarily the period in which it was decided.

Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much has been allocated to Crosby from the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund. [164414]

Yvette Cooper: Crosby is situated in the Sefton district. Overall Sefton has been allocated £12.6 million (2001–02: £2.8million, 2002–03: £4.2 million and 2003–04: £5.6 million) of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund (NRF). Sefton is due to receive a further £5.6 million in 2004–05 and £5.6 million in 2005–06.

It is for each local authority to work with their fellow local strategic partnership members to agree exactly how to use NRF in support of the priorities in their local area.

North Bow

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the effectiveness of the Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust in the regeneration of North Bow. [166130]

Keith Hill: The Tower Hamlets Housing Action Trust (HAT) has completed its work on budget (including £ 123 million of Government assistance) and one year ahead of its original completion target of March 2005. It has exceeded its original objectives for the building of new homes or the improvement of existing ones to the highest standards; ensuring effective, sensitive and responsive maintenance and management of homes; promoting diversity of tenure within the HAT's estates; and improving the economic, social and environmental conditions of the area, including improved jobs opportunities, youth and community facilities.

Nearly 1,000 new homes have been built. Only one tower block, and one sheltered housing scheme, are to remain—both of which will have been extensively refurbished by the end of the HAT programme.

The high level of resident involvement has remained core to the HAT's ethos throughout its life. This included tenant involvement in the actual design of

homes. The recent Quality of Life Survey showed that 60 per cent. of residents feel that levels of crime have gone down and community spirit and neighbourliness have risen.

The HAT has also delivered, in partnership with the Bow People's Trust (BPT) and Old Ford Housing Association—and many other local agencies—a range of community and economic development initiatives to tackle the problems of social exclusion in the area. These initiatives include the Tower Hamlets Credit Union in Roman Road; the regeneration of the Roman Road Market; Growing Concerns—a community gardening project; a Construction Training Initiative for ethnic communities; a range of services for the elderly and support to local schools. A large area of open space is also being provided in the HAT area and a new Youth Centre will soon be built.

The HAT has encouraged its successor organisations to continue its vision and ensure that the gains made locally in neighbourhood renewal are sustainable and beneficial to the whole community for the long term. To this end, the HAT has awarded an endowment of some £3 million which will be used exclusively in the local area through the "Action for Bow" Trust Fund.

Public Lavatories

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total amount raised by the uniform business rate levied on public lavatories was in 2003–04. [165938]

Phil Hope: The information requested is not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to revise the uniform business rate in order to exclude the rating of publicly owned public lavatories. [165935]

Mr. Raynsford: None.

Local authority property—whether offices, schools, libraries, sporting facilities, car parks or lavatories—is rateable.

Recruitment

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost of recruitment of civil servants for the Department was in each financial year since 1996–97, broken down by *(a)* delegated or contracted out recruitment procedures and *(b)* recruitment procedures carried out by the Department. [158193]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created on 29 May 2002.

(a) The total cost of recruitment of civil servants, using contracted out recruitment procedures from June 2002 to March 2003 is £457,000.

(b) The provision of a breakdown of costs for internal or Whitehall-wide recruitment carried out by the Office could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

All permanent recruitment into the Office is carried out through fair and open competition and in accordance with the rules set out in the Civil Service Commissioners Recruitment Code.

Regeneration Funding (Ilford, North)

Linda Perham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much funding has been allocated for regeneration in Ilford, North since 1997. [164881]

Yvette Cooper: Information on the allocation of resources broken down to constituency level is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The London borough of Redbridge and the London Development Agency have advised the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister that the amount of funding which has been allocated to regeneration projects in the borough since 1997 is tabled as follows:

Programme	*Source*	*Date*	*Funding (£ million)*	*Match funding (£ million)*
Ilford Town Centre Redevelopment-ODPM allocation from Sustainable Communities Funding	ODPM	2003–06	0.6	0.53
The Health Ladder to Social Inclusion	SRB Allocation administered through LD A	1999–2006	[1]8.0	11.6
From offending to Employment in North East London	SRB Allocation administered through LDA	1997–2003	[2]1.5	2.36
Bridging the Gap	SRB Allocation administered through LDA	1997–2002	3.0	6.0
South Ilford Business Development	LDA 2 Programme	2003–06	0.64	0.47
Barnabas Workshop—Job Shop South Ilford Business Partnership	LDA 2 Programme	2003–06	0.31	—

[1] Programme covering Redbridge and Waltham Forest is delivered by the North East London Health Authority and benefits residents in both boroughs.

[2] Programme led by the Probation Service and benefiting offenders and young people at risk of offending in five North East London boroughs including Redbridge.

In addition to these allocations there have been further allocations to the borough from the European Social Fund for training schemes.

The match funding details includes Local Authority, Health Authority, Learning and Skills Council and private sector resources and is specifically related to the regeneration programmes listed.

Regional Assemblies

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the estimated costs are of setting up elected regional assemblies in *(a)* the North West, *(b)* the North East and *(c)* Yorkshire. [165460]

Mr. Raynsford: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for North Essex on 18 March 2004, *Official Report*, 451W.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the effect of the proposed regional assemblies on the operation of *(a)* town, *(b)* county, *(c)* borough and *(d)* city councils in the regions in which assemblies are set up. [165607]

Mr. Raynsford: Elected regional assemblies will be required to actively involve stakeholders in the region in their work. We would expect that local authorities (including town and parish councils) in any region that has an elected assembly will work in partnership with the assembly to deliver their vision for the region.

In regions that choose to have elected assemblies, two-tier local authorities (county and shire district councils) will be restructured into a single tier.

Regional assemblies will generally not take responsibilities from local authorities. Local government will remain the community champion with responsibility for local service delivery, while regional government will lead in the development and implementation of the strategic vision for the region.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to paragraph 5.5 of Cm 5511, what level of additional funding will be made available for rewarding elected regional assemblies which achieve or exceed the targets set by central Government. [165728]

Mr. Raynsford: No decisions have been taken on the likely level of performance reward grant for elected regional assemblies. Targets will be agreed between elected assemblies and central Government, not set by central Government.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* officials and *(b)* press officers are involved in the information campaign on elected regional assemblies, "Your Say". [162422]

Mr. Raynsford: No members of staff are working full-time on the information campaign or elected regional assemblies.

However, there are four administrators, three publicity officers and three press officers in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister involved in the campaign as part of their wider communications responsibilities. There are also 14 members of staff across three Government Offices involved in the campaign as part of their wider responsibilities.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he will take to encourage voter turnout for the regional assembly referendums. [165606]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has announced that we intend to hold the referendums as all-postal ballots. In addition, we are running the "Your Say" campaign about the proposed powers of assemblies. As part of this information campaign, there will be a leaflet to every household.

The Electoral Commission also have a power under the Regional Assemblies (Preparations) Act to do anything they think necessary or expedient to encourage voting at these referendums.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library copies of the responses to the Consultation Papers on *(a)* regional referendums spending limits and *(b)* the conduct of the referendums. [166516]

Mr. Raynsford: Copies of the responses to the following consultation papers are available in the Library:

(a) Registration and spending limits for those wishing to campaign;

(b) Combining regional and local referendums and local referendum rules; and

(c) Fees and charges for counting officers.

In addition, a summary of the responses is available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website.

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total budget for the "Your Say" information campaign is; and how much he has budgeted for *(a)* leaflets, *(b)* posters, *(c)* broadcasting, *(d)* ministerial visits, *(e)* exhibition stands, *(f)* design costs, *(g)* press information and *(h)* other associated costs. [165727]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects the "Your Say" information campaign to cost up to £5 million in total. Likely costs are not broken down in the way requested. However current estimates of the main components are:

	£
(a) Production and distribution of leaflets	1,700,000
(b) Posters	650,000
(c) Broadcast media	1,120,000
(d) Newspapers	475,000
(e) Events	420,000
(f) Other	635,000

Regional Devolution

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress with plans for regional devolution in areas which express an interest. [165608]

Mr. Raynsford: The Government are continuing to prepare for referendums to be held in each of the North East, North West, and Yorkshire and the Humber about whether people want an elected assembly for their region.

This includes undertaking our information campaign "Your Say", which is aimed at ensuring people in the three northern regions are aware of the issues before they cast their vote in a referendum.

If there is a "yes" vote, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will then bring forward legislation whenever parliamentary time allows to enable elected regional assemblies to be established. We aim to publish a draft of that Bill before the first referendums are held.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the process for establishing regional devolution in areas that vote in favour of the proposal. [165618]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will lay orders for various aspects of the referendums in the summer.

Before we hold referendums in regions that may want to establish elected assemblies, we aim to publish a draft Bill, which will set out the process of establishing the assemblies and the powers they will have. The earliest that elections could be held is in 2006.

Room Sizes

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will re-introduce minimum standards for the size of rooms in new dwellings. [165463]

Phil Hope: The Government has no plans at present to introduce minimum room size standards for new dwellings into the building regulations.

Science Strategy

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he has taken to enhance science in his Department since the publication of the Government's science strategy Investing in Innovation. [162245]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published a Science and Innovation Strategy for my Department in July 2003 which sets out: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's commitment to maintaining the use of science and research for policy making and delivery; how The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's evidence base is being developed to support it's objectives; how The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is engaging with our research stakeholders; and how The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is developing it's research base and building capacity, both internally and in the wider research community. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is implementing the recommendations of the Cross-Cutting Review of Science and Research in co-operation with OST and we will look for opportunities to use our research to promote innovation.

Special Constables

Mr. Todd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his policy is on the granting by parish councils of *(a)* honoraria and *(b)* ex-gratia payments to special constables serving their area. [165467]

Phil Hope: Parish Councils are responsible for their actions and decisions to their electorate and to the auditor. Special constables may be paid allowances by a police authority only as determined by the special constables regulations. Any proposals to offer honoraria or ex-gratia payments to special constables would require approval by the Home Secretary under The Special Constables (Amendment) Regulations 2002.

Public Expenditure (Sittingbourne and Sheppey)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much public funding was spent on *(a)* regeneration and regional development, *(b)* housing and *(c)* planning in the constituency of Sittingbourne and Sheppey between (i) 1992 and 1997, (ii) 1997 and 2001 and (iii) 2001 and 2004. [159488]

Yvette Cooper: The readily available information on the funding (£ million) provided by central Government to Swale District Council for these activities is tabled as follows. Spend, particularly on homelessness, strategic housing work and planning, is also funded from general Revenue Support Grant and the authority's own resources.

	1992–93 to 1996–97 (five years)	*1997–98 to 2000–01 (four years)*	*2001–02 to 2003–04 (three years)*
(a) Regeneration and regional development			
Single Regeneration Budget[1]	Not available	4.1	3.4
Mid-Kent Leader Plus[2]	—	—	0.3
(b) Housing			
Local authority housing programme[3]	14.9	7.2	4.4
Local Authority Social Housing Grant	[4]7.9	9.3	4.7
Approved Development Programme	[4]11.4	4.5	6.0
Homelessness	—	—	0.1
(c) Planning[5]	—	—	0.2

[1] The funding for two current SRB schemes.
[2] Estimated figure for Swale's of a cross-authority scheme.
[3] Includes an element assumed to be funded from the authority's capital receipts.
[4] 1994–95 to 1996–97 only.
[5] Planning delivery grant introduced in 2003–04.

Tenancy Deposit Scheme

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the policy statement being used to inform the Law Commission's indicative clauses for a statutory tenancy deposit scheme. [166129]

Phil Hope: The reference to the Law Commission is for them to consider indicative clauses on tenancy deposit protection to accompany the publication of their draft legislation Bill on tenure reform. These will illustrate how a compulsory requirement for tenancy deposit protection and adjudication over tenancy deposit disputes would be implemented using the mechanisms set out in their report in November on Renting Homes.

This reference does not require the Law Commission to consider the desirability or otherwise of regulating tenancy deposits. Neither does it represent a

commitment by the Government to legislating on the basis of Law Commission's draft legislation or the draft clauses on tenancy deposit protection and adjudication.

When it is published we will need to consider the Law Commission's draft legislation very carefully. The Government will publish its approach to tenancy deposit protection shortly afterwards.

Thames Gateway

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the Government estimates that there is sufficient urban capacity in the London part alone of the Thames Gateway Development area to accommodate up to 120,000 new homes. [166288]

Phil Hope: The Government announced in July 2003 its commitment to support development of at least 120,000 new homes in Thames Gateway overall, by 2016. This assumed development of at least 60,000 within the London part of the Gateway by 2016. It did not preclude further growth, and since then work by the Greater London authority (GLA) suggests that there could be substantially more capacity in the London gateway over the longer term.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of the 120,000 new homes envisaged for Thames Gateway development the Government foresees will be built on previously developed land. [166289]

Phil Hope: The presence of a substantial reservoir of previously developed land is one of the key features of the Thames gateway. It is estimated to contain some 2 per cent. of the land area of the south-east but over 17 per cent. of its currently available supply of previously developed land. In the period 1997–2000 an estimated 80 per cent. of new dwellings in the gateway were built on previously developed land, which is above the national target of 60 per cent. and the gateway strategy aims to at least maintain this trend. Detailed allocation of land for new development will be undertaken through the statutory plan-making process by local planning authorities.

TREASURY

Teenage Pregnancy Rates

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the teenage pregnancy rates were for each of the last three years, broken down by constituency. [165824]

Mr. Boateng: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Adrian Sanders, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the teenage pregnancy rates were for each of the last three years, broken down by constituency. (165824)

The most recent year for which figures on teenage conceptions are available is 2001. For information on teenage conceptions by parliamentary constituency, I would refer you to the answer given in the Official Report, volume no 21, column no 586W (16 December 2002). As population estimates for 2000 for parliamentary constituencies (as constituted in that year) are not available, rates cannot be supplied based on these figures. Teenage conception figures by parliamentary constituencies are not readily available for any other years. Figures for 1998 and 1999 are available by ward, local authority and health authority areas. Figures for 2001 are provisional and are only available for local and health authorities. For the purposes of this answer, 'teenage' refers to those aged under 18, in line with the target set by the Government strategy on Teenage Pregnancy.

National Statistics

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what financial and operational criteria will have to be met before the proposed relocation of the Office of National Statistics office in Titchfield receives approval. [165051]

Mr. Boateng: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mark Hoban, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what financial and operational criteria will have to be met before the proposed relocation of the Office of National Statistics office in Titchfield receives approval. (165051)

An initial assessment of these issues was discussed with the Lyons Review team. A fuller assessment will be considered as part of the Spending Review, to inform Government decisions on the allocation of resources. We will be able to present this when those criteria are fully settled.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will publish the Office for National Statistics quantification of the impact of aligning its employees' pay with market conditions outside London as it applies to those employees currently based in *(a)* London and *(b)* Titchfield (i) at present and (ii) once the relocation proposals are implemented. [164724]

Mr. Boateng: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mark Hoban, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning publication of the Office for National Statistics quantification of the impact of aligning its employees' pay with market conditions outside London as it applies to those employees currently based in *(a)* London and *(b)* Titchfield (i) at present and (ii) once the relocation proposals are implemented. (164724).

This information was provided to the Lyons review team on a confidential basis and will not be published.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) who owns the Office for National Statistics offices in Titchfield; [164732]

(2) how much has been spent on the *(a)* maintenance and *(b)* refurbishment of the Office for National Statistics office at Titchfield in each of the last five years. [164738]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mark Hoban, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent questions concerning the Office for National Statistics (ONS) site at Titchfield. (164738, 164732)

The Titchfield site is a Crown freehold held by ONS under the name of the First Secretary of State.

The amount of money spent on the office at Titchfield for maintenance and refurbishment in each of the last five financial years is given below.

£000

	Maintenance	*Refurbishment*	*Total*
1998–99	219	238	457
1999–2000	247	354	601
2000–01	186	233	419
2001–02	299	412	710
2002–03	307	783	1,089
Total	1,258	2,018	3,276

Significant work was undertaken to refurbish the Titchfield accommodation occupied by the Neighbourhood Statistics and reprographics teams during 2003/04. The total forecast expenditure on these two projects during the year is £1.6 million, although final accounts for 2003/04 are not yet available.

Administration Costs

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made in lowering administration costs as a proportion of total spending since his Budget statement. [165021]

Mr. Boateng: The Budget announced that the administration costs of all departments will be capped at or below the 2005–06 nominal level for the remainder of the 2004 Spending Review period. This will reduce administration costs to a planned 3.7 per cent. of total spending by 2008.

Child Benefit

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to pay benefits for each child rather than per pregnancy in the case of multiple births; and if he will make a statement. [166231]

Dawn Primarolo: By 2004–05, financial support for children through tax credits, child benefit and other benefits will have increased by £10.4 billion in real terms from its 1997 level, a rise of 72 per cent. The 2003 pre-Budget report announced a significant increase in the child element of child tax credit—up £180 to £1,625 a year from April 2004. Both the child element of child tax credit and child benefit are already paid in respect of each child in a household, according to income. The baby addition to the family element of child tax credit is intended to recognise the costs on the family of responsibility for a baby and as such is payable per family rather than per child. This and other structural design features of child tax credit will be kept under review, particularly in the light of the Government's commitment of halving child poverty by 2010.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Tynemouth constituency receive child tax credit. [165359]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Wirral south have received child tax credit. [166627]

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Birkenhead have received child tax credit. [166310]

Dawn Primarolo: Estimates of the number of families receiving the child or working tax credit in each constituency appear in Child and Working Tax Credit Statistics Geographical analyses January 2004. This can be found on the Inland Revenue website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits/menu.htm. The estimates are based on a sample of cases, and are subject to sampling uncertainty.

Children (Overseas Holidays)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what proportion of children in England took holidays overseas in each of the last seven years. [165580]

Mr. Boateng: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Tim Loughton, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on the proportion of children in England that took holidays overseas in each of the last seven years.

The information requested is not available. However, the Office for National Statistics conducts the International Passenger Survey (IPS) which interviews people as they enter or leave the country. The IPS counts visits, and people who make more than one visit in a year can be counted more than once. From that source ONS can estimate the number of visits abroad made by UK residents aged under 16. The number of these visits, and the number of visits per 1,000 UK residents aged under 16, are shown in the table below for each of the last 7 years (1997–2003).

	Number of visits made by under 16s (thousands)	*Number of visits made per thousand under 16s*[1]
1997	4010	334
1998	4124	343
1999	4710	392
2000	4821	403
2001	5083	429
2002	5144	437
2003	5141	[2]

Notes:
[1] A single child may make several visits abroad in one year.
[2] 2003 population estimates are not yet available.

Capital Allowances

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Birkenhead have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for computer and internet equipment. [166311]

Dawn Primarolo: We regret that the information is not available to estimate the number of businesses in Birkenhead which have benefited from the 100 per cent. first year capital allowances for the purchase of information and communication equipment.

Council House Tenancies

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer after how many years council house tenancies will be notifiable under stamp duty land tax regulations. [166284]

Ruth Kelly: Under the usual terms of council house tenancies it is unlikely that any will be notifiable under Stamp Duty Land Tax.

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the number of council tenancies which will be notifiable under stamp duty land tax regulations by 2014. [166285]

Ruth Kelly: None.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166361]

Dawn Primarolo: Inland Revenue, Customs and Excise and HM Treasury all aim to ensure that their standard computer software and hardware is maintained at versions which reflect business needs, and which are consistent with industry norms. All three

departments have a policy of replacing older mainstream hardware as part of ongoing refreshment programmes.

Departmental Policies (Sustainable Development)

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in that capacity; [165527]

(2) what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in that capacity in the last 12 months; [165528]

(3) if he will list the meetings attended by a representative of his Department on the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers; [165529]

(4) what steps he is taking to assist in the delivery of sustainable development within Government; [165530]

(5) what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [165531]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 26 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 110W. Since then, the development of the next steps of environmental measures contributing to the Government's sustainable development strategy announced in Budget 2004 has been my responsibility. These included:

new eligibility criteria for climate change agreements;a package of measures to promote household energy efficiency including a reduced rate of VAT for ground source heat pumps, and possibly for micro-combined heat and power units from 2005, and incentives for the private rented sector to invest in energy efficiency;duty rates for sulphur-free fuels raised in line with inflation from September 2004 and, to encourage the use of this clearer fuel, the duty for ultra-low-sulphur fuels set at 0.5 pence per litre above this level from the same date;an increase in rebated fuel rates, and three-year certainty for duty differentials on biofuels and road fuel gases;reforms to the tax treatment of company vans and emergency vehicles;publication of the third progress report on the lorry road-user scheme;reform of the aggregrates levy relief scheme in Northern Ireland to ensure that the levy achieves its environmental aims there.

In addition to this work on economic instruments to tackle environmental threats, consideration of sustainable development is incorporated directly into policy areas across the Treasury. For example, work on international poverty reduction and public spending, including this year's spending review, contribute directly to the Government's sustainable development goals.

Departmental Policy

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Newcastle upon Tyne, East and Wallsend constituency, the effects on Newcastle upon Tyne, East and Wallsend of his Department's policies and actions since 1997. [166876]

Ruth Kelly: The Government has put in place a radical programme of both macroeconomic and microeconomic reform since 1997 to improve the economic performance of all parts of the UK. There is significant evidence that these policies have already yielded considerable benefits for the Newcastle upon Tyne, East and Wallsend constituency.

For example, since May 1997, claimant unemployment has almost halved, long-term unemployment has fallen by almost three quarters and long-term youth unemployment has fallen by almost 90 per cent.

The Neighbourhood Statistics Service provides a wide range of statistical information at parliamentary constituency level, taken from the 2001 Census and other sources. This service is available on the National Statistics website at http://neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk/.

Labour Statistics

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Birkenhead from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [166305]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in Birkenhead since 1997. [166306]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Frank Field, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about full time jobs, and jobs created in Birkenhead. (166305, 166306)

While statistics on the number of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in the total number of jobs, from year to year.

The following table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs, for 1997 and 2002, the latest year for which figures are available. No information is available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] in Birkenhead Parliamentary Constituency: 1997 and 2002

Number, per cent

	Full-Time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	22,000	33,900
2002	22,400	35,100
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	400	1,200
Percentage	2.0	3.7

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs

Source:

1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Birkenhead on the latest date for which figures are available. [166307]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Frank Field, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Birkenhead. (166307)

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of jobs in tourism related industries in Birkenhead was 2,100. This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by the Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels

restaurants

bars

activities of travel agencies

library, archives museums etc

sporting activities

other recreational activities.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Birkenhead in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [166308]

Mr. Boateng: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Frank Field, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question concerning job vacancies in Birkenhead. (166308)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records, the number of unfilled vacancies in Birkenhead was 898 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

The ONS Vacancy Survey was introduced from April 2001, but does not provide information below national level.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [166638]

Mr. Boateng: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Ben Chapman, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question concerning job vacancies. (166638)

There were 600,800 job vacancies in the UK on average during 2003 according to results of the ONS Vacancy Survey. As the survey started in April 2001, there are no comparable statistics for 1997. Since the series shows seasonal fluctuations, the longest available like-for-like comparison with the past, using the latest provisional estimate of 632,400 vacancies for February 2004, is with the estimate of 622,000 for February 2002, an increase of 10,400 vacancies over the two- year period.

Previous vacancy statistics from Jobcentre Plus administrative records were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment in Birkenhead was in each year since 1997. [166312]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Frank Field dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Birkenhead Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Birkenhead constituency for each year since 1997.

Year	*Average number of claimants*
1997	4,730
1998	4,025
1999	3,829
2000	3,418
2001	3,026
2002	2,744
2003	2,540

Family Statistics

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of *(a)* families with dependent children are headed by (i) married couples, (ii) cohabiting couples and (iii) a lone (A) female and *(B)* male parent and *(b)* dependent children live in families which are headed by (1) a married couple, (2) a cohabiting couple, (3) a parent who has never married, (4) a widowed parent, (5) a divorced parent and (6) a separated parent. [165864]

Mr. Boateng: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Edward Leigh, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what percentage of *(a)* families with dependent children are headed by (i) married couples, (ii) cohabiting couples and (iii) a lone (A) female and (B) male parent and *(b)* dependent children live in families which are headed by (1) a married couple, (2) a cohabiting couple, (3) a parent who has never married, (4) a widowed parent, (5) a divorced parent and (6) a separated parent. (165864) Figures from the 2001 Census indicate that there were 6,376,140 couple or lone parent families in England and Wales. The percentage of those families which were headed by (i) a married couple, (ii) a cohabiting couple, (iii) a male lone parent or (iv) a female lone parent are shown in the table below. All information has been taken from table S006 in the Census 2001 National report for England and Wales., which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Families with dependent children, by family type England and Wales, 2001 Census

Family type	*Percentage of families*
Married or re-married couple	63.03
Cohabiting couple	11.64
Lone male parent	2.55
Lone female parent	22.78

Source :

Table S006 Census 2001 National report for England and Wales.

Figures from the 2001 Census indicate that there were 11,539,432 dependent children living in families in England and Wales. The percentage of those families which were headed by (i) a married couple, (ii) a cohabiting couple, (iii) a lone parent are shown in the table below. All information has been taken from table T01 in the Census 2001 National report for England and Wales, which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Dependent children in families, by family type England and Wales, 2001 Census

Family type	*Percentage of Children*
Married or re-married couple	65.77
Cohabiting couple	11.08
Lone parent	23.15

Source :

Table T01 Census 2001 National report for England and Wales.

Analysis of the Census figures has been undertaken in the latest edition of Population Trends 115 (pages 65–69). The published volume is available in the House of Commons Library and also on the National Statistics website at:http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/themejpopulation/PT115.pdfInformation on how many dependent children live with (1) a parent who has never married, (2) a widowed parent, (3) a divorced parent or (4) a separated parent is not currently available from the 2001 Census for England and Wales. However, an analysis, based on results from the General Household Survey for Great Britain in 2000, estimated that, of all dependent children living in families: 9.1 per cent. were living with a never-married lone mother; 0.7 per cent. with a widowed lone mother; 7.1 per cent. with a divorced lone mother; and 5.1 per cent. with a separated lone mother. Corresponding estimates were not made for the proportions of all dependent children living in families who were living in lone father families, because of small sample numbers. Overall, 2.6 per cent. of all dependent children living in families were living in lone father families. These estimates are not comparable with those from the 2001 Census, since they relate to a different time, and cover the whole of Great Britain rather than England and Wales.The full results, published in an article in Population Trends 109, are available in the House of Commons Library and may also be seen on the National Statistics website at:http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/PT109.pdf

Global Recovery

Sue Doughty: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how may copies of the Treasury summary leaflet, "Pre-Budget Report: the Strength to take long-term decisions for: Seizing the opportunities for global recovery", were distributed; to whom they were distributed; and what the cost was of *(a)* printing and *(b)* distribution. [166429]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave on 8 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 425W. Approximately 1.25 million copies of the 2003 Pre-Budget Report summary leaflet were distributed to individuals and to public organisations such as libraries, post offices, GP's surgeries, schools and universities.

Government Accounting Systems

Mr. Evans: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many accounting systems are in use in central Government; and what plans he has to reduce the number of accounting systems across central Government. [165514]

Mr. Boateng: It is the responsibility of each body in central Government to maintain appropriate accounting systems. No central record is kept, but it is likely that most of these bodies will operate different systems.

The Office of Government Commerce are currently leading a project to produce a standard specification for accounting systems for central civil Government that will include the requirement for future systems to be usable by more than one organisation. More widely, the Efficiency Review is working with departments to develop proposals for consideration in the Spending Review to simplify and standardise back office functions and the systems that support them.

Household Income

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the average *(a)* household debt per annum and *(b)* household monthly income in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [166071]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to John Thurso, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question on average household debt per annum and monthly household income by region since 1997. (166071)

ONS does not compile regional estimates of household debt, or regional average monthly household income.

However, ONS does publish estimates annual regional gross disposable household income (GDHI) at current prices, per head of resident population as part of regional household accounts. GDHI is described under the European System of Accounts 1995 (ESA95). These estimates were last published on 26 March 2002 and are presented in the attached table. This data set runs from 1995 to 1999. The estimates are available at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/article.asp?ID=128&Pos=2&ColRank=1&Rank=224

ONS hope to publish regional household accounts up to 2002 by the end of 2004, subject to resolving issues of data availability at regional level.

Total annual gross disposable household income[1] (GDHI) per head of resident population: UK regions, 1995–1999

Area	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
United Kingdom[2]	12,842	13,522	14,264	15,059	15,619
North East	11,059	11,601	12,301	12,723	13,215
North West	11,676	12,328	13,009	13,579	14,200
Yorkshire and Humber	11,525	12,301	12,842	13,633	13,872
East Midlands	11,988	12,723	13,247	13,853	14,430
West Midlands	12,010	12,546	13,056	13,828	14,538
East	13,841	14,579	15,336	16,181	16,740
London	15,636	16,519	17,713	19,057	19,641

Total annual gross disposable household income[1] (GDHI) per head of resident population: UK regions, 1995–1999

Area	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
South East	14,562	15,425	16,431	17,395	17,844
South West	12,759	13,335	14,093	14,879	15,323
Wales	11,160	11,633	12,029	12,474	12,913
Scotland	12,395	12,876	13,434	14,064	14,910
Northern Ireland	10,743	11,009	11,671	12,174	12,792

[1] Consistent with the 2001 National Accounts "Blue Book"
[2] Excludes GDHI from the "extra regio" category which covers the contribution to GDHI from UK embassy staff and forces personnel stationed overseas.
Source:
Office for National Statistics

Landfill Tax

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the implications for business of the changes in the Budget to landfill tax. [R] [166530]

John Healey: This April's £1 per tonne rise increase in the standard rate of landfill tax is part of the landfill tax escalator announced in Budget 1999. The tax is designed to be revenue neutral for businesses. Its introduction was accompanied by a 0.2 per cent. cut in employers' national insurance contributions. In addition, in Budget 2003 the Government said that incremental increases in landfill tax from 2005 would be revenue neutral to business. A number of options are now being examined, and consultation with stakeholders is continuing.

Nannies (Disabled Children)

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to extend the tax relief on the employment of nannies to parents with disabled offspring. [166115]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government announced in Budget 2004, a new voluntary scheme that will enable a range of providers of good quality childcare to get approval allowing more working parents access to financial support. This will help working parents to meet their child care costs, including those who employ nannies to look after disabled children, by extending the range of childcare that is eligible for the child care element of working tax credit. Child care approved under the new scheme will also be eligible for the new tax and national insurance exemption on £50 a week of employer-contracted child care or employer-provided child care vouchers announced in the 2003 pre-Budget report.

The Department for Education and Skills will consult on proposals for the scheme in summer 2004 for implementation in April 2005.

National Tax Agency

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what role is envisaged for *(a)* drug enforcement and *(b)* drugs policy in the new National Tax Agency. [166108]

John Healey: Customs border detection staff will become part of the new combined Customs and Inland Revenue department and will continue to enforce as now the full range of import/export prohibitions and restrictions at the frontier including in respect of drugs. The policy work in respect of the full range of controls, it exercises at the frontier will also remain with the new department.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the objectives are of the modernisation plan being implemented by the Office for National Statistics; what the expected date of completion of implementation is; if he will make a statement on progress; and what the estimated cost is. [164747]

Mr. Boateng: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mark Hoban, dated 19 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning what the objectives are of the modernisation plan being implemented by the Office for National Statistics; what the expected date of completion of implementation is; and what the estimated cost is. (164747)

The ONS was created in 1995 from the merger of three smaller organisations. The new organisation inherited:

Different computer systems that are not fully compatible with each other and which are gradually becoming out-of-date and difficult to support.

Different statistical tools requiring a large quantity of software licenses and support.

Different methodologies and practices.

The objective of the Modernisation Programme is to relocate these disparate systems into a robust, shared and enduring technical environment, supported by an agreed set of common statistical tools and methods. Where necessary, this process will involve the redesign of statistical systems to ensure that the quality, accessibility and efficiency benefits are optimised. This will increase the value of ONS's statistics and also improve the service it can offer to customers.

In the Spending Review 2002, Her Majesty's Treasury allocated £75 million over the period 2003–04 to 2005–06. Completion of the work package associated with this funding is therefore expected in 2006, although it is likely that further modernisation activity will take place in later years. The £75million allocation included £5million for 2003–04 to begin work, and undertake detailed planning and preparation, which has been done.

Older People

Steve Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what *(a)* initiatives, *(b)* campaigns and *(c)* advisory bodies relating to older people his Department (i) is responsible and (ii) has provided funding since 2001; and what the cost in each year was for each one. [166244]

Mr. Boateng: With the Department for Work and Pensions, HM Treasury has promoted a range of measures and initiatives aimed at improving the

incomes of older people, particularly those over state pension age, including increasing the basic state pension by more than inflation in 2001 -2003, guaranteeing future annual rises by the higher of 2.5 per cent. or RPI and launching the Pension Credit to reward those with modest savings for the first time.

This year the Government will pay an extra £100 to over-70 households
to help with council tax bills. This is on top of winter fuel payments, free TV licences and other measures.

Public Lavatories

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) whether the rateable value for the purpose of the uniform business rate of a public lavatory is the same in highly rateable and more lowly rated areas; [165937]

(2) what the criteria are by which a valuation officer evaluates a public lavatory for the purpose of the uniform business rate; [165939]

(3) what the *(a)* highest and *(b)* lowest rated public lavatory in England is for the purpose of the uniform business rate. [165940]

Dawn Primarolo: Details of the method and basis of valuation of Public Lavatories for non-domestic rating is set out in the Valuation Office Agency's Rating Manual. This can be found on its website at:
www.voa.gov.uk/ instructions/chapters/rating-manual/ vol5/sect625.

There are variations in the level of assessments that reflect the different levels of build costs across the country. In practice, a part of the calculation is a 'location factor' applied to the build costs. In the 2000 rating lists in England and Wales the highest location factor is 31.8 per cent. greater than the lowest. An addition of 5 per cent. is made to public conveniences in urban areas; this does not apply to rural public conveniences.

The highest assessment for a public lavatory in England and Wales is £30,000 rateable value. This is a public lavatory at Tower Place, Tower Hill, London, EC4 6DS. There are a number of public lavatories assessed at £1 rateable value following the Lands Tribunal decision (Hodkinson (VO) v Strathclyde Regional Council Superannuation Fund 1996 RA 131).

Senior Citizens (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Birkenhead qualified for the 10 pence rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [166309]

Dawn Primarolo: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p pence starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 4,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Birkenhead constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what *(a)* drug enforcement and *(b)* drugs policy functions are being transferred from HM Customs and Excise to the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [166107]

Mr. Boateng: The investigation and intelligence responsibilities of HM Customs and Excise in tackling serious drug trafficking and recovering related criminal assets will be transferred to the Serious Organised Crime Agency. The policy functions related to these activities will also transfer.

Student Loans

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was received by the Inland Revenue in student loan repayment in each month in financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and when the payments were transferred to the Student Loan Company. [166117]

Dawn Primarolo: Latest information on the recovery of student loans through the tax system and payments to the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) of loans recovered is shown in Note 5 to the Trust Statement in Appendix 1 of the Inland Revenue Annual Report for the year ending 31 March 2003. An estimate of loans recovered, and payment to DfES, for 2003–04 will be published in the 2004 report.

Monthly figures for receipts are not available as student loan deductions made by employers are reported to the Inland Revenue after the end of the tax year.

Tax Credits

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax credit overpayments have arisen as a result of official errors in the last 12 months. [165412]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Northavon (Steve Webb) on 9 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1482W.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether claimants of tax credits receive a copy of the Code of Practice on overpayments when it becomes evident that they may have been overpaid. [165413]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the replies I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Glasgow, Anniesland (John Robertson) on 21 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 1259W, and the hon. Member for North Norfolk (Norman Lamb) on 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 570–571W.

Tax Stamps

Mr. Alan Reid: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2004, reference 164497, on tax stamps, what the responses were of the two EU or accession countries not named in the answer; and if he will place copies of these responses in the Library. [165880]

John Healey: The Government has now received and reviewed responses from both Hungary and Lithuania. Neither country plans to discontinue its tax stamp scheme. The Government will consider publishing these responses if the countries concerned give their permission to do so.

Taxation

Dr. Cable: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will update the information provided in his answer to

the hon. Member for Truro and St. Austell (Matthew Taylor) on taxation of 23 January 2003, *Official Report*, column 430W; and if he will make a statement. [166127]

Dawn Primarolo: Comprehensive information on income tax has been placed in the Library of the House in October 2003. This information will be updated shortly after the Easter recess.

The full-year capital gains tax yields in 2004–05 from introducing a rate of tax of 49 per cent. on *(a)* taxable and *(b)* gross incomes exceeding £100,000 per annum are both estimated to be £120 million.

The income tax information is based upon the Survey of Personal Incomes and excludes any estimate of behavioural response to the tax change.

Capital gains tax estimates take into account the likely effect on yield of changes in the volume of disposals in a full year caused by taxpayer's behaviour.

Wayleaves

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will propose legislation to prohibit the Crown Estate from charging local authorities for wayleaves for public projects. [164774]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* The Crown Estate has a statutory duty to obtain an appropriate return from its assets under section 1 (3) of The Crown Estate Act 1961. The Crown Estate is no different from any other landowner in the way it seeks payment for wayleaves or the way in which they are valued.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer under what powers the Crown Estate is entitled to charge a wayleave for a new bridge over the River South Esk at Montrose when a wayleave exists for the current bridge. [164776]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* No new charge is being made for a wayleave over the River South Esk at Montrose. The wayleave for the existing bridge covers both the temporary and the new bridges.

The charges that are being made are for the lease for land for the temporary bridge, and the sale of land for the new bridge.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer under what powers the Crown Estate is able to charge substantial sums of money from Angus council for the construction of a temporary bridge over the River South Esk at Montrose while a new bridge is being built. [164777]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* The Crown Estate Act 1961, s.1(3) places a statutory duty on The Crown Estate Commissioners to maintain and enhance the value of The Crown Estate and the return obtained from it, but with due regard to the requirements of good management.

A rental charge is being made for the lease of land for the temporary bridge because it is on Crown Estate foreshore and seabed (tidal riverbed is defined as seabed). The rental value was agreed between agents acting on behalf of The Crown Estate and on behalf of Angus council.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the Crown Estate has received from local authorities in Scotland in each of the last 10 years as wayleaves for bridges and other public works projects. [164778]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* The information is as follows:

	Amount (£)	*Authority*	*Works*	*Date*
2003–04	0	—	—	—
2002–03	0	—	—	—
2001–02	0	—	—	—
2000–01	0	—	—	—
1999–2000	500	Western Isles Council	Wayleave for bridge span, Sound of Scalpay	11 August 1999
	550	Shetland Islands Council	Wayleave for bridge span, Muckle Roe	9 April 1999
1998–99	0	—	—	—
1997–98	0	—	—	—
1996–97	0	—	—	—
1995–96	0	—	—	—
1994–95	0	—	—	—
1993–94	100	Western Isles Council	Wayleave for bridge span, River Miavaig	21 June 1993

Mr. Weir: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what process is used to determine the value of a wayleave charged by the Crown Estate to local authorities in respect of public works projects. [164779]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* The value of a wayleave is determined on a case-by-case basis through negotiation in accordance with professional valuation practice, with the respective local authority or its representative.

As is laid down in the The Crown Estate Act 1961, no account is taken of monopoly value when valuing any Crown Estate asset.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Agricultural Land

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what changes there have been in total land area used for agricultural purposes over the last 10 years, broken down by *(a)* country and *(b)* agricultural land use categories, as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations. [165749]

Hilary Benn: The latest available figures from the Food and Agriculture Organisation indicate an overall 14.7 per cent. increase worldwide in land used for

agricultural purposes during the period 1991–2001. However, the increase is not spread across all continents. While Africa, Asia, Europe, and Latin America and the Caribbean have all increased, North and Central America and Oceania have decreased by varying amounts. This information is provided in the following two tables.

a) Total land area used for agricultural purposes by: country

Land use-agricultural area (1000ha)	*1991*	*2001*
Africa	1,098,071	1,108,071
Asia	1,306,609	1,679,915
Europe	218,665	487,771
Latin America and Caribbean	754,025	784,205
North and Central America	639,787	628,196
Oceania	482,826	475,132
Total	4,499,983	5,163,290

b) Total land area used for agricultural land use category

World land use	*1991*	*2001*
Africa (1000ha)	1,098,071	1,108,333
Arable land	168,209	182,294
Permanent crops	23,106	26,326
Permanent pasture	906,756	899,713
Asia	1,306,609	1,679,915
Arable land	457,324	508,595
Permanent crops	49,878	61,361
Permanent pasture	799,407	1,109,959
Europe	218,665	487,771
Arable land	123,695	288,132
Permanent crops	13,822	16,947
Permanent pasture	81,148	182,882
Latin America and Caribbean	754,025	784,205
Arable land	135,839	149,309
Permanent crops	18,625	20,321
Permanent pasture	599,561	614,575
North and Central America	639,787	628,196
Arable land	266,299	257,512
Permanent crops	7,661	8,500
Permanent pasture	365,827	362,184
Oceania	482,826	475,132
Arable land	48,759	52,384
Permanent crops	2,590	3,278
Permanent pasture	431,477	419,470
Total	4,499,983	5,163,552

Deforestation

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what net percentage of forest cover worldwide has been lost since 1990; and what acreage this represents *(a)* in total and *(b)* broken down by country. [165810]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The net percentage of forest cover change worldwide between 1990 and 2000 was 2.4 per cent. This represents the change in forest cover over the 10-year period to 2000 and is the most up-to-date global assessment of forest resources.

(a) In terms of acreage this represents a total worldwide loss during the 1990s in forest cover of 232,214,811 acres (93,974,000 hectares).

(b) Forest cover data for individual countries may be found in the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2000 Main Report. This is published by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations and is available online via the following web link: http://www.fao.org/forestry/foris/webview/forestry2/index.jsp?siteId=101&sitetreId=8334&langId=1&geoId=0

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of land area in *(a)* Africa, *(b)* Asia, *(c)* South America, *(d)* Europe and *(e)* North America he estimates was covered in forest in (i) 1975, (ii) 1985, (iii) 1995 and (iv) 2002. [165811]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Reliable and comparative global forest cover data are not available for the years requested. They are available for the years 2000 and 1990 and I have provided these as follows.

This information is drawn from the Global Forest Resources Assessment 2000, published by the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the United Nations, which is the most comprehensive and technologically advanced assessment in FAO's 50-year history. The Global Forest Resources Assessment of 1990, although not as advanced, brings together comparable information on the world's forest resources for the period 1980–90.

The percentage of land area covered in forest in 1990 and 2000 in each of the regions of the world is as follows:

(a) Africa: (i) 23.6 per cent. in 1990; (ii) 21.8 per cent. in 2000

(b) Asia: (i) 17.9 per cent. in 1990; (ii) 17.8 per cent. in 2000

(c) South America: (i) 52.6 per cent. in 1990; (ii) 50.5 per cent. in 2000

(d) Europe: (i) 45.6 per cent. in 1990; (ii) 46 per cent. in 2000

(e) North and Central America: (i) 26 per cent. in 1990; (ii) 25.7 per cent. in 2000.

Land Degradation

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of land area in *(a)* Africa, *(b)* Asia, *(c)* South America, *(d)* Europe and *(e)* North America he estimates was suffering land degradation in (i) 1975, (ii) 1985, (iii) 1995 and (iv) 2002. [165812]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Comparative global land degradation data are not available for the years requested. They are available for 1992 when the most recent global assessment of land degradation was made, and I have provided these as follows.

Land degradation takes a number of forms, including depletion of soil nutrients, salinisation, soil erosion, vegetative degradation, and deforestation. All of these types of degradation cause a decline in the productivity of the land, reducing potential yields and posing a potential threat to the rural livelihoods of poor people in developing countries.

Existing estimates of the current global extent and severity of the problem of land degradation should be considered indicative at best: land degradation is something that cannot be easily monitored and measured. Responding to the need for a global overview of land degradation, the Global Assessment of Human-induced Soil Degradation (GLASOD), published in 1992, became the first comprehensive soil degradation

overview on a world scale. Soil degradation is considered to be a good indicator for measuring land degradation.

GLASOD is limited, however, and the need for more objective, qualitative approaches, using nationally-based data rather than global or regional figures, is widely recognised. New international initiatives are underway to develop national data acquisition on land degradation, using GIS (Geographic Information Systems), remote sensing and local assessments.

Based on the results of the 1992 Global Assessment, the percentage of land area per region affected by human-induced soil degradation is as follows:

(a) Africa: 16.6 per cent. of total land surface

(b) Asia: 17.6 per cent. of total land surface

(c) South America: 13.7 per cent. of total land surface

(d) Europe: 23 per cent. of total land surface

(e) North America: 5 per cent. of total land surface.

Afghanistan

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many refugees have returned to Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban regime. [164852]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: According to the United Nations High Commission for Refugees, over 2.9 million Afghan refugees have returned to Afghanistan since the fall of the Taliban regime. This is in addition to some 500,000 people who were displaced within Afghanistan who have returned home.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions he has had with the Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees on support and return of displaced persons following transfer of responsibility for implementation of Annex VII of the General Framework Agreement for Peace from the Office of the High Representative to the Bosnia and Herzegovina authorities on 1 January; and if he will make a statement. [166413]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The British Government are in regular contact with the Bosnia and Herzegovina Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees. The most recent discussions took place on 29 March 2004. The British Ambassador to Bosnia and Herzegovina, along with the Swedish Ambassador and Head of the Swedish Development Agency, met the Minister for Human Rights and Refugees to discuss how Bosnia and Herzegovina could make full use of its newly-acquired membership of the Council of Europe Development Bank. The bank provides low cost loans to its members, mainly to support reconstruction and facilitate the return of displaced persons.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166399]

Hilary Benn: Details of DFID Home Civil Service staff numbers (there are no executive agencies), by Civil Service grade, and broken down by (i) gender; (ii) ethnic group (iii) disability status and (iv) age group, are contained in the following tables:

DFID staff by gender

Grade	Male	Female	Total
Senior Civil Service	54	17	71
A1 (Level 6)	131	47	178
A2 (Level 7)	211	157	368
A3 (Senior Executive Officer)	67	72	139
B1 (Higher Executive Officer)	166	131	297
B2 (Executive Officer)	132	163	295
C1 (Administrative Officer)	99	207	306
C2 (Administrative Assistant)	39	51	90
Totals	899	845	1,744

DFID staff by ethnic origin

Grade	Asian	Black	Chinese	Mixed	Other Ethnic Minority	White	Undeclared Ethnic Origin	Total
Senior Civil Service	3	0	0	1	2	51	14	71
A1 (Level 6)	3	0	0	10	0	121	44	178
A2 (Level 7)	7	1	0	5	3	238	114	368
A3 (Senior Executive Officer)	3	4	0	1	1	88	42	139
B1 (Higher Executive Officer)	17	11	0	5	3	189	72	297
B2 (Executive Officer)	9	15	2	5	8	219	37	295
C1 (Administrative Officer)	11	19	0	7	4	214	51	306
C2 (Administrative Assistant)	5	2	0	0	0	54	29	90
Totals	58	52	2	34	21	1,174	403	1,744

DFID staff by disability status

Grade	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Total
Senior Civil Service	1	70	71
A1 (Level 6)	2	176	178
A2 (Level 7)	2	366	368
A3 (Senior Executive Officer)	0	139	139
B1 (Higher Executive Officer)	4	293	297

DFID staff by disability status

Grade	Disabled	Non-Disabled	Total
B2 (Executive Officer)	4	291	295
C1 (Administrative Officer)	13	293	306
C2 (Administrative Assistant)	3	87	90
Totals	29	1,715	1,744

DFID staff by age group

Grade	*Under 25*	*25 to 34*	*35 to 44*	*45 to 54*	*55 to 64*	*65+*	*Total*
Senior Civil Service	0	0	19	37	15	0	71
A1 (Level 6)	0	7	56	81	34	0	178
A2 (Level 7)	0	107	163	74	24	0	368
A3 (Senior Executive Officer)	0	30	56	46	7	0	139
B1 (Higher Executive Officer)	10	107	92	74	14	0	297
B2 (Executive Officer)	6	92	114	67	15	1	295
C1 (Administrative Officer)	18	71	114	65	36	2	306
C2 (Administrative Assistant)	11	14	15	26	24	0	90
Totals	45	428	629	470	169	3	1,744

These details form part of our bi-annual staffing level returns to the Cabinet Office. Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service is collected by the Cabinet Office and published in "Civil Service Statistics". A copy of "Civil Service Statistics 2002" is available in the Library of the House, and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition setting out these latest figures will be published in summer 2004.

Common Foreign and Security Policy

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the published objectives were of the Common, Foreign and Security Policy activity reported in the financial tables of the 2003 Commission report on EU Development Policy and the Implementation of External Assistance in 2002; what his Department's involvement in the activity was; what results it achieved; and what assessment he has made of its value for money. [165182]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Detailed descriptions of the objectives of the Common Foreign and Security Policy, as described under chapter 8 in the financial tables of the EC Annual Report, are given as part of the "Final adoption of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2002". This was published in the Official Journal of the European Communities on 31 of January 2002 (volume 45 L29, pp.1345). A copy of this is available in the parliamentary Library or via the Commission website at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/archive/2002/l_02920020131en.html.

In 2002 DFID contributed approximately £50,000 towards land mine clearance in Croatia managed under chapter 8. However overall responsibility for chapter 8 lies with the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

The activities under the CFSP budget are subject to a regular prioritisation debate against political objectives by the Political and Security Committee in which the UK takes a full part. Issues relating to value for money may be discussed as part of this review process.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

Ms Oona King: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps the Government are taking to ensure that the expansion of industrial logging in the forests of the Democratic Republic of the Congo will not compromise the rights and livelihoods of the people dependent on the forest for their survival. [165480]

Hilary Benn: The Government of the DRC recognises that there should be better management of natural resources, including forests, so as better to contribute to national development and poverty reduction. DFID plans to support the strengthening of natural resource governance in the DRC, including forestry. As a first step we are currently supporting an analysis of the governance framework for natural resource extraction and options for improvements. In the meantime the Government is receiving assistance in the forestry sector from the World Bank, and DFID officials have been in dialogue with the Bank about this work. There is a possibility that DFID will provide assistance in this area to support the Bank's programme.

Commercial logging needs to bring real benefits to the population of the DRC, and the interests of the large number of forest-dependent poor people in DRC should not be prejudiced by logging activities. With World Bank encouragement the Government of the DRC has put a moratorium on new forestry concessions until appropriate regulations are in place to govern the process. The World Bank is also supporting a review of previously allocated concessions, to ensure they meet the new forest code which includes provisions to ensure the rights of local communities.

DFID is also supporting the involvement of civil society in Central African countries to follow up on the Africa Forest Law Enforcement and Governance Conference that took place last year. In addition, the EU aims to develop partnership agreements with individual countries under its Action Plan to strengthen forest governance in the Central African region.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166376]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Computer hardware and software updates are determined and agreed as part of DFID's e-business, ICT and Knowledge Sharing strategic studies.

Hardware refresh cycles are subject to a rolling programme based upon the expected life span of the equipment involved—usually every 4–5 years. Details of the current hardware upgrade plans are at Table 1.

The timing of software updates tends to be driven by the need to deliver additional functionality, to comply with legislative changes (e.g. payroll) and to remain within support matrices for the products. Details of the current software update plans are at Table 2.

Table 1: Hardware upgrades

Hardware type	*Date purchased*	*Life (years)*	*Upgrade due*
HP4 L2000 Mini computer	2000	4–5	2004–05
HP AutoRAID Mini computer	2001	4–5	2005–06
HP5 L2000 Mini computer	2001	4–5	2005–06
HP6 L2000 Mini computer	2002	4–5	2006–07
Compaq Storage Area Networks (3)	2001–03	3–4	2004–07
NT Web Servers (45)	2000–02	4–5	2004–07

Table 1: Hardware upgrades

Hardware type	*Date purchased*	*Life (years)*	*Upgrade due*
Network servers	2001	4–5	2005–06
Desktop pcs	2002	4–5	2006–07
Laptop pcs	2003–04	2–3	2005–07
Printers	2003	3–4	2006–07
PDAs	2003–04	n/k	n/k
Copiers	2002	4–5	2006–08

Table 2: Software Upgrades

Software description	*Installed*	*Upgrade path*	*Upgrade due*
HP Unix Operating System v11	2001	HPUXv12	2005?
Windows 2000 (network os)	2001	Windows 2003	2004
Oracle v8i (corporate database)	2001	Oracle v9i or 1 0g	2004
CODA v7 (Financial)	2001	[1]n/k	n/k
Rebus v3.4 (HR)	2003	Rebus v 3.6	2004
Citrix XP (Thin client Access)	2003	Citrix (newer version)	2006?
Novell NetWare v 5.1 (network os)	2002	Windows 2003	2005–06
Win98 desktop os (UK)	2002	WinXP	2005–06
Win2000 desktop os (overseas)	2002–04	WinXP	2005–06
Novel GroupWise v5.5 (e-mail)	2002	Microsoft Exchange	2005–06
Microsoft Office 2000	2002	MS Office XP	2005–06

[1] Will be reviewed as part of the Aries project and may be replaced.

Departmental Projects

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will make a statement on *(a)* the nature of the health and education projects in (i) Russia, (ii) Mongolia, (iii) Ukraine, (iv) Georgia, (v) Armenia and (vi) Azerbaijan that were financed by EU development assistance in 2002, *(b)* the effectiveness of the projects and *(c)* his Department's involvement in the projects; [165172]

(2) if he will make a statement on *(a)* the nature of the 24 million euro environment project in Russia that was financed by EU development assistance in 2002, *(b)* the effectiveness of the project and *(c)* his Department's involvement in the project. [165203]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: EU development assistance in these countries is provided through the Tacis programme. The Department is involved in projects implemented under Tacis by contributing the UK's share of the European Commission budget allocated to Tacis and by participating in the Management Committee established to define strategy and oversee the programme. Implementation of specific projects (including procurement, which is governed by EC procurement rules) is the responsibility of the Commission.

When considering Commission funding proposals, DFID took a wide range of factors into consideration, including likely impact, cost-effectiveness and value for money. Many of the 2002 projects are in the early stages of implementation. An assessment of the projects will only be possible once they have been completed. The EC, through its results-orientated management system and strengthened evaluation systems, is best placed to carry out such an assessment.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the *(a)* Good Governance and Improvement of the Law project, *(b)* 2002 Middle East Peace project and *(c)* 2002 project on technical assistance, ref B7–410 MEDA; and if he will describe his Department's contribution to each project. [165208]

Hilary Benn: All these projects are being implemented by the European Commission under their MEDA ("Mésures d'Accompagnement") programme, which is the principal financial instrument of the European Union for providing technical and financial support to accompany the reform of economic and social structures in Mediterranean partner countries. DFID is involved through having attributed to our budget the UK's contribution to MEDA, (which in 2002 amounted to around 19 per cent. of the total), and through our being consulted by the EC as it develops its individual country strategies and spending proposals. Implementation of individual projects (including procurement) is the responsibility of the Commission.

When considering Commission funding proposals, the Department takes a wide range of factors into consideration, including likely impact, cost-effectiveness and value for money. Many of the 2002 projects are still in the early stages of implementation. An assessment of the projects, and production of final spending figures, will only be possible once they have been completed.

Drought

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what land area in total was affected by drought as defined by the Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations in each of the last 10 years, broken down by *(a)* country and *(b)* length of drought period. [165748]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID does not hold data on land area affected by drought and information in this format is not available from the FAO. To provide the data as requested would incur disproportionate cost.

EC/EU Development Policy

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the published objectives were of the expenditure on other external charters of community policy referred to in the financial tables of the Commission Report 2003 on the EC Development Policy and the Implementation of External Assistance in 2002; what his Department's involvement in future charters was; what results they achieved; and what assessment he has made of their value for money. [165101]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The entry for "other external policy chapters" in the financial tables of the EC annual report includes budget lines for the promotion of community inward investment in the developing countries of Latin America (B7–872) and the Commission's contribution to international environmental activities (B7–811) for which DFID is financially responsible.

Detailed descriptions of the objectives of these individual chapters are given as part of the "Final adoption of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2002". This was published in the Official Journal of the European Communities on the 31 January 2002 (volume 45 L29, pps 1343 and 1325 respectively). A copy of this is available in the parliamentary Library or via the Commission website at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/archive/2002/l02920020131en.html.

DFID's comment on future budget proposals from the Commission, through the annual budget negotiation process led by HM Treasury takes a number of factors into consideration including cost effectiveness. The new financial regulation requires that all future community funded activities be based on Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time bound (SMART) objectives, and accompanied by appropriate criteria for performance measurement and evaluation.

The UK Government have been a leading advocate for activity-based budgeting which was adopted by the Commission in 2003, this will increase the transparency and efficiency of budgetary decision-making in the future and help deliver a more effective EC budget.

The EC is best placed to carry out value for money assessments for individual budget lines through its own performance monitoring mechanisms.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the published objectives were of the other specific actions listed as items B7–66 in the financial tables of the 2003 European Commission Report on EC Development Policy and the Implementation of External Assistance in 2002; what his Department's involvement in these actions was; what results they achieved; and what assessment he has made of their value for money. [165127]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Items listed under B7–66 "Other specific actions" in the financial tables of the Commission report include financing for the "European Training Foundation" (B7–664), "Co-operation with Industrialised non member countries" (B7–665), and "Cooperation with third countries on Migration" (B7–667).

Responsibility for these budget lines lies with the Department for Education and Skills, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Home Office respectively.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the commitment of EU development assistance to provide support to national co-ordination units in 2002. [163861]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In 2002, €5 million was committed under the Tacis (Technical Assistance to the CIS) programme to provide support to National Co-ordinating Units. Each partner state in the Tacis region has a national co-ordinator, who is usually a senior member of that country's administration, supported by a National Co-ordinating Unit (NCU). The NCU is an institution of the partner country Government, and is headed by a local executive director and staffed by a team of national officials and experts, with necessary logistical and secretarial support.

The primary objective of EU support for NCUs is to improve and strengthen the planning and co-ordinating capacity of partner Governments in activities such as: providing information on their priorities; organising consultations with stakeholders; advising on drafts of programmes and project proposals; and providing functions related to Tacis where a national body is required.

The allocation is used to fund EU and local expertise, training, and office and equipment costs.

EU Information and Communication Projects

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the *(a)* objectives and *(b)* results of the (i) Mediterranean and (ii) Middle East projects on information and communication that were financed by EU development assistance in 2002; and what his Department's involvement in the projects was. [165204]

Hilary Benn: These projects are being implemented by the European Commission under their MEDA ("Mésures d'Accompagnement") programme, which is the principal financial instrument of the European Union for providing technical and financial support to accompany the reform of economic and social structures in Mediterranean partner countries. DFID is involved through having attributed to our budget the UK's contribution to MEDA, (which in 2002 amounted to around 19 per cent. of the total), and through our being consulted by the EC as it develops its individual country strategies and spending proposals. Implementation of individual projects (including procurement) is the responsibility of the Commission.

When considering Commission funding proposals, DFID takes a wide range of factors into consideration, including likely impact, cost-effectiveness and value for money. Many of the 2002 projects are still in the early stages of implementation. An assessment of the projects, and production of final spending figures, will only be possible once they have been completed.

Fair Trade Movement

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on his most recent discussions with the Fair Trade Movement on their work with developing countries. [164939]

Hilary Benn: I met with Harriet Lamb, the Director of Fairtrade Foundation, on 1 March 2004 and spoke at the launch of Fairtrade Fortnight. DFID has a continuing dialogue with the Fairtrade Foundation on their work with producers in developing countries.

Ghana

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much funding his Department has made available for improvements to the water supply in *(a)* Accra and *(b)* Kumasi; and what conditions regarding the involvement of the private sector apply to such funding. [166359]

Hilary Benn: DFID made a grant of £13.95 million to the Ghana Water Sector Improvement Project in 1998 with £7.735 million earmarked for capital expenditure. To date over £4.5 million has been used for technical assistance projects. DFID have now agreed with the Government of Ghana that the capital funds may be used in any urban area. The conditions which reflect an established Government of Ghana policy under successive administrations for the use of the capital funds are:

Tariff increases should have reached a level whereby average tariffs are at economically viable levels, or a plan is announced to reach viable tariff levels within a satisfactory time frame.

Bids should have been received showing private sector interest in operating urban schemes.

There is evidence of the Government of Ghana's commitment to a tariff structure which balances commercial needs with poor people's ability to pay.

Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much the UK Government will contribute to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria in *(a)* 2004 and *(b)* 2005. [164928]

Gareth Thomas: For the financial year 2004–5, DFID's contribution to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM) will be £30 million. This will be paid in May. In 2004–6 DFID has pledged £33 million.

The GFATM is one of a number of instruments used to tackle these terrible diseases of poverty. Most of DFID's HIV/AIDS spending, of which the UKU is the second biggest bilateral donor, goes direct to developing countries through Government, NGOs or the private sector. Last year DFID invested over £270 million on HIV/AIDS related bilateral work and have contributed £48 million to Roll Back Malaria and invested £2 million to the Stop TB Partnership, DFID has committed over £1.5 billion since 1997 to support the strength of health systems to help deal with these diseases in developing countries.

Good Governance (West Africa)

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has made of the link between good governance and its relation to economic productivity in developing countries with particular reference to *(a)* Guinea and *(b)* Senegal. [166590]

Hilary Benn: Good governance and economic growth are crucial requirements for poverty reduction in Africa. Our experience and research shows that broad based economic growth and poverty reduction can only be sustained where there is effective government. Investment is vital for growth and businesses will only invest if they feel confident that they will benefit from successful investment and perceive the risks of expropriation to be low. The priorities for improving the business environment will depend on country context.

DFID has not made any country specific assessment of the relationship between good governance and economic productivity in either Guinea or Senegal. Our assistance to both these countries is mainly through multilateral channels such as the EC and World Bank. In Senegal our assistance through these channels amounted to £13 million in 2001. In Guinea we are closely in touch with the EC who are starting negotiations with Guinea on necessary governance reforms, as a condition of resumption of EC assistance. There is a clear connection between such reforms and economic development.

HIV/AIDS

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what support his Department has given to military forces in sub-Saharan Africa to establish programmes to reduce the spread of HIV/AIDS by their soldiers. [164762]

Hilary Benn: I have been asked to reply.

DFID recognises the high incidence of HIV prevalence among African military personnel and the problems of tackling HIV-infection in conflict areas and among African peacekeeping troops. This issue is also addressed within the interdepartmental (DFID, FCO and MOD) Africa Conflict Prevention Pool.

DFID has been working with UNAIDS to incorporate HIV/AIDS policies into the design of UN led peacekeeping operations, many of which are operational in Africa and involve African troop contributing countries. A separate piece of work has just begun to develop similar guidelines and approaches with the African Union.

Regional training centres, such as the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre (supported by the UK Government through the interdepartmental Africa Conflict Prevention Pool) also provide a range of training courses for African peacekeepers, some of which touch on HIV/AIDS.

Ultimately addressing the causes of conflict is key to stopping the spread of HIV/AIDS among military personnel and between military personnel and civilians. African conflict prevention therefore remains a key focus for DFID and for wider HMG programmes of support.

Humanitarian Crises

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department takes to verify the accuracy of claims by charitable organisations concerning humanitarian crises. [166479]

Hilary Benn: DFID has the capacity to undertake continuous global surveillance to identify and monitor disasters and emergencies. In the event of a humanitarian crisis, DFID officials gather information from a number of sources in order to establish the real nature and scale of humanitarian needs. This process involves detailed investigation through the internet, media, the United Nations, DFID overseas offices, UK Diplomatic Missions, Governors offices in the UK Overseas Territories and the Red Cross/Red Crescent family. If required, DFID officials are deployed to the specific affected country to assess the situation for themselves.

Charitable organisations are required to submit an audit report within nine months of the end of the recipient's financial year which clarifies use of DFID's funds separately.

Iraq

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what independent financial auditing is undertaken on the contracts issued by the Coalition Provisional Authority for the reconstruction of Iraq. [166606]

Hilary Benn: The use of all Iraqi assets by the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) is subject to independent auditing oversight by the International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB), which was set up under UNSCR1483.

In order to ensure its independence, IAMB'S membership comprises representatives of the United Nations, the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. IAMB has recently appointed a private sector audit firm to undertake its audit functions. IAMB'S website is www.iamb.info

The use by the CPA of United States Government resources is subject to the audit procedures of the US authorities.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of *(a)* the extent to which non-governmental organisations will exit Iraq following the scheduled handover of sovereignty to Iraqis on 30 June and *(b)* the impact this will have on the humanitarian situation in the country. [165428]

Hilary Benn: The number of international NGOs present in much of Iraq has been low for some months because of security concerns. However, some continue to operate using Iraqi or Arabic staff, and there are a large number of emerging Iraqi NGOs and more international NGOs are present in Kurdish areas. After the handover of sovereignty, and with the return of the UN, it is possible that international NGOs might increase their presence, but this will mainly depend on the security situation.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what representations have been made to him by UK-based non-governmental organisations on the security of their aid workers in Iraq following the scheduled handover of sovereignty to Iraqis on 30 June. [165429]

Hilary Benn: DFID maintains close and regular contact with UK-based non-governmental organisations. The security environment remains one of our central concerns. However, no specific representations have been made on the security of aid workers following the scheduled handover of sovereignty on 30 June.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps will be taken to ensure the security of aid workers in Iraq following the scheduled handover of sovereignty to Iraqis on 30 June. [165430]

Hilary Benn: Following the transfer to Iraqi sovereignty on 30 June the UK will continue its contribution to the multinational force, which is mandated with contributing to security and stability in Iraq. DFID already provides some security-related assistance to the UN and will offer support to help the UN re-establish itself in Iraq. Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) will be responsible for their own security, but DFID will continue to maintain regular dialogue with them on security issues.

Extensive measures are taken to protect DFID staff and contractors, for example through the provision of safety and communications equipment, security training, briefing and armed protection. These security arrangements will be kept under constant review before and after the transition to Iraqi sovereignty.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether training projects or preparations for Iraq proposed by *(a)* the Emergency Response Team and *(b)* the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department of his Department were (i) cancelled and (ii) postponed in the year to 1 May 2003. [165985]

Hilary Benn: There were no training projects or preparations for Iraq DFID's Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department, including its Operational Team, cancelled or postponed in the year to 1 May 2003.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development on what occasions the head of the Emergency Response Team visited *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* the Gulf region in the year to 1 May 2003. [165986]

Hilary Benn: The Director of the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department's Operations Team made visits to Kuwait on 4–7 February 2003 and Bahrain, Dubai, Kuwait and Iraq 13–17 April 2003. These visits were for operational planning and management purposes. He also visited Cyprus on 26–27 March 2003 for discussions with United Nations agencies.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether any training in personal health and safety for *(a)* the Emergency Response Team and *(b)* the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department of his Department was (i) cancelled and (ii) postponed in the year to 1 May 2003. [165987]

Hilary Benn: There was no cancellation or postponement of training in personal health and safety for DFID's Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department, including its Operational Team, in the year to 1 May 2003. 29 staff from the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department, including part-time consultants of the Operational Team, attended health and safety courses in this period.

Training in personal health and safety for staff is identified following training needs assessments and arranged to suit course and individual Availability and the priority of the requirement. Apart from internal briefings, the Conflict and Humanitarian Affairs Department does not run its own health and safety training. It sends staff to appropriate external courses. These courses are reviewed annually reflecting changing priorities. In addition DFID provides its staff with regular advice on health and safety issues.

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance has been given to trade union bodies in Iraq; what programmes such assistance was given under; and whether those programmes are still open for further assistance. [166137]

Hilary Benn: DFID has not yet provided any funding for trade unions in Iraq. Trade unions under Saddam Hussein were part of the Ba'ath Party machinery and had very little independence. Effectively they no longer exist. It will take time to establish more appropriate structures for industrial relations in Iraq.

DFID is committed to supporting the emergence of a vibrant civil society in Iraq, including through trade union organisations as they begin to emerge. DFID is putting in place, programmes for providing support to civil society groups. Proposals from nascent trade union groups will be eligible to be considered for funding.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's total expenditure in Iraq has been since May 2003; if he will list the major projects funded; and under which budget heads each project was funded. [166414]

Hilary Benn: In the 2003–04 financial year, DFID disbursed £209 million from its Iraq programme budget, and £1.1 million from its running costs budget on expenditure related to managing the Iraq programme.

Updated lists of projects are regularly deposited in the Library of the House. Since March 2003, DFID has approved funding for projects worth £278.6 million under the Iraq programme. The main areas for support are as follows:

£13 million to United Nations agencies for pre-conflict preparedness:

- World Food Programme (£8 million);
- UNICEF (£2 million);
- United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (£1.75 million);
- World Health Organisation (£1 million);
- Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (£150,000);
- Office of the United Nations Security Co-ordinator (£100,000).

£71.8 million to United Nations agencies in response the UN Consolidated Appeals for Iraq:

- World Food Programme (WFP), for food aid and logistical support (£25 million);
- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), for emergency assistance to the electricity sector (£12.2 million), rehabilitation work on Umm Qasr Port (£3.1 million), rapid employment generation (£0.9 million);
- UNICEF, for water and sanitation projects, child immunisation, and mine risk awareness (£13.8 million);
- World Health Organisation, for health system support (£5 million);
- UN Mine Action Service, for mine clearance activities (£4.4 million);
- Office of the UN Security Co-ordinator (UNSECOORD), to support enhanced UN security in Iraq (3.5 million);
- Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO), for recovery of agriculture in southern Iraq (£1.5 million);
- Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), for information coordination and technology (£0.75 million);
- UN Environment Programme (UNEP), for post conflict environmental assessment (£0.7 million);
- UN Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for promoting women's rights (£0.5 million);
- Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, for promoting human rights in Iraq (£4 million).

£70 million to the International Reconstruction Fund Facility for Iraq (IRFFI), of which £40 million was allocated to the World Bank Trust Fund, and £30 million to the United Nations Trust Fund.

£32 million to the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, for emergency humanitarian provision.

£7.3 million to non-governmental organisations for humanitarian and reconstruction assistance.

£84.5 million for specific projects, of which:

- £25.9 million to meet the costs of secondments and consultants in the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA);
- £26.7 million for infrastructure rehabilitation projects in southern Iraq;
- £8.5 million to the International Finance Corporation's facility for support to small and medium businesses;
- £6.5 million to the BBC World Service Trust for the re-establishment of broadcasting capacity;
- £5 million to set up a Political Participation Fund to increase opportunities for political representation by all Iraqi citizens;
- £3.15 million to support CPA Governorate teams in southern Iraq;
- £3.15 million to the IMF for economic governance and financial management support;
- £3 million for strengthening the capacity of public administration;
- £2.1 million for support to the justice system, including training for judges and lawyers in human rights law;
- £0.5 million for training Iraqi journalists.

Kenya

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what resources his Department will make available to the Kenyan Government in 2004–05; and if he will make representations to the Kenyan authorities on problems in North-West Kenya regarding *(a)* the roads infrastucture and *(b)* a clean water distribution system. [165063]

Hilary Benn: In 2002 DFID provided £36.25 million in direct assistance to Kenya in support of the Government's Economic Recovery Strategy (ERS). I expect to at least to maintain this level of resources in 2004–05.

DFID supports development work in North-West Kenya through partners such as Oxfam. This work includes humanitarian assistance, drought mitigation, pastoral development, access to water, peace building and conflict management and strategic studies and operational inputs. It is carried out in close collaboration with the Kenyan authorities, and involves strengthening local organisations in their discussions with the Government about the provision of basic services, including roads and water. DFID's staff in Nairobi also maintain a close dialogue with the Kenyan Government on these issues. DFID has welcomed the emphasis that the Kenyan Government has placed on reducing poverty in the arid parts of Kenya, and will continue to monitor its implementation closely.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what amount of overseas aid has been allocated to assisting Kenya in each of the last 10 years. [165801]

Hilary Benn: Levels of official development assistance allocated to Kenya in each of the last 10 years are shown in the following table. All figures are in million.

£ million

	Amount of UK bilateral assistance	*UK imputed share of EC assistance*
1993	26.30	5.2
1994	28.94	3.5
1995	22.04	6.3
1996	28.04	3.8
1997	28.45	3.7
1998	32.64	4.6
1999	34.01	1.2
2000	48.30	2.3
2001	38.27	8.4
2002	36.25	[1]4.13

[1] UK share of EC aid in 2002 estimated as official calculation exercise still to be carried out.

Land Classification

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what information he has collated on *(a)* the average area of land classified as wetlands, *(b)* the (i) maximum and (ii) minimum area of mountain snow cover and *(c)* the total area of sea level intrusion in each of the last ten years, broken down by country. [165809]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not collect this information.

Mine Clearance

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department will spend on *(a)* humanitarian mine clearance, *(b)* commercial mine clearance, *(c)* military initiatives in mine clearance, *(d)* mine awareness, *(e)* mine victim assistance and *(f)* research and development for mine clearance in 2004. [165849]

Hilary Benn: Until the work of the current DFID review of mine action is complete I am unable to precisely indicate the detail of our mine action budget for 2004–05. However I anticipate that DFID's total allocation in this sector will remain at current levels.

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much his Department spent on *(a)* humanitarian mine clearance, *(b)* commercial mine clearance, *(c)* military initiatives in mine clearance, *(d)* mine awareness, *(e)* mine victim assistance and *(f)* research and development for mine clearance in 2003. [165850]

Hilary Benn: Disbursements in the Financial Year 2003–04 were as follows:

	(£)
Humanitarian Mine Clearance	[1]9,717,650
Mine Risk Education (Awareness) Grant to UNICEF	650,000
Research & Development inc knowledge provision	1,498,443

[1] DFID has not directly funded commercial mine clearance or military mine clearance initiatives in 2003. However commercial companies will benefit from contracts that use DFID funds provided to the United Nations for mine action programmes. The above programmes also include integrated demining activities that include mine risk education programmes. DFID is not able to disaggregate either of these figures.

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the recent review his Department made of its mine action funding policy. [165851]

Hilary Benn: The review of DFID's Mine Action Funding Strategy is still continuing. As soon as a final decision has been reached I will inform interested organisations.

Bushmeat

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the action being undertaken by his Department to combat the international trade in bushmeat. [163512]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID's primary concern is poverty reduction and helping to bring about sustainable development for more than one billion people who are trying to live on less than one dollar a day. While bushmeat is an important source of food and livelihoods for many poor people, particularly those living in or close to forests, the bulk of bushmeat harvesting is not traded across national boundaries and less than 1 per cent. of the harvest is thought to comprise endangered species. DFID is concerned that the steady decline in the supply of bushmeat is having a negative impact on the livelihoods of poor people.

The Government has set up an Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group on International Biodiversity to ensure that our response to biodiversity issues, including bushmeat, is as effective as possible.

Palestine

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the situation in Gaza, with particular reference to the movement of food into the area. [165823]

Hilary Benn: The Government and our EU partners are seriously concerned about the new restrictions placed on the entry of humanitarian goods and services to Gaza, and have made strong representations to the Israeli Government to ease the situation. While DFID respects Israel's legitimate security needs, it is essential that these are addressed in a manner which minimises interference with the work of international organisations, humanitarian bodies and diplomats. 600,000 Palestinian refugees in the Gaza Strip are dependent on the United Nations Relief and Works Agency's food aid programme. This programme has been suspended as a consequence of current Israeli restrictions. Until the situation is resolved it will cause further suffering for communities struggling to cope with prolonged economic hardship.

Policy Objectives

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the published objectives were of the *(a)* democracy and human rights, *(b)* international fishing agreements and *(c)* bananas ACP projects that were financed on the general Commission budget in 2002; what his Department's involvement in them was; what results they achieved; and what assessment he has made of their value for money. [165171]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Detailed descriptions of the objectives of individual projects are given as part of the "Final adoption of the general budget of the European Union for the financial year 2002", published in the *Official Journal* of the European Communities on 31 January 2002 (volume 45 L29). A copy of this is available in the parliamentary library or via the Commission website at http://europa.eu.int/eur-lex/en/archive/2002/l_02920020131en.html. Chapters relevant to the question can be found on the following pages: Human Rights pp. 1309; fishing agreements pp. 1314; Assistance to ACP banana producers pp. 1340. Funding for projects financed in 2002 may have been allocated in earlier years.

DFID comments on the Commission's future budget proposals for the Democracy and Human Rights and Assistance to ACP banana producers budget lines, through the annual budget negotiation process led by HM Treasury. Matters relating to international fishing agreements are the concern of the Department for Rural Affairs. In considering proposals from the Commission a number of factors are taken into account including cost effectiveness.

The EC Human Rights and Democracy initiative resulted in funding contributions for 33 specific projects in 2002. Details of these can be found on the Commission's website at: http://europa.eu.int/comm/europeaid/projects/eidhr/projects_2002_targeted en.htm#701.

In addition further funding was provided from this budget line for specific projects carried out by non-governmental organisations working in the field of democracy and human rights.

Expenditure on Assistance to ACP Banana producers resulted in continued financial support to 12 traditional ACP suppliers under the special framework of assistance established in 1999. Projects included support for improving competitiveness and encouragement for diversification in countries where banana production is no longer considered profitable.

An assessment of the value for money will only be possible once the projects have been completed. The EC is best placed to carry out value for money assessments for individual budget lines through its own performance monitoring mechanisms.

Rapid Reaction Mechanism

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what the published objectives were of the rapid reaction mechanism financed on the General Commission Budget in 2002; what his Department's involvement in the mechanism was; what results it achieved; and what assessment he has made of its value for money. [165180]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Detailed descriptions of the objectives for the EC Rapid Reaction Mechanism (RRM) are outlined in the Commission's Annual Report 2003 on the European Community's Development policy and the implementation of external assistance in 2002 (p 70–73) and in the *Official Journal* of the European Communities published on 31 January 2002 (volume 45 L29, pps 1306). A copy of this is available in the parliamentary Library or via the Commission website at http://europa.eu.int/eurlex/en/archive/2002/l_02920020131en.html.

These include, preventative action during emerging crises, acute crisis management, post conflict reconciliation and post-crisis reconstruction.

As with other parts of the Commission budget DFID engaged in discussion around funding for the RRM through the annual budget negotiation process led by HM Treasury.

In 2002 the rapid reaction mechanism resulted in funding contributions towards, among other things, the stabilisation of Afghanistan, Peace-building in the horn of Africa, reconstruction in the Palestinian territories, conflict mitigation in Nepal and Peace-building in Sri Lanka.

The EC is best placed to carry out value for money assessments for individual budget lines through it's own performance monitoring mechanisms.

St. Helena

Mr. MacDougall: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on progress in developing an airport on St. Helena. [165507]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I refer my hon. Friend to the written ministerial statement that I have laid before the House today.

Sustainable Development

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been represented on the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers; [165433]

(2) what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that role. [165434]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I am a Member of the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers (ENV(G)), but it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Uganda

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development for what reason food aid to Teso in north-east Uganda was distributed through the World Food Programme. [165519]

Hilary Benn: Over the last 12 months DFID has provided £6.4 million specifically for food relief in the north and east of Uganda. This support is channelled through the World Food Programme, which works with NGO partners to distribute food at a local level.

Over 1.5 million people are now displaced in northern and eastern Uganda, requiring a huge and ongoing humanitarian response. DFID channels support for food relief through WFP because it is the UN agency mandated to provide food aid in such a large-scale emergency. It is the only agency in Uganda equipped with the necessary staff, resources and experience required to respond adequately to the situation.

Vitamins and Minerals

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many people's health his Department estimates has been damaged as a result of lacking essential vitamins and minerals. [165255]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) does not conduct its own global health estimates, but uses those produced by the international bodies mandated to do this such as the World Health Organisation (WHO), UNICEF and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO). FAO estimate that more than 2 billion peoples health in the world is affected by a lack of essential vitamins and minerals.

DFID is working to tackle malnutrition through a wide range of health, education and food security policies. DFID's position paper on food insecurity, "Eliminating Hunger" sets out a strategy for helping poor people access an adequate variety and quantity of safe, good-quality food. Since 2001 DFID has also provided core funding of over £440 million to WHO and UNICEF whose activities include directly providing essential vitamins and minerals to the most needy, particularly children who are at risk.

DFID is also funding research into improving the nutritional content of crops, including vitamins and minerals.

Zimbabwe

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what value for money guarantees he is seeking regarding EU aid spending in Zimbabwe. [165544]

Hilary Benn: All spending by the European Community is subject to rigorous review, evaluation and audit procedures. The European Court of Auditors is responsible for appropriate audit of EC programmes, including programmes in Zimbabwe.

Concerns about the exchange rate used by the European Commission were raised in a report of the European Court of Auditors. DFID's understanding is that those concerns were limited to part of the spending of the European Development Fund (EOF) that was converted into Zimbabwe dollars during 2002. Humanitarian aid, which is largely funded from the EU budget rather than the EOF, was therefore not affected. Humanitarian aid is in any case very largely used to procure food and other goods outside Zimbabwe and would not be converted into Zimbabwe dollars. The European Commission's view is that use of any other exchange rate would have contravened either Zimbabwean law or the EC's international obligations.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 20 April 2004

HEALTH

Substance Abuse

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have died as a result of abuse of *(a)* butane gas refills and *(b)* other volatile substances in each year since 1997. [165759]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Statistics, collected by St. George's Hospital Medical School on behalf of the Department, on volatile substance abuse deaths from cigarette (butane) lighter refills, and total volatile substance abuse deaths are shown in the tables.

Deaths associated with cigarette lighter refills

Year	Number
1997	47
1998	43
1999	43
2000	34
2001	42

Deaths by volatile substance abuse

Year	Number
1997	78
1998	80
1999	75
2000	65
2001	63

Source:
St. George's Hospital Medical School: 16th Annual Report on Trends in Death Associated with Abuse of Volatile Substance 1971–2001—Key findings for 2001.

Mobile Phone Masts

Mr. Bailey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects the mobile telecommunications and health research programme to report on the public health implications of mobile phone masts. [165908]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The mobile telecommunications and health research programme reports progress at open seminars each year. The majority of projects are due to be completed in time for the annual seminar in November 2005. The remaining projects may take up to three years longer depending on their complexity. Most of the studies are concerned with mobile phones rather than base stations (masts) although there is one volunteer study looking specifically at base station exposures. Further details of these projects can be found on the website www.mthr.org.uk.

The public health implications of mobile phone base stations were reviewed recently by the National Radiological Protection Board's advisory group on non-ionising radiation, (Documents of the NRPB, Vol. 14, No 2, 2003). The report, entitled *Health Effects from Radiofrequency Electromagnetic Fields*, concluded that

> "Exposure levels from living near to mobile phone base stations are extremely low, and the overall evidence indicates that they are unlikely to pose a risk to health."

The report is available at www.nrpb.org.uk.

Breast Cancer

Mr Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Birkenhead with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [166570]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table:

Waiting times for patients referred urgently by their GP with suspected breast cancer to 1st outpatient appointment: Wirral Hospitals NHS Trust

Year	Quarter	Percentage of patients seen in two weeks %	Total patients seen	Patients seen in two weeks
1999/00	1	42.0	81	34
1999/00	2	64.0	100	64
1999/00	3	67.3	110	74
1999/00	4	93.7	111	104
2000/01	1	88.3	111	98
2000/01	2	91.0	100	91
2000/01	3	91.4	128	117
2000/01	4	100.0	153	153
2001/02	1	100.0	126	126
2001/02	2	100.0	148	148
2001/02	3	100.0	167	167
2001/02	4	100.0	173	173
2002/03	1	100.0	165	165
2002/03	2	100.0	160	160
2002/03	3	100.0	137	137
2002/03	4	99.2	118	117
2003/04	1	100.0	146	146
2003/04	2	100.0	197	197
2003/04	3	100.0	190	190

Source:
DH form QMCW

Smoking

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what programmes he has in place to encourage smoking cessation among the over-60s. [166010]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Our comprehensive tobacco control programme is aimed at all age groups, to reduce the numbers starting to smoke and to encourage those who smoke to stop. National Health Service stop smoking services are in place across the country to support smokers who want to quit. The services welcome people of all ages, and are widely available and accessible.

Standard 8 of the national service framework for older people provides a continuing commitment to the health and well being of older people. An increase in access to local NHS stop smoking services is one important component in extending healthy life expectancy in older people.

Between April and September 2003 over 23,300 smokers aged 60 or over set a date to quit smoking with the help of NHS stop smoking services and nearly 14,800 reported that they had successfully quit four weeks later. This means that an encouraging 63 per cent. in this age group were successful in quitting.

Edward Jenner Institute

Mr. Rendel: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has for the future of the Edward Jenner Institute at Compton; and what funding he as allocated to the institute for future years. [162227]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 18 March 2004]:* The Edward Jenner Institute for Vaccine Research (EJIVR) was established in 1995 to develop programmes in basic research relevant to human and animal vaccines. GlaxoSmithKline, the Medical Research Council, the Biotechnology and Biological Sciences Research Council and the Department of Health contributed a total of £6 million per annum to establish and fund the EJIVR for an initial 10 year research programme.

The four sponsors remain committed to supporting basic and applied vaccine research through to the end of the current term in October 2005. However, they have agreed that the existing joint funding model for the EJIVR is not the best way forward beyond 2005.

The sponsors are working actively with the board of the EJIVR to progress vaccine research beyond October 2005. The sponsors have recently completed a scientific review of the EJIVR's research programmes. The outcomes from this are assisting the board in its development of future plans to build on the best programmes, scientifically and strategically. Until the board's plans have progressed further, it is not possible to be more specific about the future.

Tuberculosis

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his policy is on the containment of tuberculosis, with particular reference to containment of strains which may not respond to treatment by established procedures. [162914]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 23 March 2004]:* The interdepartmental working group on tuberculosis document was published in September 1998. It is entitled:

The prevention and control of Tuberculosis in the United Kingdom: UK Guidance on the Prevention and Control of Transmission of:

1. HIV-related Tuberculosis.

2. Drug-resistant, including Multiple Drug-resistant Tuberculosis.

It gives advice on the containment of tuberculosis and multi-drug resistant tuberculosis. It is available in the Library.

Working Time Directive

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the costs of implementing the European Working Time Directive in *(a)* money terms, *(b)* extra doctors required and *(c)* other extra NHS staff required for (i) August 2004 and (ii) 2009; and what methodology he used to calculate those figures. [164568]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 30 March 2004]:* The Working Time Directive (WTD) is an integral part of modernising and improving services. The National Health Service has been aware of the implications of implementing the WTD for doctors in training since 2000, and planning for it forms part of overall NHS planning.

In the United Kingdom's response to the European Commission's questionnaire on working time, which was completed in February, we stated that in the UK the NHS would need to recruit several thousand extra middle grade doctors by August 2004 to achieve compliance with the re-interpreted Working Time Directive, while simultaneously maintaining current levels of service provision and retaining similar working practices as now. The cost of recruiting the extra middle grade doctors would run to hundreds of millions of pounds per annum.

However, this is not a realistic scenario. Even if this number of additional doctors were available, implementing the directive in this way would be very inefficient. As stated in our recent response to the EC's communication on working time, solutions need to include alternative ways of working that are already being piloted in the NHS, such as substituting non-medical practitioners where possible, instituting new forms of multidisciplinary team working, or redesigning services in some areas. There is no 'one size fits all' solution and ways of becoming WTD compliant will vary between trusts. Actual costs or numbers of additional staff required are not held centrally and could not in any case be disaggregated from the overall cost of NHS growth and modernisation.

NHS Foundation Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects to lay before Parliament the code for determining the limit on the total amount of borrowing of any NHS Foundation Trust required by section 12 of the Health and Social Care (Community Health and Standards) Act 2003. [166073]

Mr. Hutton: The Independent Regulator of National Health Service foundation trusts is responsible for making the Prudential Borrowing Code.

The draft prudential borrowing code has not yet been issued for consultation. I am informed by the Independent Regulator that a draft code is expected to be issued for consultation shortly and will be subject to a 12-week consultation period. Following the consultation, the Regulator will consider the responses, amend the code as required, make the final code and lay a copy before Parliament.

Primary Care Trusts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list each primary care trust indicating its variation from *(a)* average per-capita resources in England and *(b)* their Resource Allocation Working Party as fair share funding formula. [166660]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Hospital Discharges

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many elderly people have been subject to eviction as a result of rent arrears after a stay in hospital in each year since 1997. [166517]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not collect this information.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he has taken to improve communication between health and social services to support vulnerable people who risk losing their homes as a result of rent arrears built up during a stay in hospital; and if he will make a statement. [166518]

Dr. Ladyman: The Community Care (Delayed Discharges etc.) Act 2003 introduced a system of notifications between National Health Service bodies and social services departments which has improved communication and co-ordination between health and social care partners at the point of discharge.

In addition, since March 2003 working age patients have continued to receive their full entitlement to any incapacity benefits, Income Support, bereavement benefits, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit for 52 weeks. Also pensioners continue to receive their full State Retirement Pension, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit entitlement for 52 weeks.

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what procedures are in place to prevent elderly people returning home from hospital being subject to eviction orders as a result of rent arrears. [166520]

Dr. Ladyman: From May 2003 pensioners have continued to receive their full State Retirement Pension, Pension Credit, Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit entitlement for 52 weeks in order to ensure that they can continue to maintain their living expenditure. The Department has taken action to ensure that hospital discharges are planned effectively and completed in a timely manner.

Hospital-acquired Infections

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the Nosocomial Infection National Surveillance Scheme, including its current remit and responsibilities. [165246]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The nosocomial infection national surveillance scheme was a voluntary reporting system for two types of data: hospital-acquired blood stream infection and surgical site infection. The first stopped in 2002, while the second continues as the surgical site infection surveillance service. Its remit is to help trusts use surveillance data to monitor and improve the quality of patient care.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will publish the systematic review of how infection control guidelines are implemented in the NHS carried out by Thames Valley University. [165249]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Thames Valley University will update existing guidelines[1] on preventing hospital-acquired infections later this year, but has not undertaken a systematic review of their implementation.

[1] The epic project: developing national evidence-based guidelines for preventing healthcare association infections phase 1: guidelines for preventing hospital-acquired infections 2001 http://www.dh.gov.uk/assetRoot/04/07/73/68/04077368.PDF

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance his Department has issued to neonatal intensive care units on the use of (a) broad spectrum antibiotics to prevent infections and (b) more targeted antibiotic approaches. [165242]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We have not issued specific guidance but the medicines management framework provides standards for the best use of all medicines in hospitals. This includes a recommendation that a lead pharmacist for anti-microbial prescribing is responsible for ensuring that appropriate policies are in place.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the National Care Standards Commission records incidences of MRSA in care homes. [165243]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Care Standards Commission did not have records of methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) infections.

Health Services (Hull and East Yorkshire)

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many cases of MRSA have been identified in hospitals within Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust in each of the past five years; [165038]

(2) what percentage of patients in hospitals within Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust are infected with MRSA; [165039]

(3) what percentage of NHS staff within Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust are infected with MRSA. [165043]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The data are not collected centrally. Available data from the national mandatory surveillance system for methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA) bloodstream infections are shown in the table.

Number of methicillin resistant Staphylococcus aureus bacteraemia laboratory reports, Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust

Year	*Number of reports*	*MRSA rate (per 1,000 bed-days)*
April 2001–March 2002	106	0.26
April 2002–March 2003	75	0.18

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many beds there are in the Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust. [165042]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The average daily number of available beds in wards open overnight at Hull and East Yorkshire National Health Service Trust in 2002–03 was 1,391. In addition, the average daily number of day case beds in 2002–03 was 107. Information for each NHS trust is published annually on the Department's website at http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/. Information for 2003–04 will be available in the summer.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many nurses work in hospitals in the East Riding of Yorkshire. [165044]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

National Health Service hospital and community health services: Qualified nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff in Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust as at 30 September 2003

headcount

	All qualified nurses	*Community*	*Hospital*
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust	2,399	0	2,399

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases of tuberculosis there were in the East Riding of Yorkshire in each of the past five years. [165047]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Year	*Health Authority*	*TB cases*
1998	East Riding	17
1999	East Riding	30
2000	East Riding	37
2001	East Riding	37
2002	East Riding	18

Source:
Department of Health.

Bacterial Resistance

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has undertaken into anti-adhesive therapy to combat bacterial resistance in hospitals. [165025]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not commissioned research specifically on anti-adhesive therapy to combat bacterial resistance in hospitals. However, a broad strategic programme of research worth over £2.5 million has recently been commissioned, aimed at improving our scientific understanding of anti-microbial resistance.

Mr Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department is taking to encourage pharmaceutical companies to research new antibiotics to combat the threat of antibiotic resistant bacteria. [165239]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Our policy concentrates on supporting appropriate prescribing rather than influencing industry's research programmes.

Fertilisation and Embryology

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment his Department has made of new processes to produce stem cell-like cells from the blood. [165027]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government consider that it is too soon to say what kind of stem cells will yield breakthroughs in scientific knowledge enabling new treatments to be developed. The Government are therefore promoting research across a full range of stem cell sources.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the use of online human egg matching services. [165032]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The use of donor eggs in treatment in the United Kingdom is subject to the provisions of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 and is regulated by the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA). Standards of practice for the donation of eggs and their subsequent use in treatment, including remuneration for donors, are set out in the HFEA's code of practice. Payments that may be made to donors are limited to £15.00 per donation plus reasonable expenses. These provisions apply irrespective of the potential donor's country of origin or the route by which they are linked to a potential recipient.

Thalassaemia

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures his Department is taking to fund research into combating beta thalassaemia major. [165250]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Details of research projects relating to beta thalassaemia major funded by, or of interest to, the National Health Service are available on the National Research Register (NRR) at www.update-software.com/national. The NRR currently contains details of around 20 on-going or completed projects with a specific focus on beta thalassaemia, in addition to a larger number of projects covering a wider range of haemoglobinopathies. Many of these projects are funded through allocations made annually to NHS providers for research to meet the priorities and needs of the NHS and to meet the costs to the NHS of hosting research supported by external funders. The total amount allocated to NHS providers in 2003–04 for research and development was £442 million.

The NHS health technology assessment programme has published reviews of *Screening for sickle cell disease and thalassaemia* (2000) and *Antenatal and neonatal haemoglobinopathy screening in the UK* (1999). These are available on the programme's website at www.hta.nhsweb.nhs.uk.

The Medical Research Council (MRC) has a long history of research into the causes and treatment of thalassaemia. Since 1980, the MRC molecular haematology unit in Oxford has undertaken both basic research into the process by which multipotential haemopoietic stem cells differentiate into the highly specialised cells found in blood, and also more applied research into how these processes are perturbed in inherited and acquired human genetic disesases (e.g. thalassaemia). The unit has an annual budget of over £2 million. The MRC also supports two grants in this area.

Animal Experiments

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to his answer of 25 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 467W, what reasons underlay the decision to authorise the payment towards the cost of research into the public's attitude to research involving animals. [165816]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government supported the 2002 MORI poll because it provided data on public attitudes to inform development of Government policy relating to the use of animals in medical research. The survey also provided data to assess any changes in public attitudes since the 1999 MORI poll carried out for the Medical Research Council.

Sustainable Development

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [165441]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department of Health's strategy on sustainable development and the environment is in line with the Government's overall sustainable development strategy, in which health ("expected healthy years of life") is one of the 15 key headline indicators. The Department is currently implementing a change programme which will result in shifting responsibility to the front line and focusing on providing strategic leadership to the National Health Service and social care. A review of the sustainable development strategy is currently under way as part of this process.

The Department's strategy should be viewed in the context of overall health strategies. On-going actions to raise awareness, integrate sustainable development into policy making and enhance operational activities for both the central Department and through advice to the NHS ensures that the Department continues to contribute to the Government's overall strategy on sustainable development. Progress is reported on the Department's website at: http://www.dh.gov.uk/AboutUs/AimsAndObjectives/SustainableDevelopment/fs/en

The NHS Estates Agency (NHSE) and the NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency (NHS PASA)—both Executive Agencies of the Department—have their own sustainable development/environmental strategies in place. The NHSE has issued a *New Environmental Strategy for the NHS* and *Sustainable Development in the NHS* as guidance for the NHS. NHS PASA has a sustainable development policy which it published in February 2003. This policy describes the framework within which NHS PASA will conduct its activities in order to contribute towards global pursuits of sustainable development. There are links to these Agencies' websites at the above address.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been present on the delivery of sustainable development across Government as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [165442]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department's Green Minister is a member of the ENV(G) Cabinet sub-Committee. Additionally, officials regularly attend working groups and other fora which report directly to ENV(G), related to the development of the *Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate*. In particular, my officials have been closely involved in the development of procurement targets for the *Framework* and the Department is represented on the sustainable procurement group.

As part of the public sector food procurement initiative, the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) is working with government departments to develop food action plans. The Department's NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency and its NHS Estates Agency have been working with DEFRA to develop a food procurement action plan which sets a framework and objectives for those Agencies and the wider National Health Service.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [165448]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department is contributing to the Government's forthcoming consultation on the review of the United Kingdom strategy for sustainable development. One of the aims of the review is to step up action in the delivery of sustainable development.

The Department also has an important consultation—*Choosing Health?*—in train to identify action to improve people's health in preparation for a White Paper to be published this summer. Both consultations will have many aims and goals in common and will be an important means of promoting the sustainable development agenda.

The Department is also leading on cross-Government work on Tackling Health Inequalities: A programme for action, which was published in July 2003 and sets out plans to tackle health inequalities over the next three

years; and on developing a Food and Health Action Plan. Taking this work forward will make a significant contribution to the delivery of sustainable development.

Recycled Paper

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list his Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; and if he will state (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the recycled, and post-consumer recycled, content of each paper. [165445]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department's contracted supplier of copier paper, bulk stationery and envelopes is Guilbert UK. The vast majority of white paper purchased is Niceday 3500, which is 80gsm, 100 per cent. recycled, using 80 per cent. post consumer waste.

Bulk paper copying is carried out on Xeros "x3" brand paper. This is 100 per cent. post consumer waste recycled.

NHS Dentistry

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, how many dentists have been recruited to the NHS in each year since 1997 in the Cumbria and Lancashire Health Authority. [165542]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the number of dentists joining the general dental service (GDS) or personal dental service (PDS) in the Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority area in each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

Number of entrants to the GDS and PDS

Year	*Cumbria and Lancashire SHA*
1998 from 1997	58
1999 from 1998	72
2000 from 1999	67
2001 from 2000	79
2002 from 2001	60
2003 from 2002	75

Notes:

1. Dentists include principals, their assistants and trainees. Entrants will include some dentists who left dentistry temporarily in previous years.
2. These figures do not cover other National Health Service dental services, for example, community dental service and hospital dental service.

Source:

Dental Practice Board statistics.

Contraception

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evidence he has collated on the percentage of girls who take the contraceptive pill who suffer from (a) weight gain, (b) acne or other skin conditions and (c) mood swings. [165491]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Clinical trials for combined oral contraceptives have suggested that mood disturbances occur in around one per cent. of users, while acne, other skin conditions (such as eczema and itching) and weight changes occur in between 0.1 per cent. and 1 per cent. of users.

Statins

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of people being prescribed statins in each year to 2010. [165794]

Miss Melanie Johnson: *Winning the War on Heart Disease*, the 2004 progress report on the national service framework (NSF) for coronary heart disease, reports that statin prescribing continues to rise by around 30 per cent. a year. Nationally, about 1.8 million people are currently receiving statins.

The Government has made no estimate of numbers of people likely to be prescribed statins in 2010. However, in his 2002 Report *Securing Our Future Health: Taking a Long-Term View*, Derek Wanless suggested that statins should be prescribed for patients with lower levels of coronary heart disease risk than in the NSF, a 15 per cent. risk over 10 years, as opposed to 30 per cent. in the NSF, and that this would lead to an estimated prescribing cost of £2.1 billion by 2010. The National Institute of Clinical Excellence has been commissioned to produce a technological appraisal of statins and effective prescribing.

Hypertension

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department are taking to encourage self monitoring of hypertension. [165802]

Miss Melanie Johnson: It is essential that individuals across the population be made aware of the risks associated with high blood pressure and the importance of knowing their blood pressure. For the last two years, the Department has contributed to the funding of The Blood Pressure Association's national blood pressure testing week, which is the annual event highlighting their ongoing *Know Your Numbers* campaign.

Genetically Modified Food

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what restrictions are in place to prevent the impact of genetically modified meat and fish and what discussions he has had with retailers on their policy towards these products. [165451]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Before any genetically modified food (including GM animals and fish) can be marketed in or imported into the European Union, approval is required under the relevant European Commission legislation. This would include a rigorous safety assessment of the GM food, which is carried out on a case by case basis.

The Food Standards Agency has had no discussions with retailers on their policy towards such products.

Public Health

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, pursuant to the answer of 7 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 396W, which posts are filled by *(a)* acting staff, *(b)* temporary staff and *(c)* staff who fill other posts as directors of public health. [159105]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library and the previous information has been updated.

Food Advertising

Mr. Paul Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish the evidence received by his Department on the impact of the advertising of food to children. [159774]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In September 2003, the Food Standards Agency (FSA) published the results of a review that it had commissioned on the effects of food promotion on children's food related behaviour. The review is available on the FSA's website.

In August 2003, the food advertising unit of the Advertising Association provided the FSA with the report, *Advertising and Food Choice in Children: a Review of the Literature*, by Dr Brian Young of Exeter University. This report is available on the food advertising unit's website.

In December 2003, the FSA received from Dr Jason Halford of Liverpool University a pre-publication copy of his paper, *The effect of Television Food Advertisments/ Commercials on Food Consumption in Children*. Dr Halford's paper has since been published in the Journal *Appetite*.

Health Services (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list time in the last seven years for residents of Crosby. [160392]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information most closely associated with place of residency is not collected on a constituency level, but at a health services commissioner level. Data is shown in the tables for Sefton Health Authority for the period 1997 to 2002 and South Sefton Primary Care Trust for 2003.

GP Referral to Consultant Waiting List in weeks

Year	Name	Not seen 13 to 25	Not seen 26 plus
1997–98	Sefton HA	1,936	243
1998–99	Sefton HA	2,153	911
1999–2000	Sefton HA	2,241	883
2000–01	Sefton HA	1,358	779
2001–02	Sefton HA	1,141	0

GP Referral to Consultant Waiting List in weeks

Month/year	Name	13-17 Not seen	17-21 Not seen	21-26 Not seen	26 plus
March 2003	South Sefton PCT	218	85	0	0
September 2003	South Sefton PCT	441	102	0	0

Source:
Department of Health QM08R

Inpatient Waiting Lists by Commissioner for Crosby residents—Waiting list in months

Year	Quarter	Name	TWL	0-2 Not seen	3-5 Not seen	6-8 Not seen	9-11 Not seen	12-14 Not seen	15-17 Not seen
1996-97	4	Sefton HA	9,239	4,046	2,247	1,531	1,166	246	3
1997-98	4	Sefton HA	8,915	4,204	1,952	1,328	984	367	80
1998-99	4	Sefton HA	7,967	4,031	1,634	1,142	745	325	90
1999-2000	4	Sefton HA	7,531	3,603	1,773	1,158	644	237	116
2000-01	4	Sefton HA	7,436	3,987	1,638	971	455	278	107
2001-02	4	Sefton HA	7,155	3,837	1,753	1,002	464	99	0

Waiting List in months

Year	Month	Name	TWL	0-2 Not seen	3-5 Not seen	6-8 Not seen	9-11 Not seen	12-14 Not seen	15-17 Not seen
2002-03	March 2003	South Sefton PCT	3,917	2,581	841	369	126	0	0
2003-04	December 2003	South Sefton PCT	3,689	2,744	689	230	26	0	0

Source:
Department of Health QF01.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Crosby awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [160432]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not held centrally.

Day Cases

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the inpatient pre-booking performance against target was in Crosby for *(a)* elective inpatients, *(b)* day cases and *(c)* outpatients in each year since 1997. [164311]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department began publishing national day case figures from March 2003. Data is not collected on inpatient pre-booking performance for elective inpatients or outpatients and is not published on a constituency or National Health Service trust basis.

Egg Consumption

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* median, *(b)* highest and *(c)* lowest consumption of eggs per person in the UK was amongst (i) infants, (ii) children, (iii) young adults and (iv) adults, according to the findings of the National Diet and Nutrition Survey. [162173]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the consumption of eggs is published in:

the National Diet and Nutrition Survey: adults aged 19 to 64 years (volume 1–types and quantities of food consumed) 2002).

the National Diet and Nutrition Survey: young people aged 4 to 18 years (volume 1–report of the diet and nutrition survey) (2000).

the National Diet and Nutrition Survey: children aged 1½ to 4½ years (volume 1–report of the diet and nutrition survey) (1995).

Copies of the reports are available in the Library.

Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures his Department has taken to inform and reassure people who have received blood transfusions since 1980, and will now not be allowed to donate blood, on the risk of vCJD infection. [163473]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The National Blood Service (NBS) has produced two leaflets for donors giving them more information about the new donor exclusion criteria. The first leaflet is entitled *Variant CJD and blood donation* and is a general information leaflet for donors. The second leaflet, entitled *Keeping things safe*, is for those donors who have received blood since 1 January 1980 in the United Kingdom and can therefore no longer give blood. Copies of these leaflets can be obtained from the NBS website at www.blood.co.uk or from the NBS helpline. Donors will also receive an information leaflet entitled *A change to the rules for blood donors* with their invitation letter to give blood.

The NBS has run some press advertising in national newspapers in early April. These adverts addressed why this change is happening, what the risks are and how people can help.

In addition, any patient who has concerns can contact NHS Direct.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research is being (a) undertaken and (b) funded by his Department on (i) diagnosis and (ii) treatment of vCJD, and the risks of infection through blood transfusion. [163475]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The diagnosis of pre-clinical infection is a major part of the Department's programme of Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (CJD) related research. There are 13 contracts that are currently being funded through the policy research programme. In addition, the Department is currently funding seven projects to asses the risk of transmission through blood, and five projects to develop new therapeutic compounds and the CJD clinical trial. Over £30 million has been committed to date on CJD research.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, whether recipients of blood transfusions after 5 April will be prevented from donating blood. [163476]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The new donor exclusion criteria will apply to anyone who has received a blood transfusion since January 1980. This is because there is still a risk that the person from whom the recipient received the blood may have been exposed to variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob Disease by dietary exposure.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people have received *(a)* transfusions of whole blood components and *(b)* transfusions of other blood products since 1980. [163480]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the number of patients who have received blood transfusions or other blood products is not collected centrally. However, the National Blood Service estimates that in recent years, 800,000 patients in England and North Wales received a blood transfusion per annum.

Nick Harvey: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to extend the ban on blood donations from those who have received a blood transfusion since 1980 *(a)* to organ donation recipients and *(b)* to prevent recipients of blood transfusions from donating organs; and if he will make a statement. [164280]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Individuals who have had an organ transplant are excluded from giving blood because of their treatment. All potential organ donors are assessed at the time of their death to identify any risk of disease transmission to the donor.

Accident and Emergency Services

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many consultants there were on average in an accident and emergency department in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997; [163503]

(2) how many consultants there were in each accident and emergency department in England in each year since 1997. [163508]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Community Hospitals

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS staff are working in the community hospitals of *(a)* Townlands, *(b)* Wallingford, *(c)* Abingdon, *(d)* Wantage, *(e)* Watlington and *(f)* Didcot; and what proportion of these staff receive financial assistance with regard to (i) housing and (ii) transportation. [164101]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on number of National Health Service Staff is not held at hospital level but at primary care trust level. Information is shown in

the table for South East Oxfordshire and South West Oxfordshire Primary Care Trusts, which commission services from the community hospitals listed.

NHS hospital and community health services: All NHS staff by main staff group in each specified organisation as at 30 September each specified year

headcount

	2002	*2003*
South East Oxfordshire PCT total	515	567
Non medical staff total	249	266
of which: Professionally qualified clinical staff total	120	138
Qualified nursing	115	132
Allied health professionals	2	3
Qualified scientific, therapeutic & technical (St&t)	3	3
Support to clinical staff total	93	88
Support to doctors & nurses	93	88
NHS infrastructure support total	36	40
Central functions	25	25
Managers & senior managers	11	15
Medical and dental staff total	—	—
General Practitioners[1]	65	66
Practice Staff	201	235
of which: Practice Nurses	37	39
South West Oxfordshire PCT total	1,119	1,103
Non medical staff total	607	589
of which: Professionally qualified clinical staff total	305	280
Qualified nursing	284	275
Allied health professionals	8	—
Qualified St&t	13	5
Support to clinical staff total	255	252
Support to doctors & nurses	251	252
Support to St&t	4	—
NHS infrastructure support total	47	57
Central functions	19	20
Hotel, property & estates	2	3
Managers & senior managers	26	34
Medical and dental staff total	—	1
General Practitioners[1]	129	138
Practice Staff	383	375
of which: Practice Nurses	67	69

Notes:
"—" denotes zero
[1] All practitioners include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS Other, GP Retainers, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.
Sources:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.
Department of Health non-medical workforce census.

Expert Patients' Programme

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the expert patient programme; and what plans his Department has to extend the programme. [164869]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The expert patients programme provides training in self-management for patients with chronic conditions and helps build informed partnerships between patients and health and social care professionals. The programme is currently being piloted within primary care trusts in England. The report, entitled: *The Expert Patient: A New Approach to Chronic Disease Management for the 21st Century*, which was published in September 2001, commits us to making the programme integral to mainstream National Health Service healthcare provision between 2004 and 2007.

Skin Diseases

Dr. Evan Harris: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has conducted into quality indicators for the treatment and management of inflammatory skin diseases. [164904]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2001, the National Health Service health technology assessment programme published systematic reviews of treatments for atopic eczema and severe psoriasis. These are available on the programme's website at www.hta.nhsweb.nhs.uk. Further assessments in eczema, psoriasis and acne are in progress.

Last year, the Nuffield Trust published *Measuring general practice: a demonstration project to develop and test a set of primary care clinical quality indicators.* The project looked at 19 disease areas, including acne, and was conducted in partnership with the National Primary Care Research and Development Centre (NPCRDC), based at the University of Manchester. NPCRDC is funded largely by the Department.

Care Homes

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many outbreaks of infectious disease there were in care homes in each year since 1997. [165241]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information about all outbreaks of infectious diseases in care homes is not collected centrally.

The Health Protection Agency has provided the information shown in the tables on infectious intestinal diseases and on influenza from their voluntary reporting system.

General outbreaks of Infectious Intestinal Disease linked to care homes. England & Wales, 1997–2003

Year	*Number of outbreaks*
1997	152
1998	178
1999	167
2000	219
2001	159
2002	331
2003	187
Total	1,393

provisional data.
Source:
HPA GSURV outbreak database 30/3/04

Influenza outbreaks reported

Year	*Number of outbreaks*
1997	No data available
1998	10
1999	7
2000	1
2001	1

Influenza outbreaks reported

Year	*Number of outbreaks*
2002	1
2003	3
Total	23

Source:
HPA data.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Farm Incomes

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on farm income levels for farmers in the Ribble Valley and Fulwood in the past five years. [165510]

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on farm income levels for farmers in Birkenhead in the past five years. [166612]

Alun Michael: Owing to the small number of farms in the constituencies of Ribble Valley and Fulwood and Birkenhead, there is no robust data available on farm incomes for farmers in that area over the last five years. Net farm income for farms in the North EU "Super Region" and for England over the last five years are shown in the table below.

Net Farm Income

	1998–99	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
North EU Super Region	8,272	8,659	12,456	16,457	18,512
England	10,359	7,981	9,886	13,558	16,435

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business.

Advisory Committee on Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish the membership for the Advisory Committee on Pesticides; and which organisations are allowed to attend. [166457]

Alun Michael: The membership of the Advisory Committee on Pesticides is already published and can be viewed on the Pesticide Safety Directorate's website at http://www.pesticides:gov.uk/acp.asp?id = 203.

Those who attend the meetings of the committee in addition to its members are departmental assessors and advisors and are listed in the ACP's annual report published at http://www.pesticides.gov.uk/uploadedfiles/Web_Assets/ACP/ACP_annrep_2002.pdf.

The Committee's annual report for 2003 is in preparation and is expected to be published within the next month.

On occasion the Committee invites individuals, such as applicants for approvals, to make a presentation related to a specific item of the committee's business. These individuals are not present when decisions are taken.

Home Energy Efficiency

Mr. Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Birkenhead have benefited from Warm Front. [166613]

Alun Michael: Between the launch of Warm Front in June 2000 and the end of March 2003, approximately 3,780 households in Birkenhead received assistance from the scheme.

Horses and Ponies

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of regulations which affect horses and ponies as *(a)* food producing, *(b)* agricultural and *(c)* pet or companion animals. [166443]

Alun Michael: We have been working on revisions to the Horse Passports (England) Regulations 2003, and to European legislation on animal welfare during transport and on veterinary medicines; reviewing national legislation on animal welfare (including regulation of tethering, livery yards and riding establishments); and working with the horse industry to develop a 10-year health and welfare strategy. The Ragwort Control Act, which is part of our work on animal welfare, came into force in February and was accompanied by a regulatory impact assessment. The Act provides for a Code of Practice on the Control of Ragwort, which should be in place towards the end of June. We recently issued the draft Code, and a draft environmental appraisal, for public consultation. Last month we published the first-ever research on the horse industry as a whole, jointly funded by the Department and the British Horse Industry Confederation.

Greyhounds

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, how many greyhounds have been collected by local authority dog wardens in each year since 2000. [165485]

Alun Michael: Under section 149(8) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990, local authority dog wardens are required to keep a register containing the prescribed particulars of, or relating, to dogs seized and the register shall be available, at all reasonable times, for inspection by the public free of charge. However, we do not collect that data centrally as there is no requirement for it to be supplied to Government.

Rights of Way

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what obligations Plymouth City Council has to consult the public over variations to public rights of way; and whether her Department monitors the exercise of such powers. [165911]

Alun Michael: When making changes to a right of way, a local highway authority must, in most cases, (a) serve a notice of the relevant order on every owner, occupier and lessee of any land affected by the order, (b) publish the notice in at least one local newspaper and (c) notify all statutory consultees. The notice must also be displayed at the ends of the right of way affected by the order. Defra does not monitor the exercise of these duties, but councils are well aware that an order can be challenged if a local highway authority has failed to give correct notice and that it is in their interests to follow the correct procedures.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Possession Orders

Mr. Willis: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many possession orders have been issued in each year since 1997 to (a) elderly and (b) vulnerable people. [166519]

Mr. Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not currently collect data on numbers of possession orders issued. Data collected by the Department for Constitutional Affairs and held by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the number of possession orders issued each year since 1997 does not give a breakdown of specified groups of tenants.

Communications Masts

Annabelle Ewing: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he and his officials had with (a) Airwave and (b) O2 prior to the setting of the UK's safety limit on Tetra radiation. [161611]

Yvette Cooper: None. The Government set up the Independent Expert Group on Mobile Phones (chaired by Sir William Stewart) to consider the health effects of mobile phones, base stations and transmitters. They conducted a rigorous and comprehensive assessment of existing research and gathered a wide range of views and published their report in May 2000. In respect of base stations, the report concludes that *"the balance of evidence indicates that there is no general risk to the health of people living near to base stations on the basis that exposures are expected to be small fractions of the guidelines"*. However, gaps in scientific knowledge led Stewart to recommend a precautionary approach comprising a series of specific measures. The Government accepted the recommended precautionary approach and is taking forward a range of precautionary actions. These include ensuring all base stations meet the international guidelines on public exposure set by the International Commission on Non-Ionising Radiation Protection (ICNIRP).

Following a request to the NRPB by the Home Office, the issue of possible health effects caused by signals from TETRA base stations was comprehensively addressed in a report by NRPB's independent Advisory Group on Non-ionising Radiation (AGNIR), chaired by Sir Richard Doll. The report on *Possible Health Effects from Terrestrial Trunked Radio (TETRA)* was published in 2002 in the Documents of NRPB (Volume 12 No 2, 2001) and is also available on the NRPB web site: www.nrpb.org. The report noted that the signals from TETRA base stations, like their mobile phone counterparts, are not pulsed. NRPB advise that there is no reason to believe that signals from TETRA base stations should be treated differently from other base stations.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers currently seconded to the National Criminal Intelligence Service will be transferred to the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [166602]

Caroline Flint: Staffing levels in the Serious Organised Crime Agency will be determined by the operational outcomes it is funded to deliver; no decisions have yet been taken on the requirements for particular groups of staff, but the overall objective is to enhance the effectiveness of our response to serious organised crime.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what role the Serious Organised Crime Agency will have in *(a)* drugs enforcement and *(b)* drugs policy; [166103]

(2) what former HM Customs and Excise function he expects the Serious Organised Crime Agency to undertake; [166104]

(3) how many personnel involved in *(a)* drug enforcement and *(b)* drugs policy he expects to be transferred from HM Customs and Excise to the Serious Organised Crime Agency; [166105]

(4) how many personnel he expects to work on *(a)* drugs enforcement and *(b)* drugs policy in the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [166106]

Caroline Flint [*holding answer 19 April 2004*]: Proposals for the Serious Organised Crime Agency were set out in the white paper "One Step Ahead: A 21st century strategy to defeat organised crime" (CM6167), published on 29 March. A project team is now working on the detailed arrangements, but it is not intended that the new agency will have responsibility for drugs policy.

Race Hate Websites

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, what action he will take to *(a)* close down race hate websites and *(b)* protect named journalists who are being targeted by these sites. [160802]

Fiona MacTaggart: Websites of this kind are objectionable and I can understand why journalists and other persons identified on them might feel concern.

Whilst we are keeping the legislative position under review, existing laws already provide a level of protection.

It is an offence to assault people or damage their property, and a person who behaves in that way or takes active steps to commit those offences is liable to prosecution, regardless of how or where, or on what website he came to identify his victim.

It is also an offence to incite another person to commit a criminal offence. While it might not be possible to take action against a foreign-based internet service provider for disseminating the incitement, that would not in itself prevent prosecution of a person in this country who had been responsible for the content of the website. There is, of course, a question about what constitutes incitement. Publishing information such as names and addresses of those belonging to an identified organisation or espousing a particular view may not necessarily be enough in itself to constitute incitement but it is for the police and prosecutors to decide in all the circumstances of a particular case and on the available evidence whether an offence has been committed.

The Protection from Harassment Act 1997 makes provision that a person may be guilty of an offence if he engages in a course of conduct which he knows or ought to know causes harassment. The Act is concerned with the effect of the behaviour rather than the type of conduct—any actions that foreseeably cause distress may amount to harassment. The Act also provides, as a civil remedy, the opportunity to apply to the High Court for an injunction. Victims of harassment by animal rights extremists have successfully used the Act to secure orders which, among other things, have required the removal of their personal details from websites. In these cases however acts of harassment beyond identifying persons on a website were proved.

The internet service provider industry itself is sometimes able and willing to refuse to carry objectionable material on websites. In the UK, most service providers have acceptable use policies, under which they reserve the right to remove a customer's material, or refuse to carry it, not only if it is illegal but also in certain other circumstances, which can include where material causes concern or needless anxiety to others or publishes details of individuals without their consent. The UK's Internet Watch Foundation encourages service providers to refuse to handle sites which violate their acceptable use policies. The great majority of UK service providers operate responsibly. The government has also discussed with other governments how we can co-operate to tackle this problem, given that it raises issues of cross-national jurisdication.

It is important that those with concerns should make them known to the police and to the Internet Watch Foundation.

Probation Hostels

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average percentage change in costs was for each probation hostel following the decision to award the contract for hostel facilities to the private sector between the last and current financial years. [160808]

Paul Goggins: Prior to the award of the approved premises (previously known as hostels) facilities management contract no consistent data on the cost of running each premises was held. Therefore, it is not possible to accurately compare current costs to historic costs.

Reflecting the enhanced specification, and the intention to improve the quality of the approved premises estate, including staff security and health and safety, funding for premises was increased by 10 per cent. for financial year 2003–04.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

"Choosing Health?"

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her Department will make a formal response to the recommendations of the Treasury's recent report on Securing Good Health for the Whole Nation; and if she will make a statement. [165008]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have been asked to reply.

The Department of Health launched "*Choosing Health? A consultation on action to improve people's health*" on 3 March. The formal consultation period runs until 28 May 2004. The consultation will feed into a White Paper, to be published this summer. The White Paper will set out what the Government will do to achieve change in the public sector and in partnership with other organisations to improve health, and will include the Government's response to Derek Wanless' report on Securing Good Health for the Whole Population.

Digital Television

Mr. David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assessment she has made of accessibility to digital television in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* England, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland. [165677]

Estelle Morris *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Nearly three-quarters of the UK population are currently believed to have a full range of digital terrestrial television (DTT) services potentially available. Current estimates, provided by the BBC, of the coverage of DTT services in the nations are:

England: 73 per cent.

Scotland: 82 per cent.

Wales: 57 per cent.

Northern Ireland: 58 per cent.

Digital satellite signals are potentially available to almost all UK viewers, and may offer an alternative in areas where DTT signals are not available. Cable TV services are also available to more than half the UK population (primarily in urban areas).

Full details, including maps of the extension of DTT coverage which may be possible after digital switchover by re-using analogue TV frequencies and increasing transmission powers, are available in Ofcom's report 'Driving Digital Switchover'.

Green Minister

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what work her Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months

in that capacity; and what meetings her Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that capacity. [165955]

Estelle Morris: In February, as the Green Minister for DCMS I endorsed the publication of my Department's strategy for sustainable development, copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House. In the spirit of strengthening links for sustainable development between departments, as recommended by my colleague the Minister for Environment, I recently issued an invitation to ministers across Government to attend an informal discussion on how our various departments relate to the subject. This will take place in the Royal Parks' newly opened restaurant in St James's Park, during London Sustainability Weeks in June. The restaurant has a modern ecological design constructed from sustainably produced materials (larch, oak) and has a green turf roof. The food it serves is procured as far as possible from named small specialist English producers, and will be organic, British and seasonal. It will present information on the ingredients used in an educational, fun and original way.

Helen Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what criteria she used for making the selection of 20 sports eligible for main Lottery funding; if she will list the 20 sports selected for Lottery funding; and whether crown green bowling was considered as a sport which might be eligible for main Lottery funding. [166798]

Richard Caborn: The 20 sports eligible for priority lottery funding were selected by Sport England. The selection criteria were participation rates, retention, and levels of success. Sport England also considered the governance of each sport. Any sports can apply for lottery funding.

The Priority sports are:

England only: badminton, cricket, football, golf, hockey, netball, rugby union, rugby league, squash and tennis.

UK-wide (same treatment by Sport England, but also qualify for UK Sport One Stop Planning support: athletics, canoeing, cycling, equestrianism, gymnastics, judo, rowing, triathlon, sailing and swimming).

Crown green bowling was considered for priority funding. However, in comparison to the 20 sports chosen, there is less overall participation in numbers and diversity.

There is no reason why crown green bowling should not successfully apply for individual project lottery funding. Applications should be made to the new Regional Sports Boards that have been established to ensure that funding meets local and regional needs.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will list for each civil service grade within her *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group, (iii) registered disabled and (iv) age group. [166397]

Richard Caborn: The Department and Royal Parks Agency collect data on ethnicity and disability on the basis of voluntary self-declaration. The tables provide data by grade broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group, (iii) disability and (iv) age group. The Department and Agency Codes of Practice on equal opportunities monitoring do not allow disclosure of data where numbers in any group are fewer than five; where this is the case data have been aggregated to maintain confidentiality.

DCMS Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Breakdown by Grade

			Ethnicity		Disability	
	Total staff in Grade	Female	Non-White	Not Declared	Disability Declared	Not Declared
AA/AO	104	67	21	13	6	11
EO	119	64	18	8	*	14
HEO/SEO	152	69	12	22	*	24
Grade 7	90	35	*	8	*	14
SCS	25	6	*	*	0	*

* Fewer Than 5

DCMS Age Breakdown by Grade

	<25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55+
AA/AO	29	19	11	16	8	5	4	12
EO	7	32	23	20	14	10	6	7
HEO/SEO	2	27	22	40	31	10	15	5
Grade 7	0	7	7	15	23	14	12	12
SCS	0	0	0	5	4	5	8	3

Royal Parks Agency Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Breakdown by Grade

			Ethnicity		Disability	
	Total staff in Grade	Female	Non-White	Not Declared	Disability Declared	Not Declared
AA/AO	145	51	6	33	0	0
EO	53	17	*	12	*	0
HEO/SEO	30	8	*	*	*	0

Royal Parks Agency Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Breakdown by Grade

	Total staff in Grade	Female	Ethnicity		Disability	
			Non-White	Not Declared	Disability Declared	Not Declared
Grade 7	10	*	0	0	0	0
SCS	2	0	0	0	0	0

* Fewer Than 5

Royal Parks Agency Breakdown by Grade

Age Breakdown	<25	25-29	30-34	35-39	40-44	45-49	50-54	55+
AA/AO	8	13	22	29	30	20	11	12
EO	1	0	9	14	5	11	6	7
HEO/SEO	0	1	2	7	4	7	4	5
Grade 7	0	0	0	1	1	5	0	3
SCS	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0

DEFENCE

Electronic Payments

Mr. White: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress his Department has made to manage the changeover from the Bank Automated Clearing System to the new BACSTEL-IP system for electronic payments. [164317]

Ivor Caplin: Action to manage the changeover to the new BACSTEL-IP system is being co-ordinated in the Ministry of Defence by the Defence Communications Services Agency, supported by the Departmental Corporate Banking and Fund Manager and by Lloyds TSB, the sponsoring bank for BACS within the Department. Initial work to gather information has been conducted, and a plan prepared to enable migration well ahead of the discontinuation of the existing BACS system.

Dr. Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what alternative methods of payment he is proposing for people who currently receive a war pension by order book, girocheque or payable order but will be unable to transfer to direct payment. [165214]

(2) who will be eligible to receive their war pension by methods other than direct payment. [165215]

Ivor Caplin: The Veterans Agency (VA) has always accepted that for a very limited number of customers, those most vulnerable and genuinely unable to manage Direct Payment, this method of payment may not be practical or suitable for their needs.

For those customers the VA will provide an alternative method of payment that will take the form of a weekly cheque. This will be sent to the pensioner's home by first class post and they will be able to cash it at any post office.

Departmental Personnel (Vale of York)

Miss Anne McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many (a) service and (b) departmental civilian personnel are based in the Vale of York. [165095]

Ivor Caplin: Location data for Service personnel are not available by Parliamentary Constituency. However they are available by Local Authority Area. The Parliamentary Constituency of the Vale of York contains part of the Unitary Authority of York, and parts of the local authorities of Hambleton and Harrogate. The total number of Service personnel in these areas as at 1 July 2002 (the most recently available data) is given in the following table:

UA/LA	All Services	Naval Service	Army	RAF
York	680	–	680	–
Hambleton	2,130	10	700	1,420
Harrogate	2,610	60	2,530	10

Note:
1. – denotes zero,
2. All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. Due to rounding methods used totals may not always equal the sum of the parts.
3. Figures are for UK Regular Forces, both Trained and Untrained, and exclude Gurkhas, Full-Time Reserve Service personnel, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment and mobilised Reservists.

The number of civilian personnel working for the Ministry of Defence as at 1 January 2004 in Yorkshire and The Humber was 3,140 (rounded to the nearest 10).

This includes permanent, full-time equivalent staff, non-industrial and industrial, including Trading Funds and excludes those on career breaks, long-term sick leave, secondment etc. Reliable data is not available below Government Office Region level.

Civilian Personnel

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the salary bill was for civilians employed within the (a) Ministry of Defence and (b) armed forces in the latest year for which figures are available. [165554]

Ivor Caplin: Civilian salary costs, including National Insurance contributions, superannuation liability and redundancy and severance payments, for the last Financial Year 2002–03 were £2,584,057,000. This information was published in the Department's Annual Reports and Accounts at Note 2.2 to the acccounts. A copy is available in the Library of the House.

Army Resettlement Payments

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many (a) soldiers and (b) ex-soldiers were (i) investigated and (ii) prosecuted in regard to fraudulent claims for payment associated with resettlement in each year since 2000. [166436]

Ivor Caplin: Information for all soldiers is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost. The investigation of ex-soldiers is a matter for the appropriate civil police authority.

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence, how many soldiers received payments as part of their resettlement on leaving the Army in 2003; and what the average amount was. [166437]

Ivor Caplin: The Information requested is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Cap Badges

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the regiments which have the name of a county included in the cap badge. [166028]

Ivor Caplin: The following 11 regular Army regiments include the name of a county in their official titles: The Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders; The Cheshire Regiment; The Devon and Dorset Regiment; The Prince of Wales's Royal Regiment (Queen's and Royal Hampshires); The Green Howards (Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment); The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire; The Queen's Lancashire Regiment; The Royal Gloucestershire, Berkshire and Wiltshire Regiment; The Staffordshire Regiment; The Worcestershire and Sherwood Foresters Regiment; and The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding).

Of these 11 regiments, five feature the name of a county in their actual gap badges. They are: The Argyle and Sutherland Highlanders; The Cheshire Regiment; The Prince of Wales's Own Regiment of Yorkshire; The Queen's Lancashire Regiment; and The Duke of Wellington's Regiment (West Riding).

Wind Turbines, Guestwick

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether he intends to object, for operational flying reasons, to the erection of six wind turbines at Guestwick in Norfolk. [166043]

Ivor Caplin (holding answer 19 April 2004): An objection to the current proposals will be lodged on the basis of potential interference with the operation of both air traffic and air defence radar. The developer has been notified.

The main reasons are that the proposed development is situated within 22km and in line of sight of the Air Traffic Radar at RAF Coltishall and within 16km and line of sight of the radar at RAF Honington. The blades of wind turbines can produce false returns or mask the detection of flying aircraft. It is the view of our specialist technical advisers, who have considered the proposal, that such a development could place the safety of flight in danger and therefore pose an unacceptable risk to personnel, aircraft and people on the ground.

In addition the site lies within 27km and line of sight of the Air Defence Radar at RAF Trimingham.

However, officials from Defence Estates are discussing with the developer whether any mitigating measures might be possible which would allow a development to proceed.

Computer Services

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to update computer (a) hardware and (b) software standard packages used in his Department. [166369]

Ivor Caplin: The Defence Information Infrastructure Integrated Project Team (DII IPT) will deliver 139,000 desktop devices across Defence. This will include the provision of standard personal productivity software, e.g. office automation. The DII (Future) Programme will be delivered incrementally commencing during 2005 and is expected to achieve a Full Operating Capability by 2009.

CABINET OFFICE

Disclosure of Information

Mr. Heath: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office in what circumstances is disclosure of Government policy to a third party considered a disciplinary offence. [166194]

Mr. Alexander: The rules on the disclosure of information by civil servants are set out in the Civil Service Code and Civil Service Management Code.

Regulatory Reform

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what steps he is taking to improve the regulatory reform process. [166195]

Mr. Alexander: As I confirmed to the Regulatory Reform Committee on 1 July 2003, we will honour the commitment given during the passage of the Regulatory Reform Bill in another place to review the workings of the order-making process in April 2004.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Norman: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what plans he has to improve the monitoring of regulatory impact assessments. [166196]

Mr. Alexander: My right hon. Friend the Chancellor announced in the Budget on 17 March new processes for approving regulatory proposals likely to impose large additional costs on businesses.

These new arrangements mean that departments will need to agree regulatory impact assessments on major proposals with the Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact

TREASURY

Tax Credits

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people have received overpayments of tax credits in the last 12 months. [165419]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave my hon. Friend the Member for Jarrow (Mr Hepburn) on 22 March, *Official Report*, columns 663-64W.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what problems there have been with the tax credit computer system. [165420]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave the hon. Member for Birmingham, Northfield (Mr Burden) on 8 December 2003, *Official Report*, columns 334-35W.

Mr. Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many claimants of child tax credit there are; and what the total funding was for 2003–04 for each *(a)* constituency and *(b)* region in the United Kingdom. [166672]

Dawn Primarolo: There were 4.6 million families with an award of Child Tax Credit on 5 January this year. Because Child Tax Credit is a national system of financial support there is no separately identifiable funding for each constituency and region of the UK. However, data on the number of families receiving Child Tax Credit in each constituency and region is available on the Inland Revenue's website, at: http://www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/personal-tax-credits.

Illegal Imports

Mr. Breed: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many successful prosecutions have been brought against illegal *(a)* meat and *(b)* produce importers in the past five years, broken down by port of entry. [165718]

Mr. Healey: HM Customs and Excise have been responsible for anti-smuggling controls on illegal imports of meat since April 2003.

Customs have brought two successful prosecutions against people smuggling illegal meat in the past fortnight: one involving an American national arriving at Gatwick airport and another a Gambian national arriving at Heathrow.

In the past five years, two other successful prosecutions have been brought by Customs in regard of imports of meat, skins and dead animals (both in 2001). Records detailing the ports of entry and details of relevant prosecutions brought by local authorities are not recorded centrally.

There have been no prosecutions with regard to illegal imports of produce in the past five years.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what provisions are being made to ensure that *(a)* post-GCSE students taking summer jobs and *(b)* sixth formers with Saturday jobs are covered by the new minimum wage for 16 and 17 year olds. [166814]

Dawn Primarolo: The new minimum wage rate will cover all 16 and 17 year olds who have ceased to be of compulsory school age, with an exemption for apprentices and those engaged in specified pre-apprenticeship training programmes. The Government will bring in regulations to implement the new minimum wage rate before Parliament ahead of the Summer recess and the new rate will come into effect on 1 October. The DTI is considering how best to raise awareness of the new minimum wage among 16 and 17 year olds and their employers.

WALES

Inward Investment

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales which business sectors in Wales attracted the highest *(a)* number of investors and *(b)* amount of investment in each year since 1999. [161203]

Mr. Touhig: Since 1999, the following business sectors have attracted the highest number of investors in Wales:

Year	*Business Sector*	*Number of investors*
1999–2000	Call centres	11
2000–01	Other manufacturing	11
2000–01	Ebusiness	10
2001–02	Automotive	9
2002–03	Other manufacturing	11

Since 1999, the following business sectors have attracted the highest amounts of investment in Wales:

Year	*Business Sector*	*Amount invested*
1999–2000	Other manufacturing	£334.8m
2000–01	Automotive	£299.9m
2001–02	Semi-conductors	£69.4m
2002–03	Other manufacturing	£209.5m

Source:
Welsh Development Agency
NB—"Other manufacturing" are those projects which fall outside the above categories. For exmaple, it excludes aerospace, automotive, construction products, electrical engineering, general engineering, etc.

Employment

Bill Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many jobs have been lost in (*a*) manufacturing and (*b*) agriculture in Wales in each year since 1997. [163166]

Mr. Touhig: Between 1997 and 2003, on average 19,000 jobs were lost each year in manufacturing and 14,000 manufacturing jobs created. The decline in the manufacturing sector is more than balanced by a rise in overall employment in Wales which has risen by over 100,000 since 1997. Details for individual years for the manufacturing sector are as follows:

Year	*Gains (thousands)*	*Losses (thousands)*
1997	11.2	10.5
1998	17.2	19.0
1999	10.0	15.0
2000	13.1	17.6
2001	24.9	30.1

Year	Gains (thousands)	Losses (thousands)
2002	12.8	22.9
2003	9.0	20.0
1997–2003 averages	14	19

Source:
Welsh Register of Manufacturing Employment

Information for the agriculture sector is not available in the form requested. However, employment trends in agriculture are set out in the table below.

Persons Employed in Agriculture in Wales (thousands)

Year	
1997	63.3
1998	61.9
1999	59.5
2000	55.7
2001	56.3
2002	56.2
2003	55.6

Source:
Digest of Wales Historical Statistics

NORTHERN IRELAND

Murder Defendants (Bail)

Mr. Nigel Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State, Northern Ireland Office how many times defendants charged with murder in Northern Ireland have been released on bail in each year since 2000. [166440]

Mr. Christopher Leslie: I have been asked to reply.

In 2001, 13 defendants on murder charges were released on bail.

In 2002, 17 defendants on murder charges were released on bail.

In 2003, 14 defendants on murder charges were released on bail.

SCOTLAND

Focus Groups and Opinion Polls

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what his estimate is of total expenditure by his Department on *(a)* focus groups and *(b)* opinion polls in each year from 1995–96 and 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [162758]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999. Since then there has been no expenditure on focus groups or opinion polls.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many press officers were employed in his Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [162846]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999. Details of the number of press officers and their total pay cost to the office (including superannuation and employers national insurance contributions) are given in the table below:

Year	Number of Press Officers	Cost £
1999–2000	4	[1]44,078
2000–01	4	139,705
2001–02	4	134,702
2002–03	4	[2]99,166
2003–04	2.6	[3]111,202

[1] Part year cost from 1 July 1999
[2] Part year cost because of vacancies
[3] Estimated

Computers

Steve Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many cases of computer misuse there were in his Department in each of the last seven years, broken down by category of misuse; and how many of those cases resulted in disciplinary action. [163228]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office was established on 1 July 1999. Since then there have been no cases of computer misuse in the office.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the requirements are on officials in his Office to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for his officials. [164713]

Mrs. McGuire: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirement for civil servants declaring any conflict of interest. Further information and guidance to staff on the declaration of interests is available from the Staff Handbook.

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department. [166083]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office has had no contracts, consultancy or other service work carried out by these accountancy firms.

Staff Transferrals

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many staff from his Office have transferred to other Government departments since 1 June 2003; and to which departments they have transferred. [165965]

Mrs. McGuire: Since 1 June 2003, three staff have transferred from the Scotland Office to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, the Wales Office and the Department for Constitutional Affairs respectively. In

addition, 28 staff have returned to their parent departments (primarily the Scottish Executive) after their period of loan.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland how many staff from other Government departments have transferred to his Office since 1 June 2003; and from which departments they have transferred. [165966]

Mrs. McGuire: Since 1 June 2003, nine members of staff have joined the Scotland Office on loan from the Scottish Executive.

Higher Education

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what steps he will take in response to the findings and recommendations of the Scottish Executive's Phase 3 Higher Education Review. [165959]

Mrs. McGuire: Higher Education in Scotland is a devolved matter. It is therefore for Scottish Ministers to consider the findings of the 3rd Phase Scottish Higher Education Review to inform the 2004 Spending Review.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Pensions and Benefits (Direct Payments)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in the Portsmouth South constituency drew their *(a)* benefits including war pensions and *(b)* retirement pensions at (i) post offices and (ii) banks and building societies, in each of the last three years for which figures are available. [165353]

Chris Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. However, information available on pensioners (women over 60 and men over 65) as at 31 December 2002 and 31 December 2003 in the Portsmouth South constituency receiving benefit payments collectable at a post office and by direct payment into bank and building society accounts, is in the tables.

Other Benefit accounts as at December each year in Portsmouth South Constituency

	Payments into Bank/ Building Society Accounts	*Payments through Post Office*
December 2002	3,995	9,330
December 2003	5,725	8,045

Retirement Pension accounts as at December each year in Portsmouth South Constituency

	Payments into Bank/ Building Society Accounts	*Payments through Post Office*
December 2002	5,790	6,640
December 2003	6,135	5,410

Included in payment through the post office are customers paid into Post Office card accounts and customers paid by girocheque. Girocheques are encashable either at a post office or they can be paid into a bank or building society account. These figures do not include war pensions and child benefit customers as these accounts are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and Inland Revenue respectively.

Some customers who are paid direct into an account can also collect their payments in cash at post offices through the wider range of banking services now available at the post office. There is no data available on the number of benefit claims collected in this way.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the take up of direct payment has been. [166230]

Chris Pond: Key figures on the progress of conversion to Direct Payment are available in the Library, updated every four weeks.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) to how many benefit claimants the Department has sent personal invitation letters to open a Post Office Card Account; and how many of these are in receipt of state pensions; [166011]

(2) how many benefit claimants have completed the Post Office Card Account application forms at post offices; and how many of these are in receipt of state pensions; [166012]

(3) how many benefits claimants are being paid by the Department directly into Post Office card accounts; and how many of these are pensioners. [166082]

Chris Pond: Key figures on the progress of conversion to Direct Payment are available in the Library, updated every four weeks.

Post Office Limited have advised that as at 31 March 2004 over 2.1 million Post Office card accounts had been opened. The Post Office does not break these figures down into individual benefit groups therefore specific data for pensioners is not available.

The number of Department for Work and Pensions benefit accounts being paid into a Post Office card account as at 20 March 2004 is 679,355 of which 172,345 are Retirement Pension accounts.

As many customers have already provided their account details it is expected that the figures for Direct Payment into Post Office card accounts will quickly rise, as customers existing methods of payment expire, and they move over to payment being made direct into their nominated account.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff are employed by his Department to call members of the public who have yet to sign up for electronic payment of their benefits into bank or Post Office accounts. [165709]

Chris Pond: The conversion process normally consists of one or more mailings sent directly to the customer, followed by a phone call if there is no response to the letter(s). If the customers' telephone number is not available then a further letter asking them to contact the Department may be issued.

Approximately 150 of the staff employed by the Customer Conversion Centre are involved in making outbound calls. This is just part of the range of tasks undertaken by the Customer Conversion Centre aimed

at assisting over 14 million customers to convert to Direct Payment before order books are phased out in 2005.

New Deal for Lone Parents

Mr. Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many women in Birkenhead have benefited from the (a) New Deal for Lone Parents and (b) New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement; [166508]

(2) how many lone parents in Birkenhead have gained work through the New Deal programme. [166511]

Jane Kennedy: The New Deal is working. Over one million people have been helped into work since its inception. On New Deal for Lone Parents alone there have been almost 460,000 entrants to the programme and over 240,000 of the lone parents participating have found work.

Statistics for New Deal for Partners are not available at constituency level. The information requested on the number of women benefiting from New Deal for Lone Parents is in the table.

Number of Women Participating in New Deal for Lone Parents in Birkenhead

Number of New Deal Participants [1]	*Number of New Deal Starts* [2]
1,310	1,630

Source:
New Deal evaluation Database, Information and Analysis Directorate, DWP.
Notes:
[1] All figures relate to individuals who have started each programme.
[2] An individual may have had more than one start over the period.

Seven Hundred and Forty lone parents have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents in Birkenhead. Information on the family circumstances of the participants of other New Deals is not available.

Mr. Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Wirral South have gained work through the New Deal programme. [166632]

Jane Kennedy: 210 lone parents have gained work in Wirral South through New Deal for Lone Parents.

Information on how many lone parents have gained work through other New Deal progammes is not available.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) if he will break down by geographical area the information given in the latest Office of National Statistics' Statistics on the New Deal immediate destinations of people leaving the New Deal for Young People (Table 4) and the enhanced New Deal 25 plus (Table 5); [166351]

(2) in the latest Office of National Statistics' statistics on the New Deal, if he will break down by benefit to which individuals moved, the information given in the column on transfers to other benefits in Table 5 of the Immediate Destination on leaving the enhanced New Deal 25 plus; [166379]

(3) if he will break down by benefit to which individuals moved, the information given in the column on other benefits in Table 4 of the Immediate Destination on leaving the New Deal for Young People in the latest Office of National Statistics's Statistics on the New deal. [166380]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Latest information on the immediate destinations of people leaving New Deal for Young People and New Deal 25 plus, broken down by Jobcentre Plus region, has been placed in the Library.

A further breakdown of immediate destinations on leaving New Deal for Young People and New Deal 25plus is not available. Work is currently underway examining our data sources and systems, exploring the possibility of linking these to provide information such as that requested.

Pensioner Incomes

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate for (a) 1979, (b) 1996–97 and (c) 2002–03 the number of individual pensioners living in households with income below 60 per cent. of median income after housing costs; and of these how many were (i) men and (ii) women. [166250]

Malcolm Wicks: The requested information is provided in the table.

Number of pensioners (millions) living below 60 per cent of contemporary median income (After Housing Costs)

Year	*Male*	*Female*	*All Pensioners*
1979	0.9	1.6	2.5
1996–97	0.8	1.9	2.7
2002–03	0.8	1.3	2.2

Notes:

(1) All figures are estimates and are taken from the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) series. Family Expenditure Survey (FES) data is used for 1979, while Family Resource Survey data is used for 1996–97 and 2002–03. FES figures relate to single calendar years whereas FRS figures are for single financial years.

(2) Comparisons between results for 1979 and those for the later years should be regarded as approximate, due to the change in data source and grossing regime.

(3) Estimates are for Great Britain and are quoted to the nearest 0.1 million. Totals for male and female pensioners may not add up to 'All pensioners' due to rounding.

(4) The estimates are sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using milti-purpose grossing factors that, in the case of the Family Resources Survey, control for tenure, Council Tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to both sampling error and to variability in non-response.

(5) The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income (that is to say income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household). Figures are quoted on an After Housing Costs basis, and include the self-employed.

(6) Caution should be taken when making comparisons between gender using HBAI data. HBAI attempts to measure living standards as determined by household income; consequently both partners in a couple will appear at the same

position in the income distribution. Any differences in figures can only be driven by gender differences for single adults, which will themselves be diluted by the figures for couples.

Chemical Leak (Rhodia)

Mr. Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects the Health and Safety Executive to report on the chemical leak of 3 November 2003 at the Rhodia Group Chesterfield site; and if he will make a statement. [165641]

Jane Kennedy: HSE will be completing its investigation into the chemical release at Rhodia in the next few weeks, and then determining what further action it will take. I have asked the Health and Safety Executive to keep you informed of developments on this matter, and as to what means of public reporting will be used.

Pensioner Benefits

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the assumptions on uprating of benefit, referred to in Note 5 to the Answer of 3 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 470-2W, on pensioners' benefits, were. [166647]

Maria Eagle: The current policy on uprating of Disability Living Allowance (DLA), Attendance Allowance (AA) and Carers' Allowance (CA), to which I referred in note 5 to the written answer I gave to the hon Member on 3 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 470-2W, is that these benefits are uprated in April each year in line with the movement of the Retail Prices Index (RPI) over the 12 months to the previous September. This policy is applied when estimating expenditure on these benefits for future years, using the latest HM Treasury medium term assumptions for the annual movement of the RPI up to 2006–07, and an assumption of an annual movement of the RPI equal to 2.58 per cent for the long term (beyond 2006–07).

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iraq

Sir John Stanley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date he was first informed that the former deputy legal adviser in his Department, Ms Elizabeth Wilmhurst, did not agree that the use of force against Iraq was lawful. [165684]

Mr. Straw *[holiding answer 19 April 2004]:* We do not comment on individual cases or any legal advice individual officials may have given. Information concerning Government legal advice is exempt from disclosure under exemptions 2 and 4(d) of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Immigration

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department has now submitted all relevant papers to the Immigration Appellate Authority in the case of Mr. M. A., husband of Mrs. S. A., if Aylesbury (refs. A1146799; ISB/566943; TH/25294/2002); what the expected timescale of the appeal is; and if he will make a statement. [166640]

Mr. Mullin *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* I have written to the hon. Member.

St. Helena

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations he has received about the development of an airport on St. Helena; and if he will make a statement. [162912]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has received representations from one of the parties who expressed an interest in the development of air access for St. Helena.

Evaluation of the four expressions of interest and outline proposals, received in response to the international invitation issued in April 2003, concerning the possible development of air access to St. Helena, is now complete. I also refer the hon. Member to the written statement made by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for International Development (Gareth Thomas) on 19 April, *Official Report*, column 1WS.

Guinea

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the formation of the new government in Guinea in March. [166588]

Mr. Mullin: On 23 February, President Conte announced the appointment of the former Foreign Minister Francois Fall as Prime Minister. On 2 March he announced a further round of ministerial changes, with five new additions to the Cabinet.

The British Government, and the EU more broadly, are concerned at issues of governance and human rights in Guinea. EU article 96 negotiations have started. Under Article 96 of the Cotonou Agreement the EC is able to take appropriate measures, such as the suspension of aid, against Africa, Caribbean and Pacific states who fail to meet their obligations regarding human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

Human Rights (Africa)

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the importance of human rights in relation to economic growth and development in African countries. [166589]

Mr. Mullin: There is an increasingly clear link between respect for human rights, the rule of law and democratic norms on the one hand, and stability, prosperity and progress on the other. We believe that a stable environment where human rights and the rule of law are respected creates the best conditions for economic growth and the reduction of poverty in Africa. We also consider that protection and promotion of human rights such as access to education, healthcare, and justice can have a direct impact on future economic development and can help African countries meet the

Millennium Development Goals. In this respect, since 1998 the Foreign and Commonwealth Office has funded over 60 human rights projects worth more than £6 million in sub-Saharan Africa alone. We also support initiatives such as the Africa Peer Review Mechanism of the New Partnership for Africa's Development, which aims to ensure that the policies and practices of participating states conform to agreed standards of political, economic and corporate governance.

Illegal Drugs Tade

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the UK spent on reducing the illegal drugs trade in *(a)* South Africa, *(b)* Eastern Europe and *(c)* Central Asia in each of the last five years; and what assessment he has made of the effect of this expenditure on the trade in drugs. [166874]

Mr. Rammell: There are no figures available for total UK spending on UK efforts which contribute towards reducing illegal drug trade in the areas mentioned. Spending by a range of Government Departments on matters such as the alleviation of poverty, law enforcement co-operation and other areas may all directly or indirectly contribute to the reduction in the illegal drugs trade and cannot be calculated precisely. Information is however available in respect of specific funds within the responsibility of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO).

The UK Drugs and Crime Fund (DCF) is administered by the FCO. Its remit is to support project work aimed at reducing the threat to the UK caused by drugs and serious crime overseas. Colombia, Jamaica, Iran, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Turkey are currently the highest priority countries for drugs funding from the DCF.

Since financial year 1999–2000, £36,779,926 has been spent world-wide on drug related projects, of which £17,416,886 was spent in Latin America and the Caribbean, £5,593,246 in Eastern Europe and Turkey and £10,072,530 in Central Asia. DCF projects have contributed directly to significant seizures of drugs and helped improve the skills and equipment of law enforcement partners overseas.

The elimination of the threat to the UK from the cultivation of opium in Afghanistan is a top priority for the Government. Some 95 per cent. of the heroin reaching the UK originates in Afghanistan. The Afghan Government has set the objective of eliminating opium cultivation there by 2013 and the UK has committed £70 million over three years to support implementation of this strategy, part of which comes from the DCF but the remainder from other sources of FCO and other Government Department funding.

Indonesia

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Indonesian Government about religious freedom; and if he will make a statement. [166462]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I met with the Indonesian Ambassador on 6 October and 10 November 2003 and 4 March 2004 and on each occasion we discussed a wide range of issues, including religion. We support the Indonesian Government's efforts to bring peace to the provinces of Central Sulawesi and Maluku.

The British Government is committed to working with Indonesia to encourage religious tolerance. Together with the Department for International Development, we have committed over £4 million to help establish the United Nations Development Programme Conflict Prevention and Recovery Unit in Jakarta. The Unit will build up capacity in conflict reduction and recovery in the provinces affected by religious conflict. This includes funding projects like the Maluku Reconciliation Conference, which was held in London and Brussels in January 2004 and which brought together Muslim and Christian Leaders from Maluku to discuss how to establish peace in the province.

Burma

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans the Government has in the near future to call for a European Union demarche to the Burmese regime regarding the Burmese military's atrocities against the Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples. [166644]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We regularly discuss human rights issues on Burma with our EU partners. The UK has been instrumental in pressing for and supporting numerous demarches to the Burmese regime, including on human rights abuses against the ethnic groups.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the British Government classifies systematic atrocities against the Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples by the Burmese military as (a) war crimes and (b) crimes against humanity under international law. [166645]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The British Government is one of the strongest critics of the Burmese regime's abuses of human rights. We are aware of a consistent pattern of serious violations over many years, particularly against the ethnic groups. These have been highlighted in successive UK co-sponsored resolutions on Burma in both the United Nations General Assembly and the United National Commission on Human Rights. But we do not consider that the atrocities constitute "war crimes" and "crimes against humanity", which have specific definitions under international law. Nor does the United Nations Special Rapporteur for Human Rights in Burma, Sergio Pinheiro, who has regular access to Burma use these terms to describe the situation there.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will take steps to strengthen the European Union common position on Burma, in response to the continuing systematic atrocities against the Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples by the Burmese military. [166646]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Given the State Peace and Development Council's (SPDC) announcement that the National Convention, the first step of the SPDC's 7-point roadmap to national reconciliation, will reconvene on 17 May to draft a new constitution for Burma we believe that it would send a wrong signal to

strengthen sanctions under the EU's Common Position on Burma at a time when the regime may be moving forward with the political process. We are therefore prepared to support a rollover of existing measures in the EU Common Position on Burma which already contains tough measures against the regime. However, we remain ready to respond proportionately to developments on the ground in Burma.

We have been pressing strongly for the release of Aung San Sui Kui and Oo Tin Oo. I raised this on 18 April with the Chinese, Thai, Malaysian and Vietnamese neighbours of Burma at the ASEM Foreign Ministers meeting.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations the Government has made to the Burmese regime regarding recent Burmese military offensives in Northern Karen State and Karenni State. [166657]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I regularly raise our concerns on Burma with the Burmese authorities, most recently when I met the Burmese Ambassador at the end of February.

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if the Government will raise the issue of the Burmese military's systematic atrocities against the Karen, Karenni and Shan peoples at the UN Security Council. [166658]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We have raised our concerns over human rights violations in Burma with our Security Council Partners. However, currently there is no consensus to bring Burma before the Security Council.

Atrocities against ethnic groups in Burma have been highlighted in successive EU co-sponsored UN Resolutions on Burma.

East Timor

Mr. Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress made in identifying those responsible for the deaths of Malcolm Rennie and Brian Peters in East Timor. [166081]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office is continuing its enquiries into what information is needed to enable indictments to be issued. I raised this issue with the Indonesian Ambassador when I met him in March. I also raised the issue with the Indonesian Foreign Minister at the ASEM summit on 18 April.

Computer Services

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166362]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office has an extensive and well-developed strategy for updating its information and communications technology. This is set out in our "e-diplomacy" strategy as announced to the House on 24 March (*Official Report*, Columns 52–53 WS).

Sudan

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with the *(a)* Arab League, *(b)* Government of Chad an *(c)* Sudanese Government on the situation in Darfur; and if he will make a statement. [166535]

Mr. Mullin: We welcome the humanitarian ceasefire agreement between the Government of Sudan and the Sudan Liberation Movement/Army and the Sudan Justice and Equality Movement which was signed in N'djamena, Chad, on 8 April 2004. This is an important step forward in resolving the crisis in Darfur and we are very grateful to the Government of Chad for its role in mediating the ceasefire talks.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development spoke to the Sudanese Foreign Minister about Darfur on 24 March, and since then our Ambassador in Khartoum has had a number of discussions with him. We have not been in contact with the Arab League on this issue, though we have discussed the matter with the Government of Chad.

Nepal

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what restrictions there are on the leaders of the Maoist terrorist movement of Nepal visiting the United Kingdom. [166198]

Mr. O'Brien: Any entry clearance application made by a Nepalese national would be considered in accordance with the UK Immigration Rules. Any security or other concerns regarding particular individuals would be considered at the time of the application. I will write to the hon. Gentleman.

TRANSPORT

Prestwick Air Traffic Control Centre

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of progress by National Air Traffic Services in securing investment to expand air traffic control capacity, with particular reference to restarting work on the new control centre in Prestwick. [166178]

Mr. Darling: The New Prestwick Air Traffic Control Centre is an integral part of NATS operations. It will handle operations over the eastern half of the North Atlantic, the northern half of the UK and much of the North Sea. Work on the new Centre at Prestwick is due to start later this year.

London Rail Services

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the changes in rail services in Greater London recently proposed by the Strategic Rail Authority. [166179]

Mr McNulty: The Strategic Rail Authority is developing a number of schemes which will improve rail services in the Greater London area including the East London Line extensions, Integrated Kent Franchise,

Thameslink 2000, southern power supply upgrade and replacement of slam door trains with modern rolling stock.

Biofuels

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will publish the consultation document on introducing the EU Biofuels Directive. [166181]

Mr. Jamieson: The consultation document will be published very shortly.

Colin Burgon: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps are being taken to improve rail commuter services in the Elmet constituency. [166182]

Mr. McNulty: The Strategic Rail Authority is actively working with the train operating companies to secure improvements to the operational performance of services.

A303

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the safety improvements to the A303 between Sparkford and Ilchester to be completed. [166183]

Mr. Jamieson: I am expecting a submission shortly which will allow me to add the Sparkford to Ilchester Scheme into the Targeted Programme of Improvements. Its completion will be subject to the usual statutory procedures and availability of funds—hence I cannot be definite on its timing.

Regional Airports

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his policy is on improving road and rail transport links to smaller regional airports in the South East of England. [166184]

Mr. McNulty: Our policy on improving road and rail links to airports in the South East of England (small and large) is set out in the Future of Air Transport White Paper. This recognises that airports are part of our national infrastructure and requires the SRA, Highways Agency to take full account of a prospective airport developer. It also looks to airport operators to work with regional and local partners to ensure that regional and local transport strategies do the same.

Crossrail

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the options for financing Crossrail. [166185]

Dr. Howells: Adrian Montague's detailed advice on the current Crossrail proposals raises complex issues and requires careful consideration against pressures on transport spending, especially on rail. My right hon. Friend will make a statement in due course.

Transport Infrastructure (London)

Mr. Love: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the additional funding required for transport infrastructure in London to meet the projected increase in population over the next 10 years. [166186]

Mr. McNulty: The Government is providing TfL with over £2.2 billion this year to improve transport across London—this is more than double the amount of funding given to London transport four years ago. Any additional funding required for transport improvements in London and other regions, in order to accommodate projected population growth, is being considered by the Department in the context of this year's Spending Review.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of extra funding needed for transport infrastructure in London. [166187]

Mr. McNulty: The Government is providing TfL with over £2.2 billion this year to improve transport across London—this is more than double the amount of funding given to London transport four years ago. Any additional funding required for transport improvements in London and other regions is being considered by the Department in the context of this year's Spending Review.

Road Noise

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he next expects to meet the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency to discuss the issue of noisy roads. [166188]

Mr. Jamieson: I am in regular contact with the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency on issues concerning noisy roads. I have recently agreed the Highways Agency's Business Plan for 2004–05, which includes a commitment to resurface 50 lane kms of concrete road surface with lower noise surfacing. In addition, all maintenance work carried out on flexible road surfaces now uses quieter road surfaces.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the use of ripple print pads on road services to reduce (a) accidents and (b) noise. [166835]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has been monitoring the effects of installing rumblewave surfacing (marketed as Rippleprint by Prismo Limited) at seven pilot sites. An initial report has been published by TRL Limited (TRL Report 545 *Development of a novel traffic calming surface "Rippleprint"*), and I have placed copies of this report in the Libraries of the House. A final report will be published later this year.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of sound-absorbing concrete in reducing traffic noise. [166849]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency is keeping in touch with developments in Europe on work on noise absorbing concrete. In general, porous concrete has been shown to have similar noise absorbing properties to porous asphalt, with the same disadvantages of high cost and loss of benefit over time as the pores become clogged. Initial trials in European countries of a new

surfacing using a resonant cavity formed in concrete below porous asphalt, have given lower noise reduction benefits than expected.

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on roadside noise barriers in each of the last 10 years. [166850]

Mr. Jamieson: Figures for the last 10 years are not available. Spend on noise barriers that are provided in conjunction with highway improvement scheme is not separately identified in the scheme cost. Spend on the installation of noise barriers provided retrospectively on older trunk roads that commenced in 2000, has been met by the £5 million per year ring-fenced allocation.

Stockport Station

Andrew Bennett: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the new platform 1 at Stockport Station to be in use; who paid for it; and whether its introduction to use is dependent on a new signalling. [162420]

Mr. McNulty: These are operational matters for Network Rail. Network Rail will respond directly to my hon Friend.

Rail Tracks (Speed Limits)

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of railway track are subject to speed limits imposed primarily or solely to prolong the life of the track; if he will list the locations thereof; and if he will make a statement. [163176]

Dr. Howells *[holding answer 25 March 2004]*: This is an operational matter for Network Rail. Network Rail will respond directly to the right hon. Member.

Coastguard Services

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment his Department has made of savings that could be made by reducing the number of coastguard stations around the Scottish coast. [166773]

Mr. Jamieson: There are no plans to reduce the number of Coastguard Co-ordination Centres in Scotland and no assessment of savings has been made.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on coastguard services in (a) Scotland and (b) the UK in each of the last five years. [166774]

Mr. Jamieson: Coastguard expenditure in Scotland and the UK in the last five years is shown below:

	Unaudited 2003–04 £000s (subject to change)	*2002–03 £000s*	*2001–02 £000s*	*2000–01 £000s*	*1999–2000 £000s*
Scotland (including Shetland & Stornoway Helicopters)	£12,266	£11,718	£10,246	£10,715	£9,063
All of UK (including Scotland and Helicopters)	£34,849	£32,891	£31,121	£32,173	£28,105

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the future of coastguard stations around the Scottish coast. [166775]

Mr. Jamieson: There are no plans to make changes to Coastguard operations around the Scottish coast, but my Department will continue to keep effectiveness and efficiency under review to make the best use of technology and resources.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the level of planned future expediture on coastguard services in *(a)* Scotland and *(b)* the UK. [166776]

Mr. Jamieson: The level of planned future expenditure for Scotland and the UK on Coastguard services will be broadly in line with previous years.

East Coast Main Line

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) when he expects the East Coast Mailine Franchise to be awarded; [166432]

(2) for what reason the announcement on the new East Coast Mainline Franchise has been delayed; [166433]

(3) what assessment he has made of the effect the delay in the announcement of the East Coast Mainline Franchise upon *(a)* the purchase of new rolling stock and *(b)* planned upgrades to the track; [166434]

(4) what assessment he has made of the implications of the delay in the announcement of the East Coast Mailine Franchise on rail services to Harrogate and Knaresborough. [166435]

Mr. Darling: The existing East Coast Main Line Franchise expires in April 2005. The SRA invited expressions of interest from operators in January 2004. The process is continuing.

Road Schemes

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the projects in the Highways Agency's Targeted Programme of Improvements with their (*a*) estimated cost, (*b*) start date of construction and (*c*) planned completion date. [166100]

Mr Jamieson: The following projects, with their estimated cost, are included in the Targeted Programme of Improvements (TPI):

Scheme	Scheme Cost (£m)
A1 Stannington Junction (under construction)	8.3
A10 Wadesmill, High Cross and Colliers End (under construction)	39.0
A120 Stansted–Braintree Improvement (under construction)	86.9
A2 Bean–Cobham Phase 1 Bean–Tollgate (under construction)	19.7
A21 Lamberhurst Bypass (under construction)	18.9
A34 Chieveley/M4 J13 Improvement (under construction)	76.0
A63 Selby Bypass (under construction)	68.4
A14 Rookery Crossroads Grade Separated Junction	7.7
A249 Iwade–Queenborough Improvement	80.8
A421 Great Barford Bypass	39.0
A47 Thorney Bypass	25.4
A5 Weeford–Fazeley Improvement	38.0
A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction	22.5
M4 Junction 18 Eastbound Diverge	9.8
M5 Junctions 17–18 Northbound Climbing Lane	6.2
A30 Bodmin Indian Queens	68.9
A66 Long Newton Junction	8.0
A2/A282 Dartford Improvement	79.7
A30/A382 Merrymeet Junction	8.7
A428 Caxton Common to Hardwick Improvement	43.9
A11 Attleborough Bypass	29.3
A3 Hindhead Improvement	167.5
A595 Parton–Lillyhall Improvement	24.9
M40/A404 Handy Cross Junction Improvement	11.8
A1 (M) Bramham–Wetherby (including Wetherby Bypass)	61.6
A1 Peterborough–Blyth Grade Separated Junctions	63.2
A11 Fiveways–Thetford Improvement	60.2
A2 Bean–Cobham Phase 2 Tollgate–Cobham	101.0
A38 Dobwalls Bypass	35.7
A419 Blunsdon	40.2
A419 Commonhead Junction	16.3
A5117/A550 Deeside Park Junctions Improvement	43.1
M6 Carlisle to Guardsmill extension	69.1
M5 Junctions 19–20 Southbound Climbing Lane	8.1
M5 Junctions 19–20 Northbound Climbing Lane	7.9
A14 Haughley New St–Stowmarket Improvement	29.0
A21 Tonbridge to Pembury	64.9
A30 Temple to Higher Carblake Improvement	40.7
A45/A46 Tollbar End Improvement	57.0
A505 Dunstable Northern Bypass (A5 to M1 Link)	48.1
A57/A628 Mottram in Longdendale, Hollingworth and Tintwistle Bypass	90.0
A66 Temple Sowerby and Improvement at Winderwath	23.3
A69 Haydon Bridge Bypass	24.2
M1 J19 Improvement	123.4
M1 Junction 10 to 13 Widening	381.8
M1 Junction 6a to 10 Widening	241.2
M40 Junction 15 (Longbridge)	57.2
M62 Junction 6 Improvement	38.0
A30 Carland Cross to Chiverton Cross	124.6
A421 Bedford to M1 Junction 13	171.0
A46 Newark–Widmerpool Improvement	186.0
A1 Adderstone to Belford Dualling	14.2
A1 Morpeth to Felton Dualling	84.0
A1/A19/A1068 Seaton Burn Junction Improvement	29.5
A19/A184 Testos Junction Improvement	20.5
A483 Pant–Llanymynech Bypass	40.5
A590 High and Low Newton Bypass	22.1
A64 Rillington Bypass	11.8
A66 Carkin Moor to Scotch Corner Improvement	11.0
A66 Greta Bridge to Stephen Bank Improvement	9.2
A14 Ellington–Fen Ditton Improvement	490.0
A1(M) Dishforth to Leeming	355.0
A1(M) Leeming to Barton	(cost included above)

Scheme	Scheme Cost (£m)
A1(M) Ferrybridge–Hook Moor (under construction)	160.5
A1(M) Wetherby–Walshford (under construction)	33.5
A303 Stonehenge	223.1
A47 Blofield to North Burlingham Dualling	15.4
A500 City Road and Stoke Junction Improvement (under construction)	59.6
A64 Colton Lane Grade Separated Junction (under construction)	11.0
M20 Junction 10A	46.0
M25 J12-15 Widening (under cosntruction)	104.5
M60 J5-8 Widening (under construction)	116.5
A27 Southerham to Beddingham	18.9
M25 Widening Junction 1b-3	65.9
M25 Widening Junction 5-7	214.4
M25 Widening Junction 16-23	496.0
M25 Widening Junction 23-27	419.1
M25 Widening Junction 27-30	402.3
M1 Widening Junction 21-30	1,914.6

These costs include the latest Treasury guidance on risk and optimism bias and allow for inflation at 2.5% per annum.

Of these, the following schemes are expected to start works in 2004 – 05, with anticipated completion dates as shown:

Scheme	Date of Completion
A14 Rookery Crossroads Grade Separated Junction	2005–06
A249 Iwade–Queensborough Improvement	2006–07
A421 Great Barford Bypass	2006–07
A47 Thorney Bypass	2005–06
A5 Weeford–Fazeley Improvement	2005–06
A63 Melton Grade Separated Junction	2006–07
M4 Junction 18 Eastbound Diverge	2005–06
M5 Junctions 17–18 Northbound Climbing Lane	2005–06

Firm decisions have yet to be made on start of works for the remainder of the programme.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport which major local road schemes in England have been given *(a)* provisional and *(b)* full Government approval in each of the last four years; what their current status is; and what the (i) expected start date and (ii) completion date is in each case. [166101]

Mr. Jamieson: Local major road schemes in England, excluding London that have been given *(a)* provisional and *(b)* full Government acceptance in each of the last four years are set out in the following table, together with the current status.

Three schemes in the table, which have been provisionally accepted, have been re-designated as Work in Progress following changes from the original scheme proposals. A number of schemes that were provisionally accepted in earlier settlements have been

fully accepted since 2000. Expected start and completion dates shown in the table reflect the Department's current information of the proposed delivery timetables of the relevant local authorities. Delivery of schemes is subject to completion of all necessary statutory procedures. Departmental funding of schemes is subject to conditions set out in the relevant decision letters issued to local authorities.

Scheme	*Current Status (A)-Fully Accepted (PA)-Provisionally Accepted*	*Expected Start of Works*	*Expected Scheme Completion Date*
2000 LTP Settlement			
Wyre Piddle Bypass	Open (December 2002)		
A689 Sedgefield to Wynard Improvement	Open (April 2003)		
Biddulph Inner Bypass	Open (October 2003)		
Semington to Melksham	Open (March 2004)		
Burntwood Bypass Phase 3	A	May 2004	April 2005
Nar Ouse Regeneration Project	A	January 2004	July 2005
South Lowestoft Relief Road	PA	May 2004	December 2005
W. Thurrock Regeneration Ring Road	A	April 2002	April 2004
A1073 Spalding to Eye Improvement	PA	Scheme reverted to 'Work in Progress' in 2003	
A13/A127-A1159 Corridors	A	July 2002 (Public Transport), Autumn 2004 (Road)	2006
Earl Shilton Bypass	PA 2000	Scheme reverted to 'Work in Progress' in 2002	
A607 Rearsby Bypass	A	March 2004	December 2004
A158/C541 Coastal Access Improvement	PA	April 2004	June 2007
Connecting Derby Integrated Transport Phases 1, 2 & 3	A-Phase 1	Phase 2 and 3 of scheme also Accepted in 2000 but were reverted to 'Work in Progress' in 2003	
Sunderland Southern Radial Route	PA	June 2004	March 2006
Darlington Eastern Transport Corridor	PA	July 2004	December 2005
A688 Wheatley Hill to Bowburn Link	PA	October 2004	December 2005
A167 Chilton Bypass	A	May 2004	July 2005
Scotswood Road Improvement	A	April 2004	August 2006
Carlisle Northern Development Route (PFI)	PA	October 2005	October 2007
Bridgefoot Environment Enhancement	PA	October 2004	March 2006
The Glossop Spur	PA	April 2006	April 2008
Hall Lane Area Improvement Scheme	PA	November 2005	February 2007
East Kent Access Phase 1	PA	August 2003	October 2005
Stoke Hammon/Linslade Western Bypass	PA	October 2006	December 2008
Brunel Link & Harnham Relief Road	PA	November 2003	April 2005
Barnstaple Western Bypass	PA	October 2004	Decemeber 2006
NW Taunton Package	PA	July 2004	November 2005
A39 Camelford Bypass	PA	January 2005	August 2006
Weymouth Relief Road	PA	See LTP 2003 Settlement section	
Rugeley Bypass	A	April 2005	December 2006
Hanley Bentilee Link	PA	March 2006	August 2007
Barford Bypass	PA	February 2005	September 2006
Cradley Heath Town Centre	PA	October 2004	April 2005
Rugby Western Relief Road	PA	N/A	
Northfield Regeneration (Birmingham)	PA	December 2005	December 2006
Owen Street Relief Road	PA	January 2005	December 2006
East Leeds Link Road	A	October 2004	September 2006
Leeds Inner Ring Road Stage 7	A	October 2005	September 2008
Sheffield Inner Relief Road—Stages 2 & 3	PA	June 2004	September 2008
Glasshoughton Coalfields Link Road	PA	March 2005	May 2007
A631 West Bawtry Road Improvement	PA	February 2005	April 2006
Hemsworth—A1 Link Road	PA	March 2005	February 2007
South Bradford Integrated Transport	A	February 2003	July 2004

Scheme	Current Status (A)–Fully Accepted (PA)–Provisionally Accepted	Expected Start of Works	Expected Scheme Completion Date
2001 LTP Settlement			
A1198 Papworth Everard Bypass	PA	Late 2004	April 2006
East Corridor South	PA	Early 2005	Mid 2006
Markham Employment Growth Zone	PA	Spring 2005	Spring 2007
A612 Gedling ITP Scheme	PA	March 2005	March 2007
A6096 Ilkeston Awsworth Link	PA	September 2004	March 2006
A34 Alderley Edge Bypass	PA	2005	2007
A228 Main Road to Ropers Lane (Phase 1)	A	January 2003	October 2004
Bletchley Link	PA	April 2005	March 2008
Junction 11 M4 Improvement Proposals	PA	August 2004	July 2006
Poole Bridge Regeneration Initiative	PA	November 2004	May 2006
Selly Oak Relief Road	PA	2005–06	2007–08
A628 Cudworth and West Green Bypass	PA	November 2004	October 2006
Oakham Bypass	PA	September 2004	April 2007
A57(T) M1 Junction 31–Todwick Crossroads	PA	August 2005	August 2006
A1 South East Northumberland Link Road (Pegswood Bypass)	PA	April 2005	July 2007
The Kiln Lane Link, Epsom	PA	July 2006	November 2007
A244 Walton Bridge	PA	April 2006	September 2008
2002 LTP Settlement			
Mansfield Ashfield Regeneration Route	A	June 2003	December 2005
North Middlesbrough Accessibility PMPS	PA	June 2005	May 2006
Sunderland Central Route	PA	June 2005	June 2006
Cadishead Way	PA	December 2003	June 2005
Ashton Northern Bypass Stage 2	PA	October 2004	March 2006
Wigan Inner Relief Road	PA	October 2004	April 2006
A58 Blackbrook Diversion	PA	December 2005	September 2004
A165 Reighton Bypass	PA	April 2005	March 2006
A43 Corby Link Road	PA	April 2006	July 2007
A24 Horsham–Capel	PA	January 2006	January 2008
A24 Ashington/Southwater	PA	March 2006	September 2007
A228 Leybourne & West Malling Corridor Improvement	PA	Spring 2005	Spring 2007
Mereoak Roundabout	PA	July 2005	July 2007
A391 St Austell to A30 Link	PA	2007	2009
2003 LTP Settlement			
A142 Fordham Bypass	A	April 2004	August 2005
A509 Isham Bypass	PA	June 2003	December 2005
A1056 North Tyneside Northern Gateway Stage 2	PA	December 2005	Late 2006/Early 2007
A354 Weymouth Relief Road	PA	2007	2010
Brierley Hill Access Network	PA	2004–05	2007
Tunstall Northern Bypass	PA	January 2005	January 2006
Darlaston Strategic Area Access Scheme	PA	June 2006	May 2008

Notes:
[1] Dates can change as the Local Authority takes the scheme through the required statutory procedures.
[2] A = Fully Accepted schemes.
[3] PA = Provisionally Accepted. Schemes subject to completion of statutory procedures and any other processes outlined in the settlement decision letter, from the Government Office to the Local Authority, of the relevant LTP Settlement year.

Finningley Airport

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans are being considered for freight to be handled at and transported from Finningley Airport; and if he will make a statement. [165712]

Mr. McNulty: The planning permission granted in April 2003 limits the number of air cargo movements per annum to 2,738 from the opening of the airport, rising to a maximum of 4,140 movements per annum after 1 January 2012. I understand that, within these limits, the airport operator hopes to handle around 50,000 tonnes of freight a year by 2014. A small component of this could be in the bellyhold of passenger aircaft.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Prisoners (Voting Rights)

Mr. Maude: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs what plans he has to allow serving prisoners to vote in *(a)* local and *(b)* general elections; and if he will make a statement. [166795]

Mr. Leslie: At present, convicted and detained prisoners are not able to vote in UK elections. On 30 March 2004, the European Court of Human Rights gave its judgment in the case of *Hirst v. The United Kingdom*, concerning the disfranchisement of convicted prisoners. The Court found that there had been a breach of the applicant's human rights. We are currently carefully considering the implications of the judgment and what action we might take.

Freedom of Information (Terrorism)

Llew Smith: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs, what assessment has been made of the current exemptions to the release of information contained in freedom of information legislation in light of recent terrorist incidents and threats. [166035]

Mr. Lammy: The Freedom of Information Act 2000 balances the right to know with the proper conduct of effective government. Part II of the Act outlines classes of information that are exempt from disclosure for the purpose of safeguarding national security, defence and international relations. Information supplied by, or relating to, bodies dealing with security matters is also exempt.

The Government is satisfied that the provisions in Part II of the Freedom of Information Act 2000 provides a robust framework that gives people greater access to information, while ensuring that information necessary to protect national security is properly safeguarded.

Legal Services Commission

Mr. Roger Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs, (1) how many new solicitors firms have undertaken contracts with the Legal Services Commission since 2000. [165842]

(2) how many solicitors firms in England and Wales have withdrawn from a Legal Services Commission contract in each year since 2000. [165843]

Mr. Lammy: Between January 2000 and 31 March 2004, the Legal Services Commission (LSC) has awarded 755 new civil contracts to solicitors' firms. Since contracting for criminal legal aid began in April 2001, the LSC has awarded 412 new criminal contracts to solicitors' firms.

The LSC does not collect data centrally on the number of solicitors' firms that have withdrawn from legal aid work. The number of contracts that have been terminated by the LSC in each year (which includes cases where solicitors have withdrawn voluntarily) is set out below.

Civil Contracts

April 2000 to March 2001: 700
April 2001 to March 2002: 539
April 2002 to March 2003: 408
April 2003 to March 2004: 633

Criminal contracts

April 2001 to March 2002: 146
April 2002 to March 2003: 151
April 2003 to March 2004: 317

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Sellafield

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will itemise the contents of the B30 ponds at Sellafield; what the origin was of the contents; what the radioactivity level of the contents is; and what plans she has to respond to criticisms by the EU Commission in respect of the ponds that comprise B30. [165818]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 19 April 2004]*: The B30 facility at Sellafield was commissioned in 1959–60 for interim storage of spent Magnox fuel in water-filled concrete ponds and the subsequent removal of cladding from the fuel prior to it being reprocessed. The facility stopped receiving spent fuel during 1992. The B30 pond contains many tonnes of Magnox fuel and sludge from corrosion of the Magnox fuel cladding and the fuel. For security reasons it would not be appropriate to reveal itemised information on the quantities of nuclear material held in specific locations (Exemption 1, code of practice on access to Government information).

The condition of the material in B30 and the need to minimise radiation exposure means that the activities that can be performed at present to verify current quantities of material (including in the course Euratom safeguards inspections) are limited. Appropriate measurement and verification of the material will however take place as material is removed during the decommissioning of B30.

Officials will examine details of the Commission Directive and the basis for it, and work is in hand to enable us to respond to the Commission accordingly.

Iraq

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the financial value of the 10 largest contracts by US dollars for the reconstruction of Iraq already awarded by the Coalition Provisional Authority was; what the nationality of the contractor was; and to what industrial sector each related. [166604]

Ms Hewitt: The largest Coalition Provisional Authority contracts so far have been awarded on its behalf by the Program Management Office. They are given in the table:

Value	*Sector*	*Nationality*
$900 million (ceiling)	Security, Justice and Safety	US
$600 million (ceiling)	Water Resources	US
$600 million (ceiling)	Public Works and	US/UK Joint Venture

Value	Sector	Nationality
	Water (North)	
$900 million (ceiling)	Buildings, Health and Education	US
$500 million (ceiling)	Public Works and Water (South)	US/UK Joint Venture
$500 million (ceiling)	Electrical Generation	US/UK Joint Venture
$500 million (ceiling)	Electrical Power Distribution (North)	US
$500 million (ceiling)	Electrical Power Distribution (South)	US
$325 million (ceiling)	Transportation	US/Egypt/ Netherlands/UAE Joint venture
$75 million (ceiling)	Communications	US

UK companies are already playing a significant role in many of these, through parent companies or as sub-contractors or sub-consultants.

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many contracts have been awarded to British companies for the reconstruction of Iraq; what their total value is; and which companies have been awarded contracts. [166605]

Ms Hewitt: Because of the large number of different organisations involved in awarding reconstruction contracts in Iraq, it has not been possible to maintain an overall picture of the total volume of contracts awarded or the cumulative total. In addition, there is no central organisation that collects, collates and publishes such information. However, a number of British companies have been awarded contracts and sub-contracts for the reconstruction process in Iraq, including the recent awards announced by the Program Management Office (PMO). UK companies (mainly in Joint Venture with US partners) have won PMO contracts in the Electricity, Water and Oil sectors.

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, if she will require British companies working in Iraq to recruit individuals of Iraqi nationality to work in the management of their operations. [166607]

Ms Hewitt: It is vital the UK companies play their part in developing Iraq, through the creation of joint business ventures, transfer of skills and technology and working with Iraqi partners in providing jobs and prosperity for the Iraqi people. In this way, we will maximise the use of local manufacturers and construction skills in order to help build local skills and provide sustainable employment for future generations. I have no plans to require British companies to recruit Iraqi nationals to work in the management of their operations.

Business Activity (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many small businesses are registered in Crosby; and what the percentage change has been since 1997. [164412]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation, published on 31 March 2004, includes non-VAT registered firms, and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 500 in Sefton local authority (in which Crosby is a constituency) in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly Barclays figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003, the highest figure since the survey began in 1988. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

There were 5,380 businesses registered for VAT in Sefton local authority at the end of 2002. This represents a 7 per cent increase since the start of 1997 when there were 5,040 VAT-registered businesses. VAT registration data for the end of 2003 will be available in Autumn 2004.

It is important to note that VAT registration data do not capture all business activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the total Entrepreneurial Activity index for (*a*) Crosby and (*b*) England is; and if she will make a statement. [164413]

Nigel Griffiths: The Total Entrepreneurial Activity (TEA) index is not produced by government, but is a measure used by the London Business School to compare international rates of entrepreneurial activity as part of its annual Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM).

The latest TEA index, for 2003, is 6.5 per cent for England and 4.7 per cent for the North West. The UK was the only other G8 country apart from the United States to have seen a major recovery in levels of entrepreneurial activity in 2003 following the overall drop in 2002.

The UK GEM report does not provide a breakdown for areas smaller than the area covered by Government Office region. There is, therefore no TEA figure for Crosby.

Employment Rights (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Birkenhead qualify for paid leave entitlement. [166503]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Birkenhead qualify for paid leave entitlements of at least 4 weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Birkenhead have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [166504]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right not to work more than 48 hours if they want to. Numbers for Birkenhead are not available, but it has been estimated that around 50,000 workers resident in Merseyside stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Birkenhead have taken 26 weeks' maternity leave since 1997. [166495]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). However, figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits of the EU Social Chapter for the residents of Birkenhead. [166501]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Birkenhead have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to parental leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two Member States, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them; and

in addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive, to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Estate Agents Act

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will seek to amend the Estate Agents Act 1979 to include reference to buying and selling houses on the internet. [166113]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Office of Fair Trading report on estate agents recommended that the definition of estate agency work in the Estate Agents Act 1979 be reconsidered to ensure that consumers buying and selling by non-traditional means, including the internet, are afforded the same protection in law as those who employ the services of traditional estate agents.

The Department will consider carefully this and the report's other recommendations, and aims to publish a response by 18 June 2004.

Broadband

David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what estimate she has made of broadband accessibility rates for *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* England, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland, broken down by percentage of (i) households and (ii) population. [165586]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The Department of Trade and Industry has commissioned on-going research from Analysys Consulting Ltd to provide a comprehensive picture of developments in the UK broadband market.

According to the latest quarterly survey to the end of December 2003, the following estimates are given of population (households) that are covered by a mass-market broadband solution:

(a) Scotland	72 per cent.
(b) England	87 per cent.
(c) Wales	72 per cent.
(d) Northern Ireland	67 per cent.

This research is published quarterly on the Department's website:

http://www.dti.gov.uk/industry_files/pdf/uk_broadband_coverage_jan2004.pdf

Fire Safety

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what measures are in place to assess the impact of furniture fire-safety regulations that came into effect in 1997; and what the findings have been. [166293]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI commissioned the University of Surrey to research the effectiveness of the Regulations. The resulting report—"Effectiveness of the Furniture & Furnishings (Fire) (Safety) Regulations 1988"—was published in June 2000 and copies were placed in the Libraries of both Houses. The report's findings were "extremely good news". At a conservative estimate, the Regulations had saved at least 710 lives in the first ten years since their introduction, and at least 5,770 fewer people were injured in the same period. The benefits of the Regulations were most likely to be realised by the financially challenged, young children between 1 and 4 years of age, and the elderly. Recent figures from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister indicate that this downward trend has continued.

National Minimum Wage

Huw Irranca Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, if she will make a statement on the impact of the introduction of the national minimum wage for 16- to 17-year-olds on combating the exploitation of young people by employers. [164551]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government announced on 15 March 2004 that we will be introducing a new minimum wage rate for 16- to 17-year-old workers at £3.00 per hour with effect from 1 October 2004. Apprentices aged 16 and 17 will be excluded from the new rate. The great majority of young workers are already being paid in excess of the new rate, but this should help prevent the exploitation of young workers by a minority of employers. The Government run a national publicity campaign each autumn to publicise increases in the minimum wage and will be considering how best to publicise the new rate as part of that campaign.

Focus Groups and Opinion Polls

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what her estimate is of total expenditure by her Department on *(a)* focus groups and *(b)* opinion polls in each year from 1995–96 to 2003–04; and if she will make a statement. [162752]

Ms Hewitt: The Department does not centrally collect the information sought at the required level of detail and to provide it would entail disproportionate cost because of the need to ask all Directors in the DTI, plus agencies and associated non-departmental public bodies, to attempt to provide details of each survey and piece of research commissioned since 1995.

Working Time Directive

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what assessment she has made of *(a)* implementation of the Working Time Directive in other EU member states and *(b)* costs to business in other EU member states of complying with the Working Time Directive. [164582]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Other EU member states have all implemented the Working Time Directive. From discussions with them, I know they have used the flexibilities available in the Directive in different ways, depending on their national circumstances and traditions, but I have made no formal assessment of this. I do not have figures for the cost to businesses for other EU member states.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what assessment she has made of the implications for the competitiveness of UK industry of complying with the Working Time Directive. [164583]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government have put in place a comprehensive set of measures aimed at raising competitiveness and closing the UK's productivity gap with major competitors. The UK economy has grown faster than the G7 average in five of the last six years. Since the Working Time Directive applies to all European Union members it is unlikely to put the UK at a competitive disadvantage with these competitors.

British American Tobacco

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what *(a)* resource budget, *(b)* administration costs and *(c)* staff numbers are dedicated to the Companies Act investigation into British American Tobacco. [165422]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* As the inquiries have been concluded, no resources are currently dedicated to the Companies Act investigation into British American Tobacco Plc. The investigation was carried out internally by members of Companies Investigation Branch and there are no separate cost breakdowns.

Companies Investigation Branch does not disclose operational matters such as the numbers of staff dedicated to any particular inquiry.

Civil Servants

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, whether the number of jobs in her Department that are to be *(a)* cut and *(b)* relocated are the same as the numbers given her Department's recent Business Plan 2004–07. [165119]

Ms Hewitt: The DTI business plan states that we will reduce the number of people in the Department's headquarters by 7 per cent by April 2005 and by 10 per cent by April 2006.

We have also established an Efficiency Project which has developed proposals to improve further the way we work. These proposals would deliver a further 4 per cent reduction in posts by April 2008 (to 14 per cent) and 18 per cent of posts relocated outside London and the South East by April 2010. They are dependent on sufficient funding being available to meet the costs of change.

Trade (Far East)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what steps her Department is taking to promote trade with Far Eastern countries. [165543]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Working with business, UK Trade and Investment has developed a global strategy for each industry sector, targeting markets, including many in the Far East, where there are felt to be significant opportunities for UK industry. A comprehensive package of trade development measures, including subsidised trade missions, trade fairs, help to find agents/distributors etc, are available to eligible UK companies.

Invoices (Late Payment)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, what plans she has to re-examine legislation relating to the late payment of invoices; and if she will make a statement. [163591]

Nigel Griffiths: There are no current plans to re-examine the late payment legislation.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Secondments

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what secondments *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst & Young and *(d)* KPMG have made to his Department since 2001; for what (i) periods and (ii) tasks the secondments were made; whether secondments of staff from his Department have been to those firms; and what *(a)* periods and *(b)* tasks. [156918]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Since 2001, PricewaterhouseCoopers have made two inward secondments to the Department, one from October 2000–September 2001 in the Connexions Service and the other from July 2002–March 2003 in the Sure Start Unit. Deloitte & Touche have made one secondment to the Department from November 2001–March 2004 in the Sure Start Unit. Ernst and Young have made one

secondment to the Department from October 2000–March 2001 in School Leadership Division. There were no secondments from KPMG to the Department.

There were no secondments from my Department to any of the companies listed during the period.

School Transport

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures in the draft School Transport Bill will ensure that pupils attending denominational schools of their particular faith are not put at a disadvantage for home-school transport arrangements. [165482]

Alan Johnson: The draft School Transport Bill contains powers that will allow Local Education Authorities (LEAs) to operate school travel schemes. The only group of pupils specifically protected in the draft Bill is those entitled to free school meals, who are protected from charges provided they attend their nearest suitable school. However, in the draft prospectus that was published alongside the draft Bill we remind LEAs that local schemes must comply with the European Convention on Human Rights, which requires LEAs to take account of the religious and philosophical beliefs of parents, particularly in respect of pupils from low income families who will probably depend on public transport to get to school.

It is important that parents can choose a school in accordance with their religious convictions and in approving schemes, we will not expect LEAs to disturb well established arrangements for denominational transport, particularly where they are associated with local agreements or understandings about the sitting of denominational schools.

Postgraduate Study

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many graduates have chosen to continue in higher education for a masters' year in each of the past ten years. [152630]

Alan Johnson: The latest available information, showing newly qualified graduates who went on to postgraduate study, is shown in the table. Comparable figures for earlier years are not held centrally. Figures for 2002–03 will be available in August 2004.

Full-time UK Domiciled First Degree Graduates who went on to Study a Higher Degree[1]

	Number
1994–95	15,550
1995–96	15,585
1996–97	15,095
1997–98	15,525
1998–99	16,285
1999–2000	15,670
2000–01	16,005
2001–02	16,400

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agenct's First Destinations Record.
[1] Covers taught and research higher degrees.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many research graduates have been recruited by universities in *(a)* science, *(b)* engineering, *(c)* technology and *(d)* mathematics in each of the past 10 years. [152631]

Alan Johnson: The latest available information is shown in the table. Figures for earlier years are not available centrally.

Entrants to Postgraduate Research Courses[1] *in UK HE institutions*

	Subject of course:					
	Science[2]	*Engineering*	*Technology*	*Mathematical Sciences*	*Other subjects*	*All subjects*
1994–985	9,575	2,555	535	500	8,243	21,408
1995–96	8,852	2,397	476	550	8,954	21,229
1996–97	8,662	2,380	469	508	8,934	20,953
1997–98	9,181	2,153	507	501	8,726	21,068
1998–99	11,070	2,676	745	513	10,256	25,260
1999–2000	10,843	2,604	734	554	10,428	25,163
2000-01	11,007	2,936	591	529	10,916	25,979
2001–02	11,341	2,724	519	638	10,532	25,754
2002–03[3]	11,781	2,827	542	671	10,449	26,271

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.
[1] Covers UK and overseas students taking Doctorates, Masters and other postgraduate courses mainly by research.
[2] Covers Medicine and Dentistry, subjects allied to Medicine, Biological Sciences, Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects, Physical Sciences, Computer Sciences, Architecture, Building and Planning.
[3] Provisional.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportions of state-supported PhD students beginning their courses in each of the last 10 years have studied scientific subjects. [152633]

Alan Johnson: The latest available information, for UK and EU students entering PhD courses in the UK, is shown in the table. Figures for earlier years are not available centrally.

Entrants to PhD courses in UK HEIs
UK and EU domiciled students

	Total Entrants	*of which, % on science courses*[1]
1994–95	10,167	66
1995–96	10,078	63
1996–97	9,466	65
1997–98	9,586	65
1998–99	11,478	64
1999–2000	11,707	63

Entrants to PhD courses in UK HEIs
UK and EU domiciled students

	Total Entrants	*of which, % on science courses*[1]
2000-01	11,945	643
2001–02	11,864	64
2002–03[2]	12,056	66

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) student record.
[1] Covers Medicine and Dentistry, subjects allied to Medicine, Biological Sciences, Veterinary Sciences, Agriculture and related subjects, Physical Sciences, Mathematical Sciences, Computer Sciences, Engineering and Technology, Architecture, Building and Planning.
[2] Provisional.

School Closures

David Hamilton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, what criteria are applied when making decisions on closing *(a)* rural schools and *(b)* urban schools. [165587]

Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 19 April 2004]*: Under arrangements for local decision making School Organisation Committees and schools adjudicators must consider guidance issued by the Secretary of State when taking decisions on statutory proposals to close any school—rural or urban.

The guidance emphasises that all proposals must be considered on their individual merit and in the light of local circumstances. It also provides a list of factors that must be considered. For school closures this includes: the impact on standards of provision in the area, the supply and demand for places, the cost effectiveness of proposals, the views of interested parties, the journey to alternative provision, the effect on the local community etc. The guidance also includes a presumption to approve proposals to close a failing school if there is to be a fresh start school established in its place.

For proposals to close rural schools there is a presumption against the closure except where the case is strong and in the best interests of provision in the area. The guidance recommends that the transport implications of rural school closures should be considered and the overall effect on the community of closure of village schools. It also advises that the new provisions for federated and extended schools should be considered to increase the viability of rural schools before closure proposals are brought forward. There are no specific factors that apply to the consideration of urban school closures. More information can be found on the Department's School Organisation Website www.dfes.gov.uk/schoolorg.

Education Grants

Jim Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what grants were awarded to local authorities in Dorset by his Department in financial year 2003–04 that fall outside the revenue support grant. [156209]

Mr. Miliband: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister for Local and Regional Government the Member for Greenwich and Woolwich (Mr. Raynsford) on 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 750W.

Computers Within Reach

Mr. Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* families in Birkenhead have benefited from the Computers within Reach programme. [166323]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers Within Reach scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a State Pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two-thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Of the 24,000 computers delivered through the Computers within Reach scheme, approximately 3,000 were for people in the Liverpool area, including those in and around Birkenhead.

Computer Services

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166373]

Stephen Twigg: We have no plans this year to make major replacements or upgrades to the Department's hardware base which is perfectly adequate for the current level of IT in use. Over the near to medium term, we expect the percentage of laptops in use by Departmental staff to increase as remote working facilities improve and the Department encourages increased flexibility of working patterns and closer working relationships across the education sector.

The Department used predominantly Microsoft technology for its PC and back-office systems supplemented by "best of breed" technology for specific business critical activities. We have no plans to proactively update either our PC or server software this year although we do plan to introduce an improved email system (based on Microsoft's Exchange 2003), an integrated Human Resource and Payroll system, a Department-level accounting system and an Electronic Document and Records Management System (EDRMS) which will help us make better informed policy and allow us to respond positively to the Freedom of Information Act.

Education (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, if he will make a statement on the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports in Birkenhead. [166296]

Stephen Twigg: The Government is investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help to deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with

the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of 5-16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing £1,376,176 to support the delivery of three School Sport Partnerships in the Wirrall LEA area. The partnerships include 14 secondary and 70 primary schools and provide enhanced sport opportunities for all young people. Furthermore, the New Opportunities Fund has allocated £4,448,000 to specifically enhance PE and school sport facilities in the Wirral LEA area.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on higher education in Birkenhead in each of the last seven years. [166320]

Alan Johnson: The only publicly funded institution providing higher education in Birkenhead is Wirral Metropolitan College. The College has three main campuses (two of which are in Birkenhead) and also operates through neighbourhood learning centres and in-company learning centres. In 2004–05 HEFCE will be providing nearly £1.5 million to Wirral Metropolitan College but we have no information on the proportion of this or previous funding spent through the two campuses in Birkenhead.

Eligible students attending designated courses at Wirral Metropolitan College are eligible for student support. The available figures for funding for these students are shown below. They relate only to spending on tuition fees, student loans (cash cost) and the Dependants Grant for full-time undergraduate students.

Academic year	*Tuition fees* £	*Student loans (cash cost)* £	*Dependants Grants* £
1999–2000	177,100	652,300	63,000
2000–01	172,100	599,200	70,200
2001–02	179,200	664,500	115,100
2002–03	175,600	581,300	145,000

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Birkenhead deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [166328]

Mr. Miliband: One school in Birkenhead has been found to be failing since 1997 and has since recovered. A further Ofsted inspection in 2002 showed the school to be improving and providing a sound education for its pupils.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 11 year old pupils in Birkenhead have reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [166330]

Mr Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

	Mathematics			*English*		
	Birkenhead Number of pupils achieving Level 4+	*Birkenhead Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+*	*England Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+*	*Birkenhead Number of pupils achieving Level 4+*	*Birkenhead Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+*	*England Percentage of pupils achieving Level 4+*
2003	689	65	73	722	68	75
2002	770	67	73	812	70	75
2001	747	65	71	811	70	75
2000	720	64	72	764	68	75
1999	735	61	69	787	66	71
1998	538	49	59	635	58	65
1997	552	51	62	592	55	63

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16 year-olds in Birkenhead achieved at least five GCSEs at grades A*–C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [166319]

Mr Miliband: The statistical information requested is detailed in the following table:

Percentage of 15 year old pupils[1] achieving five or more GCSE/GNVQ grades A–C*

Academic Year	*Birkenhead Parliamentary Constituency*	*England*
1997	28.9	45.1
1998	31.0	46.3
1999	30.2	47.9
2000	35.4	49.2
2001	40.7	50.0
2002	44.0	51.6
2003	45.9	52.9

[1]Pupils are aged 15 at the start of the academic year, ie 31 August.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils in Birkenhead reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years. [166329]

Mr Miliband: The results from the 2003 National Curriculum tests showed that 75 per cent. of 11 year olds in England reached Level 4 in English and 73 per cent. in mathematics. These results represent a significant improvement in standards—of 12 percentage points in English and 11 percentage points in mathematics—since 1997, reflecting the impact of the National Literacy and

Numeracy Strategies on primary schools. We remain absolutely committed, through our new Primary Strategy, to supporting schools to achieve the ambitious targets we have set for standards of literacy and numeracy.

The table shows the number and percentage of pupils in Birkenhead who have achieved level 4 or above in the Key Stage 2 English and mathematics tests since 1997. The results for Birkenhead are below the national average but show improvements since 1997 in English and mathematics in excess of the improvements in the national figures:

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
English—No of pupils[1]	592	635	787	764	811	812	722
Mathematics—No of pupils[1]	552	538	735	720	747	770	689
English—% of pupils	55	58	66	68	70	70	68
Mathematics—% of pupils	51	49	61	64	65	67	65

[1]The number of eligible pupils for the Key Stage 2 tests varies slightly from year to year.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding each school in Birkenhead has received from New Deal for Schools. [166326]

Mr. Miliband: The table shows the schools in the Birkenhead constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which commenced in 1997–98. From 2000–01, capital allocations to local authorities and schools have largely been made by formulae linked to asset management plans. In addition, all schools have, since 2000–01, received Devolved Formula capital to use on their most urgent capital needs.

NDS Allocations to Schools in the Birkenhead Constituency

Year	*School*	*Project Details*	*Type*	*Grant Awarded*
1997–98	Bedford Drive Primary School	Continuation of roofing and structural repairs	LEA widegrant	£375,000.00
1998–99	Devonshire Park Primary School	Rebuild boundary wall to playground, stack and gutter repairs (North building)		£49,500.00
	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	Structural repairs to infant building–design/ construction fault		£19,800.00
	Bidston Avenue Primary School	Gutter repairs/ renewal		£8,800.00
	Park High School	Fire precaution works, replacement of aluminium windows		£82,500.00
1999–2000	The Priory Parish C of E Primary School	Part of roofing package		£2,475.00
	Mersey Park Primary School	Repair element roofing	Project including 17 schools	£950,300.00
	Woodchurch Road Primary School	Heating boiler plant repairs	Project including 13 schools	£340,900.00
	Hillside Infant School	Repair element structure	Project including 15 schools	£1,289,200.00
	Townfield Primary School	Repair element structure	Project including 15 schools	£1,289,200.00
	St Oswald's Bidston C of E Primary School	Repair element roofing	Project including 17 schools	£950,300.00
	Oxton St Saviour's C of E Primary School	Heating boiler plantrepairs	Project including 13schools	£340,900.00
	Our Ladyand St Edward's Catholic Primary School	Heating boiler plant repairs	Project including 13 schools	£340,900.00
	Holy Cross Catholic Primary School	Heating boiler plant repairs	Project including 13 schools	£340,900.00
	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	Repair element structure	Project including 15 schools	£1,289,200.00
	Prenton High School for Girls	Repair element roofing	Project including 17 schools	£950,300.00
	Rock Ferry High School	Repair element roofing	Project including 17 schools	£950,300.00
	Ridgeway High School	Repair element roofing	Project including 17 schools	£950,300.00
	Plessington Catholic High School Technology College	Heating boiler plant repairs	Project including 13 schools	£340,900.00
2000–01	Rock Ferry High School	Temporary mobile accommodation to be replaced by permanent new build	Project including 9 schools	£1,955,856.00
	Ridgeway High School	Temporary mobile accommodation to be replaced by permanent new build	Project including 9 schools	£1,955,856.00

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on repairing schools in Birkenhead in each year since 1997. [166304]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of capital support is allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level. The table sets out the capital support made by the Government to Wirral Local Education Authority since 1997–98, in total and by programme, including devolved formula capital grants to each school.

All figures in £000s

Wirral LEA Capital Allocations	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Assistance With AMPS			42				
Basic L C Vap					61	348	453
Basic Need	1,468	632	1,793	1,068	344	110	251
City Learning Centres				10	2,200		
Class Size Initiative		211	899	651	66	91	
Condition					2,076	3,108	4,009
Devolved Formula				2,336	1,922	2,906	4,590
Early Excellence Centre		195	66				
Energy		104					
Modernisation						1,567	2,911
NDS 1	375						
NDS 2		1,902					
NDS 3			2,712				
NDS 4				3,956			
Nursery Provision				70			
Outside Toilets		36	9				
Private Finance Initiative				58,500			
School Labs				224	224		
School Security	83	103	109	108	76	65	
Schools Access Initiative	30	70	150	210	349	493	726
Seed Challenge				217	247	424	421
Specialist Schools				100	200	200	
Staff Workspace						84	176
Supplementary Credit Approvals	55	684					
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools				146			
Targeted Capital Funding					600		1,316
Targeted Capital Funding—VA							3,921
Voluntary Aided School Grant	399	682	937	341	352	763	
Total	2,410	4,619	6,717	67,937	8,717	10,159	18,774

Additionally, we have allocated to date approximately £13.4 million in 2004–05 and £5.3 million in 2005–06 for further capital investment in schools in Wirral LEA.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Birkenhead (a) in each of the last seven years and (b) on the latest date for which figures are available. [166299]

Mr. Miliband: In the Birkenhead constituency there were 210 full-time equivalent teaching assistants in service in maintained schools in January 2003. This is the latest information available. The table gives the corresponding numbers since 1997.

Year	
1997	90
1998	90
1999	110
2000	110
2001	170
2002	150

Source:
Annual School's Census.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Birkenhead on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [166298]

Mr. Miliband: Teacher vacancy information is collected at local authority level. In January 2003, there were 18 vacancies for full-time teachers in maintained schools in the Wirral local education authority (LEA) area, which includes Birkenhead.

Like other areas, since 1997 Wirral has benefited from the initiatives that the Government has put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in Wirral LEA has risen by 150, from 2,930 to 3,080 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the LEA has grown by 690, from 680 to 1,370.

Sex Education

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made since 16 July 2003 on establishing a set of guidelines on sex education for boys. [166546]

Stephen Twigg: We have commissioned the development of practical guidance to support schools in Sex and Relationship Education (SRE) for boys and young men. The guidance will be available in early June.

Additionally since July 2003, we have supported the production of a resource for teaching and learning about HIV and AIDS which addresses both boys and girls. Our programme of professional development which includes a specialist module of SRE will be available to up to 3,000 teachers in 2004–05. These participants are required to demonstrate that their SRE programme meet the needs of both boys and girls.

Student Loans

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much interest accrued to the Student Loan Company on student loans in financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and how much of this interest was derived from capital sums which had been paid by debtors to the Inland Revenue but not transferred to the Student Loan Company. [166116]

Alan Johnson: In financial year 2002–03, the sum of £146.8 million in interest was added onto the student loans balance. Of this, £106.9 million related to income contingent loans and £39.9 million related to mortgage style loans. Any adjustments arising from the repayments received in respect of 2002–03 will be included in the 2003–04 data.

Data are not available to answer the second part of the question.

Data for financial year 2003–04 are not yet available.

Teachers (North Somerset)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teaching assistants, *(b)* teachers and *(c)* teaching vacancies there were in schools in the North Somerset Education Authority in each year since 1997. [165679]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The table shows the number of full-time equivalent teaching assistants, regular teachers and full-time permanent teacher vacancies in maintained schools in North Somerset Local Education Authority area, in January of each year since 1997.

	Teaching assistants	*Teachers*	*Vacancies*
1997	190	1,450	9
1998	220	1,380	12
1999	220	1,360	10
2000	260	1,360	14
2001	290	1,420	7
2002	310	1,480	5
2003	380	1,490	7

Sources:
Annual School Census (teaching assistants) and the Annual Survey of Teachers in Service and Teacher Vacancies.

Teaching Assistants (Wirral)

Mr. Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Wirral South in (a) each of the last seven years and (b) on the latest date for which figures are available. [166625]

Mr. Miliband: In the Wirral South constituency there were 130 full-time equivalent teaching assistants in service in maintained schools in January 2003. This is the latest information available. The table gives the corresponding numbers since 1997.

Year	
1997	50
1998	50
1999	50
2000	60
2001	80
2002	100

Source:
Annual School's Census.

Excellence in Cities

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Birkenhead have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [166327]

Mr Miliband: Park High School, Prenton High School Ridgeway High School, Rock Ferry High School and Woodchurch High School in Birkenhead have been included in Excellence in Cities since September 2000. The table below shows the number of children in Birkenhead benefiting, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	No of Children	*Total EiC expenditure*[1] *£*	*Spend per Pupil £*
2000–01	4,870	675,311	138.67
2001–02	5,056	675,311	133.57
2002–03	5,141	726,028	141.22
2003–04	5,284	1,437,340	272.00

[1] Funding figures were supplied by the Excellence in Cities coordinator for Wirral.

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2003–04 is due to the extra funding provided through the Leadership Incentive Grant and Behaviour Improvement Programme which came on stream in 2003.

Supply Teachers

Mr. Andrew Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills, if he will take measures to ensure that only local education authority-approved teachers can be employed by schools as supply teachers. [166412]

Mr. Miliband: My right hon. Friend has no present plans to take such measures. However, the Government has already taken action to improve the quality and reliability of supply teachers. A package of self-study materials was launched in June 2002 specifically for supply teachers. In addition, my Department's Quality mark scheme requires that teachers being offered to schools by agencies and Local Education Authorities have been interviewed and their references checked. I plan to write to schools soon recommending that they use Quality Mark holders for fulfilling their supply needs wherever possible.

Schools (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils in Wirral South reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years. [166623]

Mr. Miliband: The results from the 2003 National Curriculum tests showed that 75 per cent. of 11-year-olds in England reached Level 4 in English and 73 per cent. in mathematics. These results represent a significant improvement in standards—of 12 percentage points in English and 11 percentage points in mathematics—since 1997, reflecting the impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies on primary schools. We remain absolutely committed, through our new Primary Strategy, to supporting schools to achieve the ambitious targets we have set for standards in literacy and numeracy.

The table shows the number and percentage of pupils in Wirral South who have achieved level 4 or above in the Key Stage 2 English and mathematics tests since 1997. The results for Wirral South are well above the national average and have improved significantly since 1997:

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
English—no. of pupils[1]	665	708	757	772	797	819	767
Mathematics—no. of pupils[1]	633	633	727	723	742	774	733
English—% of pupils	76	76	81	83	86	84	84
Mathematics—% of pupils	72	68	78	78	80	79	80

[1] The number of eligible pupils for the Key Stage 2 tests varies slightly from year to year.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Wirral South on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [166626]

Mr. Miliband: Teacher vacancy information is collected at local authority level. There were 18 vacancies for full-time teachers in maintained schools in the Wirral local education authority (LEA) area, which includes Wirral South.

Like other areas, since 1997 Wirral has benefited from the initiatives that the Government has put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in Wirral LEA has risen by 150, from 2,930 to 3,080 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the LEA has grown by 690, from 680 to 1,370.

Temporary Classrooms

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many temporary or demountable classrooms in the Colchester Parliamentary constituency have been replaced with permanent accommodation since May 1997; and if he will make a statement. [165328]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not hold data on the replacement of temporary classrooms since 1997. This Government has increased its support for capital investment in schools from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £3.8 billion this year and this will increase further to over £5 billion by 2005–06. The bulk of schools capital is now allocated by formula to Authorities and schools so that they can address their local priorities, including the replacement of decayed temporary accommodation, on which we have set a high priority. Prioritisation of need is through asset management planning, which should be an open, rigorous and consultative process, based on a survey of the needs of all schools. Modern, high-quality mobile or demountable classrooms provide a good environment for teaching and learning where there is short-term need. They might, for instance, be needed to cope with a short-term increase in pupil numbers, or where extensive remodelling or rebuilding of permanent accommodation means providing temporary accommodation on the school site, rather than transporting children elsewhere.

Pupil Referral Units

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average length of attendance at pupil referral units was in each of the last three years. [165475]

Alan Johnson: The data requested is not collected centrally.

School Refurbishment

Mr Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding his Department *(a)* has spent in 2003–04 and *(b)* is planning to spend in (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 2005–06 on rebuilding and refurbishing property in (A) secondary schools and (B) further education colleges. [165351]

Alan Johnson: The majority of the Department's school capital investment is allocated to schools and Local Education Authorities (LEAs) by formula, and they decide how best to invest it in line with their asset management plans. We do not stipulate how LEAs should split this investment between primary and secondary schools and we do not, therefore, have detailed information about all capital investment spent on secondary schools. This information should be held locally. The total capital investment available for all schools amounted to £3.8 billion in 2003–04, and we have indicated that this will rise to £4.5 billion and £5.1 billion in 2004–05 and 2005–06 respectively.

All of the Department's post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment is allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). In 2003–04 the LSC's total capital funding allocation was £327.5 million, and we have indicated that this will rise to £379.5 million and £408.5 million in 2004–05 and 2005–06 respectively. This comprises capital funding for the further education and Adult and Community Learning sectors. It includes funding to develop the Information and Learning Technology infrastructure; to develop Centres of Vocational Excellence; and to support the Neighbourhood Learning in Deprived Communities programme. The Department does not provide a specific budget to the LSC for rebuilding and refurbishing property in further education colleges. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges. Mr. Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House library.

Devon Schools

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many places there were in Devon Local Education Authority *(a)* primary, *(b)* secondary and *(c)* grammar schools in each of the last seven years. [165016]

Alan Johnson: The available information shown in the table relates to the number of pupils in maintained primary and secondary schools and grammar schools rather than total number of school places.

Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools[1]*: Number (headcount) of Pupils*
Position as at January each year: Devon, Plymouth and Torbay Local Education Authorities

	Devon			*Plymouth*			*Torbay*		
	Maintained secondary			*Maintained secondary*			*Maintained secondary*		
	Maintained Primary	*Total secondary*	*of which grammar schools*	*Maintained Primary*	*Total secondary*	*of which grammar schools*	*Maintained Primary*	*Total secondary*	*of which grammar schools*
1997[2]	84,938	62,047	5,619	—	—	—	—	—	—
1998[2]	88,639	62,991	5,693	—	—	—	—	—	—
1999	56,454	37,592	727	21,887	18,254	2,481	10,254	8,467	2,607
2000	56,374	38,816	731	21,510	18,645	2,597	10,288	8,552	2,654
2001	56,503	39,832	732	21,285	18,829	2,645	10,328	8,708	2,697
2002	56,159	40,872	745	20,968	18,982	2,679	10,399	8,863	2,738
2003	55,679	41,696	741	20,431	19,008	2,709	10,325	9,024	2,722

Source:
Annual Schools' Census
[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Before Local Government Reorganisation.

Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* resource budget, *(b)* administration costs and *(c)* staff numbers were for 2003 of the (i) School Teachers' Review Body and (ii) Music and Dance Scheme Advisory Group. [165122]

Alan Johnson: The School Teachers' Review Body (STRB) does not have a specific budget. Its costs are borne within the overall total budget for the Office of Manpower Economics. The estimated resource budget for the work of the STRB in 2003–04, including members' costs and consultancy and survey work was about £840,00 and this includes Secretariat

administration costs, including pay, of £384,000. The STRB is supported by a Secretariat of 7.8 people within the Office of Manpower Economics.

The Music and Dance Scheme Advisory Group (MDSAG) does not have a resource budget. The Group's members are unpaid and only receive expenses for attendance at meetings. These amounted to some £6,000 in 2003–04. The MDSAG is serviced by two officials from the Department of Education and Skills as part of their duties in administering the Music and Dance Scheme.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 21 April 2004

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House if he will list for each civil service grade within his Office, the total number of staff employed, broken down by *(a)* gender, *(b)* ethnic group and *(c)* age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166400]

Mr. Woolas: Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service are collected by the Cabinet Office and published in Civil Service Statistics. A copy of Civil Service Statistics 2002 is available in the Library, and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

My Office currently employs 12 civil servants and two temporary civil servants as special advisers, including staff supporting the Deputy Leader of the House of Commons. The grading breakdown is set out in the following table:

Grade	*Staff number*
Senior Civil Servant	1
Band A	1
B2	3
B1	3
C2	3
C1	1
Special Adviser	2

To provide further analysis of *(a)* gender, *(b)* ethnic group, *(c)* registered disabled and *(d)* age group would identify individual members of staff.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Office. [166375]

Mr. Woolas: The computer hardware and software used in my office is provided by the Privy Council Office under an IS/IT services agreement managed by the Cabinet Office. This provides for desktop hardware to be regularly replaced, and for standard operating and applications software to be kept updated. A major upgrade is planned for the standard office automation software we use towards the end of 2004.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asbestos

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the level of compliance with the duty to manage legislation as it relates to exposure to asbestos *(a)* now and *(b)* by the time the legislation becomes legally binding in May. [166749]

Jane Kennedy: As a result of a commitment given by the Government to the House of Lords in 2002, the Health and Safety Executive carried out a review of the progress being made towards compliance with the duty to manage asbestos in non-domestic premises. The review shows that between 50 per cent. and 75 per cent. of dutyholders are aware of the new regulation and that approximately 40 per cent. were already complying with the duty six months before the regulation was due to come into force.

Since the review was carried out the HSE has continued its campaign to raise awareness of the duty in order to continue to raise the level of compliance before the 21 May when the duty comes into force.

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what efforts the Department has made to raise awareness amongst small businesses and the self-employed of the duty to manage legislation as it relates to exposure to asbestos. [166750]

Jane Kennedy: In 2001 the Health and Safety Commission embarked on a five-year campaign to raise awareness of the duty to manage and to encourage proportionate and effective compliance with the new regulation.

In addition to the development of comprehensive guidance, the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has gained the support of over 3,000 organisations to act as Partners in cascading HSE's campaign messages to a wide and varied audience, including small businesses and the self-employed. The partnership network includes the Federation of Small Businesses which has played a key role in the production of a free 'Duty to Manage' leaflet geared towards the needs of their members. Over 400,000 of these leaflets have been distributed nation wide.

HSE has also developed a 'duty to manage' asbestos website, which includes good practice examples for new dutyholders, and has produced a range of written guidance.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 8 March, with regard to Mr. David Worthington. [167259]

Mr. Andrew Smith: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 16 April 2004.

Council Tax Benefit

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people are claiming council tax benefit; and if he will make a statement. [166252]

Mr. Pond: The number of Council Tax Benefit recipients in Great Britain at August 2003 is 4,657,400.

Notes:

1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person, couple or family.

2. The figure is rounded to the nearest hundred.

3. Council Tax Benefit totals exclude any Second Adult Rebate cases.

Source:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System Quarterly 100 per cent. caseload stock-count taken in August 2003.

Pension Forecasts

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps his Department has taken to provide everyone with a personal forecast of their complete pension position as proposed in "A New Contract for Welfare: Partnership in Pensions", page 86. [166247]

Malcolm Wicks: Last year the Government began the process of issuing state pension forecasts to self-employed people and we anticipate that we will have sent 1.6 million forecasts by the end of May this year.

We also continue to work in partnership with employers and pension providers to deliver 6.3 million combined pension forecasts by the end of 2005–06. To date over 700 employers and pension providers have expressed an interest in delivering these forecasts to their employees/scheme members.

The Government are keen to ensure that individuals who are not covered by the combined pension forecast arrangements do not lose out. We intend to issue to these people a regular forecast of their projected state pension entitlement.

Retirement Planner

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate *(a)* the initial start-up cost and *(b)* the annual running cost of his Department's web-based retirement planner, as proposed in Simplicity, Security and Choice: Informed Choices for Working and Saving, page 28; if he will provide a breakdown of this cost to (i) pension providers and (ii) his Department; and if he will make a statement. [166232]

Malcolm Wicks: We anticipate that the costs of establishing and running the web-based retirement planner are likely to be less than £10 million set-up costs and less than £5 million in annual running costs. However, these figures are high-level and indicative.

Expenditure on a new service cannot be incurred ahead of Her Majesty's consent to the Pensions Bill. Following Royal Assent we will be able to engage with suppliers and estimate the potential cost. The exact costs of the system will, therefore not be known until commercial arrangements have been completed.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the average cost per member to private pension schemes for providing personalised scheme-member information in order to facilitate his Department's proposed web-based retirement planner. [166233]

Malcolm Wicks: This information is not available at the present time. Expenditure on a new service cannot be incurred ahead of Her Majesty's consent to the Pensions Bill and consent to that expenditure. Following Royal Assent we will be able to engage with suppliers and estimate the potential cost.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when his Department's proposed web-based retirement planner will be launched. [166245]

Malcolm Wicks: As announced in February 2004 in Cm 6111, 'Simplicity, security and choice: Informed choices for working and saving', the web-based retirement planner will be launched in Spring 2006.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Regional Assemblies

8. **Mr. Grogan:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect on business of elected regional assemblies in the north of England. [166261]

Phil Hope: Improving the economic performance of the northern regions will be at the heart of the objectives of elected regional assemblies. Business will be actively involved in, and benefit from, the work of the assemblies—including economic development, planning, housing, transport, employment, and training and skills.

Deprived Communities

9. **Ms Munn:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what action his Department is taking to make deprived communities better places to live. [166262]

Yvette Cooper: The Government have introduced a range of new programmes backed by substantial investment to improve disadvantaged areas, including the Neighbourhood Renewal Fund, Sure Start and neighbourhood wardens.

Independent research published this week shows crime in warden areas has dropped by 28 per cent.

Housing

10. **Mr. Jack:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what studies his Department will be making of the impact of his latest housing policies on the north-west of England. [R] [166263]

Keith Hill: The Government's housing policies are encapsulated in the Sustainable Communities Plan. With four of the nine Housing Market Renewal Pathfinders located in the north-west, the region is set to benefit from £332 million over the next two years. A full programme evaluation for the pathfinder programme is to be commissioned. In addition, a full review of North West Regional Planning Guidance will start later this year, and will give further consideration to housing provision.

11. **Mr. Blizzard:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to increase the amount of affordable housing for rent in rural areas. [166264]

Keith Hill: The target for approvals of rural housing in small settlements within the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme has been increased from 800 in 2000–01 to 3,500 over the two years 2004–05 and 2005–06. The target for these two years has been exceeded by about 500 in the programme announced last month. The programme includes homes for both rent and low cost home ownership.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the effect of changes in the level of council funding for housing upon residents of Wirral, South since 1997. [166635]

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Birkenhead since 1997. [166214]

Phil Hope: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Wirral's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by over 140 per cent. In addition to this welcome increase there is support through the Community Housing Task Force and Government Office for the North West to help the local authority and its tenants to choose the best strategy for long term improvement.

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list those respondents to the consultation paper on licensing houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) who *(a)* supported and *(b)* opposed the proposal to introduce a duty of care on the owners and managers of all HMOs to ensure the health and safety of their tenants. [166201]

Keith Hill: A total of 579 responses were received on the 1999 consultation paper on Licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation in England. 363 of them expressed no views on the proposal to introduce a duty of care on the owners and managers of HMOs.

The five who were opposed to the proposal were:

Mr. D Ugustod
South London Family Housing Association
Mr. G Clements
Leeds Property Association
An anonymous respondent

The 211 respondents in favour of the proposal were:

National Inspection Council for Electrical Installation Contracting (NICEIC)
Mr. Trevor Alan Murphy
Leicestershire Fire Brigade
Society of Mary and Martha
Mr. Tom W M Turner
Oxford Fire Service
Middlesbrough borough council
University of Newcastle
Torbay borough council
Mr. John Stather
Wigan metropolitan borough council
Mr. Duncan McCargo
Yorkshire Coast Residential Landlords Association
Warrington borough council
Cornwall county council
Landlord's Association for Wessex
Cheshire Fire Brigade
Leicester city council
South Ribble borough council
Mr. David Patey
Kingston-upon-Hull district council
The London borough of Croydon
University of Sheffield Union of Students
Preston borough council
Havant borough council
Reigate and Bansted borough council
Hertfordshire county council
The Institute of Legal Executives
The UK Association of Letting Agents Ltd. (UKALA)
Greater Yarmouth Tourist Authority
Great Yarmouth Residents Association
Lancaster city council
London borough of Newham
Association of Housing Advisory Services
Staffordshire Fire and Rescue Service
The Institute of Building Control
Tonbridge and Malling borough council
Nottingham Landlords Liaison Panel to Nottingham city council
The NHS Confederation
Redcar and Cleveland borough council
Humberside Fire Brigade
Guildford borough council
Bedfordshire and Luton Fire and Rescue Service
Slough borough council
City of Salford Housing Services
Cumbria Fire Service
Ipswich borough council
Exeter city council
Blyth Valley council
Winchester city council
Royal Berkshire Fire Authority
South West Landlords Association
Metropolitan borough of Wirral
Nottingham city council
Cannock Chase district council
Selby district council
South Headingley Community Association
Lancashire Combined Fire Authority
The Royal Institution of Chartered Surveyors
Torridge district council
London Fire Brigade
Teignbridge district council
Wyre Forest district council
Stafford borough council
The borough of Basingstoke and Deane
Hartlepool borough council
London Private Tenants Workers
West Yorkshire Fire and Civil Defence Authority
Portsmouth city council
Southampton city council
Cherwell district council
Metropolitan borough of Bury
Gloucester city council
Hereford and Worcester Combined Fire Authority
Maidstone borough council
Woking borough council
Wansbeck district council
Norfolk County Council Fire Service
Greater Manchester County Fire Service
St. Helens metropolitan borough council
Borough of Spelthorne
Somerset Fire Brigade

Stroud district council
City of Sunderland Health and Housing Services
Royal borough of Kingston upon Thames
Stoke-on-Trent city council
Surrey Heath borough council
Newcastle-under-Lyme borough council
The Energy Conservation and Solar Centre
Association of Tenancy Regulations Officers
Taunton Deane borough council
South Hams district council
Professional Briefings
Ellesmere Port and Neston borough council
The Fire Brigades Union
Sedgemoor district council
Henstead Road and Canton Street Residents Association
Rushmoor borough council
East Hampshire district council
Stockton-on-Tees borough council
Lewisham Organisation of Private Tenants
Brent Private Tenants Rights Group
Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
Field Studies Council
Bradford metropolitan borough council
Tyne and Wear Metropolitan Fire Brigade
Brentwood borough council
City of Durham
Swindon borough council
Newcastle city council
The Hull and District Landlords' Association
Vale of White Horse
Chester city council
Chichester district council
London borough of Hillingdon
The Housing Corporation
Bill Olner MP
UNIPOL
Thanet district council
Northern Consortium of Housing Authorities
The Royal borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Swale borough council
North Hyde Park Neighbourhood Association
British Property Federation
Wandsworth borough council
West Berkshire council
City of York council
Blackburn with Darwen borough council
Sheffield city council
The Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals of Universities (CVCP)
Yorkshire Region HMO Group
Nottinghamshire C I E H Housing Working Group
Doncaster metropolitan borough council
Gloucestershire Directors of Environment Services Housing Technical Sub Group
Brent borough council
Dudley metropolitan borough council
Oldham metropolitan borough council
Welwyn Hatfield council
Eastbourne borough council
Hart district council
Derbyshire Fire and Rescue Service
Barnsley metropolitan borough council
Home Office Fire Policy Unit
Northampton borough council
Herefordshire council
Allerdale borough council
Borough of Hackney
St. Edmundsbury borough council
Shepway district council
Rother district council
Leeds city council
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health
The National Council for Housing and Planning (ROOM)
Canterbury city council
Gateshead metropolitan borough council
Alan Simpson MP-Nottingham, South
Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire county council
London borough of Ealing
Solihull metropolitan borough council
Brewers and Licensed Retailers Association
National HMO Network
Chartered Institute of Housing
Mr. N Burn
Mr. J S McConnell
Child Accident Prevention Trust
Association of London Government
London borough of Hammersmith and Fulham
City of Plymouth
East Lindsey district council
Cardiff county council
Powys county council
Newport county borough council
Greater Manchester Private Sector Housing Group
Manchester city council
Julia Drown MP
Shelter
North Somerset council
North Hertfordshire district council
Mrs Jean McAndrew
Mr. Peter Brackley
Sefton council
London borough of Hounslow
Bristol city council
Reading borough council
Trafford metropolitan borough council
Greater Manchester House in Multiple Occupation Working Group
Rochdale metropolitan borough council
Hastings borough council
Association for Student Residential Accommodation
Cambridge city council
Local Government Association
The Association of Building Engineers
Small Landlords Association
Harold Best MP
Lincoln city council
Merthyr Tydfil county borough council
Monmouthshire county council
Isle of Anglesey county council
Shelter Cymru
Pembrokeshire county council
Blaenau Gwent county borough
National Union of Students Wales
Rhondda Cynon Taff
City and County of Swansea
Conwy county borough council

Denbighshire county council
Gwynedd council
North Wales Society of Directors of Public Protection
The Treforest Community Joint Committee
Residential Landlords Association
Mr. Ben Prescott

Mr. Hopkins: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what steps he is taking to help local authorities to rehouse families on the housing waiting list. [166259]

Yvette Cooper: Local authorities are no longer required to hold 'housing waiting lists', and are now required to allocate housing following their published allocation scheme. In November 2002, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister issued a revised Code of Guidance on the Allocation of Accommodation; this encourages local authorities to provide housing applicants with a choice of accommodation in their allocation scheme.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced a major new affordable house building programme worth nearly £3.5 billion over this and next year, and we are allocating £260 million over 2003–04 to 2005–06 to tackle homelessness.

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* level of housing basic credit approvals (as included in HIP allocations), *(b)* volume of reserved capital receipts from Right to Buy, *(c)* volume of usable capital receipts from Right to Buy and *(d)* capital receipts used by local authorities for housing investment were for (i) each local authority with a housing revenue account and (ii) England for (A) 1990–91, (B) 2000–01, (C) 2001–02, (D) 2002–03 and (E) 2003–04. [166637]

Keith Hill: Information on *(a)* local authority capital allocations since 1990–91 is available in the Library of the House.

The information requested at *(b)*, *(c)* and *(d)*, with the exception that no information is available yet for the year 2003–04, has been made available in the Library of the House.

Local Government Finance

12. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average council tax increase from 2003–04 to 2004–05 was in shire counties. [166265]

Mr. Raynsford: The average increase in the Band D council tax in shire county areas between 2003–04 and 2004–05 is 6.2 per cent. This contrasts with an increase of 13.8 per cent. in 2003–04.

Planning/Regeneration

Mike Gapes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on planning and regeneration policy in areas of high population density. [166260]

Keith Hill: The needs of high density areas differ greatly depending on local circumstances. Regeneration strategies are best decided locally. Planning can play an important role in high-density areas helping to create well designed and planned sustainable communities.

PRIME MINISTER

EU Constitution

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement in the House on a referendum on the EU constitution. [167220]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to my statement on Europe in the House on 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 155–57.

Libya

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Prime Minister (1) whether *(a)* he raised the issue of the sale and transportation of illegal arms to the Provisional IRA when he recently met with Colonel Gaddafi in Libya and *(b)* he was given a full inventory of the weapons and explosives which the Provisional IRA received; [166764]

(2) whether discussions took place with Colonel Gaddafi regarding financial compensation to those injured by, and to the families of those murdered by, illegal weapons transported to the IRA by Libya; and if he will make a statement; [166765]

(3) whether the issue of *(a)* arms supplies to the IRA by Libya and *(b)* compensation for victims of terrorism in Northern Ireland arising from arms shipments from Libya to the IRA was raised during his meeting with Colonel Gaddafi. [167396]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for South Antrim (David Burnside) on 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1569W.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Prime Minister what details were given by Colonel Gaddafi and the Libyan Government regarding their involvement in the murder of WPC Yvonne Fletcher; and if he will make a statement. [166766]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for South Antrim (David Burnside) on 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1569W.

Following my visit, a Metropolitan Police team visited Tripoli between 3 and 6 April to take forward the investigation into the murder of WPC Yvonne Fletcher.

TREASURY

Accountancy Services

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) which *(a)* chartered accountants and *(b)* chartered accountancy firms are banned from carrying out work for the Government; [166384]

(2) which *(a)* chartered accountancy and *(b)* chartered accountant firms have had bans lifted since 1997; and what criteria are used to determine whether bans should be (i) imposed and (ii) lifted. [166385]

Ruth Kelly: No chartered accountants or firms of chartered accountants are currently formally banned from carrying out work for the Government. However, following the collapse of Barlow Clowes, the two

partners of Deloitte and Touche (the auditors) who were censured by the Joint Disciplinary Scheme Committee of Enquiry (an integral part of the accountancy profession's regulatory regime) voluntarily agreed not to put themselves forward for Government work.

The ban on the employment of Arthur Andersen for Government work was lifted in November 1997 for reasons explained on 14 November 1997, *Official Report*, column 695.

There are no formal criteria for the imposition or lifting of a ban, and each case is viewed on its merits.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young. (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166097]

Ruth Kelly: The following information and tables provide the information required in the form in which the Chancellor's Departments and agencies have been able to compile it, without having to incur disproportionate costs.

HM Treasury[1]

Spend (£)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Deloitte Touche	0	91,473	144,628	207,261
Ernst & Young	0	0	1,410	0
KPMG	41,125	0	262,057	5,006
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	462,251	19,892	203,837	8,119

[1] Including DMO.

Office of Government Commerce[1]

Spend (£)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Deloitte & Touche	0	0	—	—
Ernst & Young	0	0	—	—
KPMG	261,000	85,000	—	—
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	—	—	—	—

[1] Including OGC Buying Solutions.

HM Customs & Excise

Spend (£)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Deloitte & Touche	876,061	38,748	—	—
Ernst & Young	253,153	215,748	—	—
KPMG	214,190	1,237,316	—	—
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	243,254	111,356	—	—

Inland Revenue

Spend (£)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Deloitte & Touche	0	2,115	302,273	48,472
Ernst & Young/Cap Gemini[1]	1,937,237	1,673,971	6,796	70
KPMG	92,500	0	32,261	83,279
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	141,101	190,372	109,680	6,289

[1] Combined expenditure with Ernst Young/Cap Gemini—further breakdown only available at disproportionate cost.

Inland Revenue (IR) has access to a range of services provided by the specified companies and their affiliated organisations. The expenditure detailed above for the specified companies was incurred primarily for management services.

The Valuation Office—Executive Agency of the Inland Revenue

During the relevant period, the IP's Valuation Office Agency (VOA) incurred expenditure only with KPMG (for business advice on the 2007 council tax revaluation) as follows:

2002–03: £634,960

2003–04: £1,034,925

The Royal Mint[1]

Spend (£)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Andersen	0	0	—	—
Deloitte & Touche	0	0	—	—
Ernst & Young	0	0	—	—
KPMG	0	0	—	—
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	137,000	51,000	—	—

[1] Including Audit Work.

Office for National Statistics

Spend (£)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002- 03*	*2003—04*
Deloitte & Touche	699	15	—	—
Ernst & Young	50	0	—	—
KPMG	251,876	191,296	—	—
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	2,198	0	—	—

National Savings

Spend (£)

	2000–01	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Deloitte & Touche	570,000	420,000	—	—
Ernst & Young	0	0	—	—
KPMG	0	0	—	—
PriceWaterhouseCoopers	43,000	0	—	—

Labour Statistics

Peter Bradley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women are employed in The Wrekin; [166720]

(2) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women in The Wrekin are in (i) full and (ii) part-time employment. [166722]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Peter Bradley, dated 21 April 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about employment in the Wrekin Parliamentary Constituency. I am replying in his absence. (166720, 166722)

The table below gives estimates of the number of men and women who are in full and part-time employment in the Wrekin Parliamentary Constituency in the twelve month period ending February 2002, the latest data for which information is available.

Men and women who are in full and part-time employment in the Wrekin parliamentary constituency

	Men	*Women*
In employment	22,000	19,000
Part-time	[1]—	10,000
Full-time	21,000	9,000

[1] Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many new *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time jobs were created between 1997 and 2003 in Liverpool, Walton; [166968]

(2) how many jobs were lost in each year between 1997 and 2003 in Liverpool, Walton. [166969]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Kilfoyle dated 21 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time and part-time jobs, and number of jobs lost in Liverpool, Walton. (166968,166969)

While no statistics of new jobs created or of jobs lost are available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, from year to year.

The attached table shows the number of full-time and part-time employee jobs in Liverpool, Walton Parliamentary Constituency in each year from 1997 to 2002, the latest year for which information is available.

Number of full-time and part-time jobs[1] in Liverpool, Walton[2]: 1997–2002

	Number of jobs		
	Full-time	Part-time	Total
1997	13,900	9,900	23,900
1998	15,400	9,700	25,100
1999	14,600	8,400	23,000
2000	17,400	9,700	27,000
2001	19,000	11,800	30,800
2002	21,600	12,900	34,500
Net change 1997 to 2002	+7,700	+3,000	+10,700

Notes:
[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.
[2] Parliamentary constituency area.
Source.
1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 1998–2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many young people aged 16 or 17 he expects will be entitled to the national minimum wage in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the United Kingdom. [166815]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Stephen Hepburn, dated 21 April 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about national minimum wage. I am replying in his absence. (166815)Information about entitlement to the national minimum wage is not available.

However, estimates for the number of employees aged 16 and 17 from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) provide an upper limit for the number of people entitled to the national minimum wage.

The table below gives estimates of the number of employees aged 16 and 17 in the United Kingdom and in the North East for the three month period ending November 2003. They include a small, but not measured, number of people with a contract of apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship schemes who are not entitled to the minimum wage.

Number of employees aged 16 and 17 in the United Kingdom and the North East

	People aged 16 and 17	People aged 16	People aged 17
United Kingdom	631,000	247,000	384,000
North East	25,000	[1]	16,000

[1] Sample size too small for reliable estimate.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability and the sample size is too small to provide comparable estimates for the Jarrow parliamentary constituency and the south Tyneside local authority with any reliability.

Census Statistics

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer according to the 2001 Census return, which 10 constituencies had the highest proportion of non-white population; what those proportions were; what proportion of the population indicated English or similar in the ethnicity question in *(a)* England and *(b)* each constituency; what proportion of the population lives in a mobile home in (i) England and (ii) each constituency; and what proportion of the population travels to work by other means in (A) England and (B) each constituency. [162763]

Mr. Boateng *[holding answer 22 March 2004]:* The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Andrew Turner, dated 21 April 2004:

As National Statistician and Registrar General for England and Wales I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking which 10 constituencies had the highest proportion of non-white population according to the 2001 Census return; what those proportions were; what proportion of the population indicated English or similar in the ethnicity question in *(a)* England and *(b)* each constituency; what proportion of the population lives in a mobile home in *(a)* England and *(b)* each constituency; and what proportion of the population travel to work by other means in *(a)* England and *(b)* each constituency. (162763)

The following ten Parliamentary Constituencies have the highest percentage of non-white ethnic groups in England and Wales. The percentages have been extracted from Table KS06 on the CD supplement to the Census 2001 Report for Parliamentary Constituencies, which is available in the House of Commons Library.

Parliamentary constituencies with the highest percentage of population in non-white ethnic groups, England and Wales, 2001

	Percentage of population in non-white ethnic groups
East Ham	66.26
Birmingham, Ladywood	64.89
Birmingham, Sparkbrook and Small Heath	64.84
Brent, South	64.58
West Ham	60.20
Brent, North	58.18
Ilford, South	54.85
Ealing, Southall	52.69
Camberwell and Peckham	50.24
Bethnal Green and Bow	49.83

Source:
2001 Census Report for Parliamentary Constituencies.

People could identify themselves as English in the 2001 Census by writing in such a response under one of the "other" categories on the ethnic group question. The number of people who identified themselves as English in this way in England was 1,064,922.

People were asked to identify their accommodation type in the 2001 Census. The Census did not identify 'mobile homes' separately but the number of people who identified themselves as living in a 'caravan or other mobile or temporary structure' in England was 142,857. This count has been taken from Table T07 on the CD supplement to the Census 2001 National Report for England and Wales, which is available in the House of Commons Library.

People were asked to identify the means of travel that they used for the longest part, by distance, of their usual journey to work. The particular means identified were:

1. work mainly from home
2. use the underground, metro, light rail or tram
3. use trains
4. use a bus, minibus or coach
5. ride a motorcycle, scooter or moped
6. drive a car or van
7. are a passenger in a car or van
8. use a taxi or minicab
9. cycle
10. walk.

The number of people using a means of transport other than these 10 categories in England was 104,205. This count has been taken from Table S121 on the CD supplement to the Census 2001 National Report for England and Wales part 2, which is available in the House of Commons Library.

I have placed in the House of Commons Library three specially commissioned tables (CO168, CO169 and CO170), respectively showing:

the number of people recording themselves as living in a 'caravan' or other mobile or temporary structure for each Parliamentary Constituency in England and Wales;

the number of people who use a means of transport other than those listed above for the longest part of their journey to work, for each Parliamentary Constituency in England and Wales;

the number of people who identified themselves as 'English' by writing in this response for each Parliamentary Constituency in England and Wales.

Further customised output may be commissioned from ONS, where requirements are not met by the standard results, via the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/census2001/op15.asp

Child Care

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what targets have been set for each local authority in England for the number of child care places which will be supported by the child care element in working tax credit for this current financial year. [166521]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government's aim is to ensure that every parent has access to good quality, affordable child care and to ensure that they are also aware of the availability of financial support for child care costs. The child care element of the working tax credit is available to low and moderate income working parents using eligible child care.

Data on the number of families benefiting from the child care element are not currently available at the local authority level due to sample size constraints. Across the UK, over 300,000 working families with children are now benefiting from help with child care costs, 67 per cent. more than benefited under the working families' and disabled person's tax credits in November 2002.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what targets have been set centrally for the number of child care places that will be supported by the child care element of working tax credit in England and Wales for this current financial year. [166522]

Dawn Primarolo: The Government have no targets for the number of beneficiaries of the child care element of the working tax credit. This help is available to low and moderate income working parents using eligible child care. Under the new tax credits, this help is benefiting over 300,000 families, 67 per cent. higher than the number who benefited under the working families' and disabled person's tax credits in November 2002.

The Government have set targets to increase the supply of child care. The 2004 Spending Review settlement announced for the Department for Education and Skills as part of Budget 2004 will allow further expansion of child care in England. The Government's aim is to ensure that every parent has access to good quality, affordable child care; and to ensure that they are also aware of the availability of financial support for child care costs.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166388]

Ruth Kelly: Data on staffing levels in the Chancellor's Departments and their agencies are collected by the Cabinet Office and published in "Civil Service Statistics". A copy of "Civil Service Statistics, 2002" is available in the Library, and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

Efficiency Gains

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made in implementing efficiency gains since his Budget statement. [165019]

Mr. Boateng: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to my answer to him of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1677W.

Gershon Review

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with Sir Peter Gershon regarding the progress of his efficiency review. [165989]

Mr. Boateng: The Chancellor and Treasury officials have had regular discussions with Sir Peter Gershon regarding the progress of the efficiency review.

Gift Aid

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) if he will estimate the amount of gift aid that has gone unclaimed in each year since 1997; [166668]

(2) how much money was claimed in gift aid in each year since 1997. [166669]

John Healey: No estimate is available of the amount of extra Gift Aid that charities could have claimed since 1997.

Amounts of tax repaid to charities on donations under Gift Aid are shown in the following table. Statistics on Gift Aid are published on the Inland Revenue website at www.inlandrevenue.gov.uk/stats/charities/c_t03_1.htm.

£ million

Year	*Total*	*By individuals*	*By companies*
1996–97	134	68	66
1997–98	177	96	81
1998–99[1]	306	110	196
1999–2000	208	128	80
2000–01[2]	222	222	[4]—
2001–02	415	415	[4]—
2002–03[3]	506	506	[4]—

[1] Figures for company donations reflect a single exceptionally large donation in 1998–99
[2] Following the Budget of 2000 company donations are paid gross and do not involve tax repayments and hence are excluded.
[3] Provisional.
[4] Not available

Identity Cards

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the Treasury has undertaken a study to estimate the cost of any future ID card scheme; and if he will make a statement. [166781]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury has been involved in discussions on the benefits and costs of a national ID cards scheme, co-ordinated by the Home Secretary. The introduction of such a scheme is a long-term undertaking, and the Treasury will continue to be involved with ongoing analysis.

Mutual Organisations

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has conducted of the value derived by members of mutual organisations from the process of demutualisation. [166732]

Ruth Kelly: Mutuality is fundamentally about members' rights to say how their organisation is governed. These rights include the right to vote to demutualise the society. It is for members to consider whether demutualisation is in their interests, taking into account the seriousness and irrevocability of the decision.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Buckmore Park Scout Centre

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what assistance is being provided by Sport England to secure the re-opening of Buckmore Park Scout Centre in the constituency of Chatham and Aylesford. [166423]

Mr. Caborn: Since the closure of Buckmore Park Scout Centre, Sport England have been actively pursuing options for reopening the centre with interested parties in the area.

Communications Act

Chris Bryant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what sums have been agreed between the BBC and Ofcom in respect of the carrying out by Ofcom of its functions in relation to the BBC, under section 198 (4) of the Communications Act 2003 for the financial year 2004–05; [166825]

(2) what sums have been agreed between Ofcom and *(a)* the BBC and *(b)* the S4C Authority in respect of the carrying out by Ofcom of its functions in relation to the Authority under section 207(6) of the Communications Act 2003 for the financial year 2004–05. [166826]

Estelle Morris: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as independent regulator. Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to my hon. Friend. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Local Authority Sports/Cultural Facilities

Mr. McWalter: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what powers she has to prevent local authorities from closing down *(a)* cultural and *(b)* sports facilities. [166406]

Mr. Caborn: The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport does not have any powers to prevent local authorities from closing down cultural and sports facilities.

However, the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 imposes a duty on local authorities that are library authorities to provide a "comprehensive and efficient" public library service, and the national library standards, published by the Secretary of State, help to inform this duty. The Secretary of State has various powers under this Act if a local authority defaults in its duties.

The Government have also taken action to prevent the loss of playing fields by introducing the Town and Country Planning (Playing Fields) (England) Direction 1998. This provides the Deputy Prime Minister with powers to ensure that communities retain an adequate supply of playing fields to meet both their current and longer term needs. In addition, where development (as defined by the Planning Acts) is proposed on school playing fields covered by section 77 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998, both planning permission from the local planning authority and consent from the Secretary of State for Education and Skills will be required.

New Opportunities Fund

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund has been allocated to Liverpool, Walton in each year since 1997. [166975]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Liverpool, Walton are shown in the table.

Financial Year	*Amount (£)*
1998–99	—
1999–2000	13,751
2000–01	38,432
2001–02	774,705
2002–03	1,137,366
2003–04	274,644
Total	2,238,898

The information is derived from the Department's Lottery award database, which uses information provided by the Lottery distributors.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Manchester, Gorton in each year since 1997. [167344]

Tessa Jowell: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Manchester, Gorton are shown in the table.

Financial Year	*Amount (£)*
1998–99	—
1999–2000	—
2000–01	238,285
2001–02	5,000
2002–03	78,810
2003–04	192,057
Total	514,152

The information is derived from the Department's Lottery award database, which uses information provided by the Lottery distributors.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166098]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: My Department does not hold a central record of the nature of individual agreements (be they contracts, consultancies or other services) nor of their value. However, our financial records show the following total payments made by the Department to *(a)* Deloitte and Touche, *(b)* Ernst and Young, *(c)* KPMG and *(d)* PricewaterhouseCoopers in financial years 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 to date (i.e. excluding any subsequent prior year adjustments).

£

Organisation	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04 To date*
Deloitte and Touche	275,594	201,670	249,007
Ernst and Young	0	38,449	0
KPMG	396,353	1,014,559	1,870,513
PricewaterhouseCoopers	5,349,686	3,847,542	3,803,767

Information about spend by the Department's Non Departmental Public Bodies could only be obtained at disproportionate cost.

Adult Education (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Birkenhead in each of the last five years. [166297]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table below:

(£000)

April 2001 to July 2001[1]		*August 2001 to July 2002*		*August 2002 to July 2003*	
Basic skills	*Key skills*	*Basic skills*	*Key skills*	*Basic skills*	*Key skills*
3,803	1,094	6,575	1,564	10,677	1,755

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Advanced Vocational Certificate

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the future of the advanced vocational certificate of education. [165862]

Mr. Miliband: The specifications for the Advanced Vocational Certificate of Education are currently being revised in order that, from September 2005, they will follow the same AS/A2 format as the GCE. Their longer-term future is being considered by the Working Group on 14–19 Reform, whose final report is due in the autumn.

Apprenticeships (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Birkenhead have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [166335]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available for a consistent geographical area over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on apprenticeships (formerly known as Advanced Modern Apprenticeships) and apprenticeships at level two (formerly known as Foundation Modern Apprenticeships) in Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 98 to March 2001 in the four TECs that amalgamated to become Greater Merseyside LSC.

Time period	*TEC/LSC*	*Apprenticeships*	*Apprenticeships at level 2*
April 1998 to March 1999	CEWTEC [1]	1,400	300
	Merseyside	2,400	1,200
	St. Helens CCTE	300	100
	North and Mid Cheshire [1]	1,200	200
April 1999 to March 2000	CEWTEC [1]	1,000	900
	Merseyside	2,600	3,500
	St. Helens CCTE	300	400
	North and Mid Cheshire[1]	900	500
April 2000 to March 2001	CEWTEC[1]	1,100	1,300
	Merseyside	2,500	4,100
	St. Helens CCTE	300	500
	North and Mid Cheshire[1]	1000	900
April 2001 to July 2002	Greater Merseyside LSC	2,600	7,100
March 2001 to July 2002	Greater Merseyside LSC	2,000	6,000

Notes:
[1] TEC also became part of Cheshire and Warrington LSC
Source:
TEC management information.
LSC Individualised Learner Record.

Computer Provision (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Birkenhead have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [166332]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At present no centrally funded DfES schemes exist which enable people to acquire free or low price recycled computers.

School Budgets (Devon)

Mr. Swire: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school budgets in Devon Local Education Authority were in deficit in each of the last seven years. [164787]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not available for the last seven years. However, the number of schools in budget deficit for the last four years is shown in the following table:

Numbers of Devon schools with a deficit budget in each of the last four years

	Number of schools
1999–2000	71
2000–2001	48
2001–2002	33
2002–2003	27

Notes:
1. The data are as reported by Devon LEA as at 30 March 2004 and taken from their section 52 outturn statements submitted to the DfES.
2. 2002–03 data are subject to changes by the LEA which may alter the results for that period.
3. For 1999–00 to 2001–02 the data are taken from the Balance Carried Forward column. In 2002–03 data come from Other Revenue Balance.
4. Section 52 data are available from 1999–00. Prior to then the ODPM's R01 statement provides information but not at school level.

School Budgets (North Tyneside)

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school budgets in North Tyneside local education authority were in deficit in each of the last 10 years. [164363]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is not available for the last 10 years. However, the number of schools in budget deficit in North Tyneside LEA for the last four years is shown in the following table:

Numbers of North Tyneside schools with a deficit budget in each of the last four years

	Number of schools
1999–2000	21
2000–01	20
2001–02	18
2002–03	32

Notes:
1. The data are as reported by North Tyneside LEA as at 29 March 2004 and taken from their 2002–03 section 52 outturn statement submitted to the DfES.
2. The 2002–03 data is subject to changes by the LEA which may alter the results for that period.
3. For 1999–00 to 2001–02 the data are taken from the Balance Carried Forward column. In 2002–03 data comes from Other Revenue Balance column.
4. Section 52 data is available from 1999–00. Prior to then the ODPM's R01 statement provides information but not at school level.

School Transport (North Tyneside)

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of home to school transport in North Tyneside local education authority was in each of the last five years. [164364]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is contained within the following table:

Cost of home to school transport in each of the last five years

	(£000)
1997–1998	950
1998–1999	985
1999–2000	1045
2000–2001	1125
2001–2002	1246

Notes:

1. The financial data are taken from North Tyneside LEA's Section 52 Outturn Statement submitted to the DfES from 1999–2000 onwards and the ODPM's R01 statement prior to then.
2. Figures are in £000s.
3. Total transport expenditure and parental contributions includes that incurred in relation to pre-primary, primary, secondary and special school education as well as in education out of school, continuing education and the management and support elements.

Europass Scheme

Ms Stuart: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1395W, on the Europass Scheme, what steps will be taken to participate in the Europass initiative; and what the timescale is for each stage of the process. [165845]

Alan Johnson: The UK is already participating fully in the current implementation of Europass Training, set up under Council Decision 1999/51/EC of 21 December 1998 on the promotion of European pathways in work-linked training, including apprenticeship.

If the current proposals for the new Europass Programme are adopted by co-decision of the European Parliament and Council of Ministers this year, it is expected that the initiative will begin on 1 January 2005. We will appoint a National Europass Centre to coordinate Europass activities within the UK. We expect the National Centre to be in place for the start of the Programme.

Free Pre-school Places

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four year olds in Chorley in each of the last seven years. [161596]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year olds in Lancashire local education authority area are shown in the table.

Number of free nursery education places[1, 2] taken up by three and four year old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers Lancashire Local Education Authority area 1997–2003

	Position in January each year	
Year	*3 year olds*	*4 year olds*
1997	4,400	12,400
1998	4,400	13,500
1999	4,400	16,000
2000	4,300	15,900
2001	9,400	15,700
2002	9,400	13,000
2003	10,100	12,600

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for thirty-three weeks of the year, usually three terms of eleven weeks.

The latest figures on provision for three and four year olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin 'Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Since 1 April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three year olds in England whose parents want one, will have access to a free, part-time early education place.

ICT Training (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Birkenhead have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [166331]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Birkenhead is served by both UK online centres and learndirect provisions.

An estimated 226 women use UK online centres in Birkenhead each quarter. This information is calculated from UK online quarterly management information (quarter ending Dec 03) which shows that, on average, each UK online centre has 101 users and that 56 per cent. of UK online users are female.

To date, 493 women living in Birkenhead (postal districts CH41 and 42) have visited a learndirect centre.

Modern Apprenticeships Task Force

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he expects to receive a report from the Modern Apprenticeships Task Force. [166202]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Secretary of State and I are kept regularly informed of progress in the work of the Task Force. However, Sir Roy Gardner the chair of the Task Force intends to submit the group's Interim Report in Autumn 2004. The report will be sent, in the first instance, to the Task Force joint sponsors: the Chancellor of the Exchequer, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and the Chair of the Learning and Skills Council,

and published shortly afterwards. In the meantime information on the work of the group is available on the Task Force's website www.employersforapprentices.gov.uk.

Teachers (North Somerset)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the pupil to teacher ratio was for the North Somerset Local Education Authority for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each year since 1997. [165604]

Mr. Miliband: The data requested are shown in the following table.

Maintained Primary and Secondary Schools[1]: Pupil: Teacher Ratios[2]—North Somerset Local Education Authority

Position at January each year: 1997 to 2003	*Pupil: Teacher ratios[2]*	
	Primary schools	*Secondary schools*
1997	23.8	16.0
1908	24.2	17.1
1999	24.4	17.0
2000	24.2	17.3
2001	24.0	17.6
2002	23.7	17.2
2003	23.9	17.2

Notes:

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] The pupil:teacher ratio within schools is the ratio of all pupils on the schools registers (counting each part-time pupil as 0.5) to all qualified teachers (including the full-time equivalent of part-time teachers).

Source:

Annual Schools' Census.

Recruitment

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the cost of recruitment of civil servants for the Department was in each financial year since 1996–97, broken down by *(a)* delegated or contracted out recruitment procedures and *(b)* recruitment procedures carried out by the Department. [158189]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department was established in June 2001. Information is available for the first full financial year of 2002/03. The figures below include Senior Civil Service recruitment.

(£000)

Year	*Cost of delegated or contracted out recruitment*	*Cost of recruitment procedures carried out by the Department*
2002/03	916,602.71	76,046.52

Targeted Capital Funds

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much in targeted capital funds for schools was allocated to each English region in the last year for which figures are available. [165870]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the value of new projects to be supported from the Targeted Capital Fund in 2004–05 for each Government Office Region.

Government Office Region	*Targeted Capital Funding for 2004–05*
East Office Region	24,772,307
East of England	28,046,121
London	50,260,995
North East	5,888,356
North West	30,824,502
South East	26,452,007
South West	43,143,376
West Midlands	21,994,219
Yorkshire and The Humber	28,223,284

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much in targeted capital funds was given to *(a)* faith schools, *(b)* non-faith schools, *(c)* faith schools with a comprehensive intake, *(d)* non-faith schools with a comprehensive intake, *(e)* Church of England schools, *(f)* Roman Catholic schools, *(g)* grammar schools and *(h)* Roman Catholic grammar schools in the last year for which figures are available. [165871]

Alan Johnson: We do not hold information in the form requested. Targeted Capital Fund(TCF) projects sometimes cover more than one school and we do not ask bids to break down costs for each school. Both local education authority (LEA) and Voluntary Aided (VA) bids can contain a mixture of schools with or without a religious character and with different admission policies. It is therefore not possible to break down allocations between the various categories requested.

For the 2004–05 round of TCF we have supported 68 LEA projects totalling £186 million at 61 LEAs, and £74 million of support for 23 VA projects at 21 LEAs.

Teachers (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* teaching assistants there were in each local education authority in Greater London in each of the last seven years. [165839]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The following table gives the numbers of full time equivalent regular teachers and teaching assistants employed in maintained schools in the Greater London area broken down by local education authority for each year between 1997 and 2003.

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
City of London							
Teachers	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Teaching assistants	—	—	—	—	—	—	10
Camden							
Teachers	1,500	1,480	1,440	1,340	1,430	1,570	1,450
Teaching assistants	200	240	250	300	360	440	470

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Greenwich							
Teachers	2,070	2,010	2,030	2,040	2,030	2,080	2,140
Teaching assistants	360	400	430	510	650	650	730
Hackney							
Teachers	1,450	1,490	1,520	1,510	1,480	1,470	1,600
Teaching assistants	210	250	290	380	420	490	530
Hammersmith and Fulham							
Teachers	930	920	930	1,000	1,000	1,010	1,060
Teaching assistants	190	200	210	250	240	260	300
Islington							
Teachers	1,420	1,410	1,330	1,350	1,300	1,460	1,380
Teaching assistants	250	250	270	350	360	350	480
Kensington and Chelsea							
Teachers	680	670	680	650	660	670	720
Teaching assistants	130	140	140	170	210	220	260
Lambeth							
Teachers	1,710	1,700	1,660	1,620	1,580	1,670	1,620
Teaching assistants	300	350	390	500	560	580	640
Lewisham							
Teachers	1,870	1,870	1,810	1,890	1,980	2,070	2,040
Teaching assistants	280	290	320	410	570	470	560
Southwark							
Teachers	1,750	1,800	1,850	1,840	1,960	2,060	2,090
Teaching assistants	350	420	430	650	810	750	710
Tower Hamlets							
Teachers	2,270	2,170	2,310	2,250	2,180	2,220	2,310
Teaching assistants	370	400	450	510	800	970	950
Wandsworth							
Teachers	1,690	1,680	1,700	1,680	1,730	1,770	1,750
Teaching assistants	330	370	370	460	470	380	530
Westminster							
Teachers	1,140	1,160	1,160	1,190	1,250	1,300	1,320
Teaching assistants	150	170	160	190	190	310	280
Barking and Dagenham							
Teachers	1,450	1,420	1,450	1,470	1,480	1,510	1,570
Teaching assistants	300	290	310	320	400	500	510
Barnet							
Teachers	2,770	2,730	2,720	2,710	2,740	2,820	2,850
Teaching assistants	290	340	400	480	550	740	720
Bexley							
Teachers	1,860	1,870	1,940	1,920	2,030	2,160	2,090
Teaching assistants	200	230	280	310	380	320	560
Brent							
Teachers	2,160	2,190	2,160	2,100	2,110	2,160	2,380
Teaching assistants	260	300	360	390	440	450	470
Bromley							
Teachers	2,270	2,330	2,340	2,340	2,540	2,640	2,590
Teaching assistants	210	230	230	270	360	440	500
Croydon							
Teachers	2,620	2,640	2,590	2,880	2,820	2,860	2,880
Teaching assistants	400	410	510	530	660	630	870
Ealing							
Teachers	2,230	2,220	2,250	2,240	2,220	2,320	2,310
Teaching assistants	340	360	370	400	510	450	530
Enfield							
Teachers	2,550	2,610	2,650	2,740	2,670	2,670	2,820
Teaching assistants	250	290	290	500	590	810	880

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Haringey							
Teachers	1,870	1,830	1,860	1,850	1,850	1,890	1,910
Teaching assistants	350	360	380	420	490	650	680
Harrow							
Teachers	1,580	1,500	1,490	1,380	1,490	1,500	1,550
Teaching assistants	270	270	290	300	300	330	430
Havering							
Teachers	1,870	1,870	1,900	1,890	1,950	2,040	2,060
Teaching assistants	170	170	200	260	300	310	520
Hillingdon							
Teachers	2,000	2,030	2,030	2,130	2,180	2,230	2,230
Teaching assistants	300	340	380	420	510	520	590
Hounslow							
Teachers	2,000	1,940	1,980	1,950	2,020	2,010	2,010
Teaching assistants	280	280	290	330	380	400	400
Kingston upon Thames							
Teachers	1,060	1,050	1,040	1,060	1,070	1,070	1,170
Teaching assistants	130	130	150	170	220	220	250
Merton							
Teachers	1,210	1,170	1,190	1,150	1,210	1,210	1,240
Teaching assistants	190	200	220	240	290	250	300
Newham							
Teachers	2,190	2,200	2,290	2,350	2,420	2,520	2,570
Teaching assistants	280	280	390	500	960	720	1,070
Redbridge							
Teachers	2,100	2,130	2,180	2,200	2,370	2,380	2,470
Teaching assistants	190	230	270	370	450	580	620
Richmond upon Thames							
Teachers	1,070	1,070	1,060	1,030	1,040	1,090	1,100
Teaching assistants	100	110	110	130	160	210	220
Sutton							
Teachers	1,390	1,420	1,450	1,480	1,530	1,590	1,710
Teaching assistants	160	170	210	230	260	340	310
Waltham Forest							
Teachers	2,010	2,080	2,090	2,060	1,940	2,020	1,940
Teaching assistants	380	400	410	470	490	610	640
Greater London							
Teachers	56,800	56,700	57,100	57,300	58,300	60,100	60,900
Teaching assistants	8,160	8,870	9,790	11,740	14,330	15,340	17,510

Source:
Annual School Census (teaching assistants) and the Annual Survey of Teachers in Service and Teacher Vacancies.

Vocational A-levels

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on Ofsted's Report on Vocational A Levels: the first two years. [165861]

Mr. Miliband: My Department and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority are considering the OFSTED report on vocational A levels. Vocational A levels are already being redeveloped so that from 2005 they will have the same AS/A2 structure as the GCE. We shall continue to make improvements to ensure that vocational A levels provide the best possible learning experience for students.

DEFENCE

Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the Army Medal Office in Droitwich Spa. [165592]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the written statement I made to the House on 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 11WS.

Army Recruitment

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a list of the traditional

geographic areas of recruitment to the different Army regiments; and what the estimated population of each such recruitment area is. [166027]

Mr. Caplin: Yes. I will place in the Library the list requested and expect to do so by the end of this month.

Climate Change

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the potential links between climate change and national security are considered when defence procurement decisions are taken; and if he will make a statement. [165287]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is in the process of reviewing the implications of climate change for defence procurement policies and several case studies of major procurement projects are being considered.

Falkland Islands

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which Royal Navy vessels were present in the waters surrounding the Falkland Islands when the Almirante Irizar sailed through *(a)* the Falklands outer conservation zone and *(b)* Falklands interim conservation zone. [165597]

Mr. Ingram: HMS Glasgow, RFA Gold Rover and FIMS Leeds Castle were present in the water surrounding the Falkland Islands when the Almirante Irizar sailed through the Falkland Islands Outer Conservation Zone and the Falkland Islands Interim Conservation Zone.

Home Front Recall Scheme

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much of the money earmarked for the Home Front Recall Scheme he intends to retain for major national projects and services; and if he will list the national projects and services which will benefit from the retained funds. [166697]

Estelle Morris: I have been asked to reply.

Home Front Recall is part of a special lottery programme called Veterans Reunited. It is funded by three National Lottery Distributors—the New Opportunities Fund, the Community Fund, and the Heritage Lottery Fund—and it will be a matter for them to decide how best to use the funding and make decisions on which projects to approve.

There will be funding for both local and national projects within the Home Front Recall scheme, but there is no fixed allocation for each type of project. The scheme was launched in April 2004 and so, at this point, no decisions have been made on either local or national grant applications. The total budget available across the UK is £7.3 million.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps have been taken to *(a)* post warnings on and *(b)* seal tanks and armoured personnel carriers destroyed by depleted uranium weapons in southern Iraq. [153874]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 12 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 537W to my hon. Friend the Member for Blaenau Gwent (Llew Smith).

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the total cost to his Department of military operations in Iraq since September 2002. [166416]

Mr. Ingram: Information on the cost of operations in Iraq in 2002–03 was published as part of the Ministry of Defence's Annual Report and Accounts (page 135). Total operating and capital expenditure during this period amounted to £847 million. It is too early to give a definitive figure for costs in 2003–04, but total funding voted at Spring Supplementary Estimates for operations in Iraq amounted to £1.5 billion.

Riot Control Equipment

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether British forces in *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* Kosovo are fully equipped with essential riot control equipment. [164958]

Mr. Ingram: British forces in both Iraq and Kosovo are fully equipped to undertake those Crowd and Riot Control (CRC) duties assigned to them.

US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether a record is kept of how many days have been expended by AWE staff under the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement. [166586]

Mr. Ingram: No.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Debt Recovery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* attachment of earnings, *(b)* charging orders, *(c)* third party debt orders, *(d)* judgment summons and *(e)* warrants of execution were issued in each year since 1997; what the total debt was that each enforcement method was to recover; and what the success rates in terms of debt recovery were for each enforcement method. [166803]

Mr. Leslie: Figures relating to the first part of the question are provided in the following table. Information relating to the amount and success rates of the enforcement methods is not available centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	Attachment of earnings orders	*Charging orders*	*Third party debt orders*	*Judgement summons issued*	*Warrants of execution issued*
1997	65,669	11,602	4,048	5,234	622,408
1998	43,440	10,852	3,646	5,688	543,848
1999	34,399	9,820	3,357	5,709	538,337
2000	35,545	10,636	3,174	5,687	470,270
2001	42,011	15,900	4,139	3,640	394,611
2002	39,855	21,447	5,499	139	372,505
2003	40,384	25,054	6,019	116	355,476

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) in how many county court judgments liability orders have been made for the payment of council tax by an enforcement agent where no levy is made in each year since 1997; [166808]

(2) in how many county court judgments liability orders for levying distress have been made for the payment of council tax where the sum is £100 or less in each year since 1997; [166809]

(3) in how many county court judgments walking possession orders have been made for the payment of council tax in each year since 1997. [166810]

Mr. Leslie: Non-payment of council tax is dealt with in each local authority area by the magistrates courts and not the county courts. The information requested and level of detail is not held centrally, and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Abandoned Vehicles

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of Operation Scrap It in *(a)* London and *(b)* Liverpool. [166686]

Ms Blears: Operation Scrap It aims to ensure that all vehicles confirmed as untaxed or abandoned will be removed within 72 hours of reporting by October this year. The authorities concerned are putting systems in place to deliver this and I am confident that the target will be met.

To remove any excuse for dumping cars, I launched a free take back service across London on 8 March.

"Reducing Crime—Changing Lives"

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a 12 week consultation period took place before the publication of the document Reducing Crime—Changing Lives, in line with the Cabinet Office code of practice on written consultations. [160897]

Paul Goggins: The Government published its proposals for the reform of correctional services in its paper Reducing Crime—Changes Lives. In that paper the Home Secretary set out the initial views of the Government to Patrick Carter's Report and sought the views of stakeholders on a number of issues.

The reform of correctional services and the creation of the National Offender Management Service is a significant undertaking. There is no suggestion that the entire reform will be carried out after a single consultation exercise of 12 weeks or otherwise. The questions for stakeholders posed in Reducing Crimes—Changing Lives represents a beginning of the consultation process. I have already undertaken to ensure that consultation is ongoing with staff and stakeholders over the period of up to five years we expect full roll out of the new service will take.

Antisocial Behaviour

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the new guidelines on anti-social behaviour issued to magistrates. [166675]

Ms Blears: The Magistrates Association Sentencing Guidelines, effective from 1 January 2004, dealt specifically with the offence of 'Breach of Anti-Social Behaviour Order' for the first time. The Guidance stated that the starting point should be a custodial sentence and offered a number of aggravating features, such as the recent date of the order breached, the continuation of the pattern of behaviour which the order sought to prohibit, and the use of violence and threats of intimidation.

As the guidelines were only introduced on 1 January, it is too early to assess the effectiveness of this work, and at this stage too early for anecdotal comment.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the Trailblazer nuisance neighbour projects in *(a)* Birmingham, *(b)* Manchester, *(c)* Sheffield and *(d)* Sunderland. [166680]

Ms Blears: The Government's National Action Plan, 'TOGETHER, Tackling Anti-Social Behaviour' launched last October announced that we will establish 'trailblazers' in Birmingham, Manchester, Sheffield and Sunderland to develop excellence in tackling nuisance families. This will ensure that in these areas nuisance neighbours are not left without an effective intervention and, where necessary, a sanction.

Each of the trailblazer areas have estimated a minimum, number of such households that will be targeted for action by March 2005, and each of them are well placed to meet and probably exceed those estimates. It is, however, early days, in terms of evaluating the success of this work. Surveys measuring the perception of antisocial behaviour by members of the public in those trailblazer areas are currently underway and will provide on-going comparisons with the national picture. Specific learning from the approaches being pursed by the nuisance neighbour trailblazers, and indeed from the national neighbour nuisance neighbour panel, will be disseminated via our TOGETHER Academy, TOGETHER ActionLine and TOGETHER website (training, telephone advice, and practical information for front line agencies on tackling antisocial behaviour.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he intends to take against those areas that have not taken up anti-social behaviour orders. [166685]

Ms Blears: Anti-social behaviour orders are not the only tool available to tackle anti-social behaviour. The Anti-Social Behaviour Act provides a wide range of tools to tackle antisocial behaviour. All areas should take swift action to deal with antisocial behaviour and other available interventions should also be considered such as injunctions, Acceptable Behaviour Contracts and other tenancy related interventions.

The TOGETHER campaign will ensure that agencies on the ground are using the measures that are already in place, and those new measures introduced by the Act as effectively as possible. The campaign will help improve the response to tackling antisocial behaviour by placing the focus within the heart of our communities and providing them with the heart of our communities and providing them with the opportunity to work together and the tools to take action to tackle antisocial behaviour. The TOGETHER Academy, ActionLine and website all provide advice and information to encourage and enable local practitioners to take action against antisocial behaviour.

Bank Automated Clearing System

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what progress his Department has made to manage the changeover from the Bank Automated Clearing System to the new BACSTEL-IP system for electronic payments. [164313]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Bank Automated Clearing System (BACS) is an automated payments service provided by BACS Ltd. This provides the standard route for electronic funds transmission used across the UK. BACSTEL-IP is the platform for the future of automated payments. It is based on internet protocols and uses the latest Public Key Infrastructure (PKI) technologies for heightened levels of security.

Home Office met with Bottomline Technologies, our supplier, and Sirius, our IT partner, in November 2003 to discuss the implementation of the new BACSTEL-IP system. The meeting concluded that as the last date for switching to BACSTEL-IP is December 2005, the partnership should firstly concentrate on the migration from BASS, the current Home Office accounting system, to the new system, Adelphi, using the existing BACSTEL system. A further meeting will take place between all parties in the autumn of 2004 to discuss the switch to the new BACSTEL-IP system planned for the early part of 2005.

Class A Drugs

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions a Merseyside senior police officer has issued a closure notice on premises they had reason to believe were being used for the production, supply or use of Class A drugs and causing serious nuisance or disturbance in the last four months. [165914]

Ms Blears: As of 14 April 2003 the new power to close premises as contained in section 1(11) of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 had been used once in the Merseyside Police Force area. As this power was enacted on the 20 January this year, more closures can be expected in the near future in line with operational needs.

The closure notice was issued by a senior police officer in the St. Helens and Wigan Basic Command Unit against a premises with a history of being subject to police action on suspicion of the supply of class A drugs and of great concern to the local community. The case is ongoing.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which former officials of the Department have asked for permission to join *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst and Young and *(d)* KPMG. [156910]

Fiona Mactaggart: The figures showing applications submitted to join the following companies, so far as information is available in the form requested, are as follows:

Company	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
PricewaterhouseCoopers	—	—	1	—
Deloitte & Touche	1	—	—	—
Ernst and Young	2	—	—	—
KPMG	—	—	—	—

— = no comprehensive figures available.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what secondments *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst & Young and *(d)* KPMG have made to his Department since 2001; for what (i) periods and (ii) tasks the secondments were made; whether secondments of staff from his Department have been made to those firms; and for what (A) periods and (B) tasks. [156924]

Fiona Mactaggart: Secondments are part of the Interchange initiative, which promotes the exchange of people and good practice between the Civil Service and other organisations—public, private and voluntary. Interchange provides opportunities for civil servants to learn new skills, widen their experience and develop ideas. It also brings in skills and experiences from other sectors.

Secondments of less than three months duration are not recorded. Since 2001, there have been secondments for periods of over three months to the organisations in question as follows:

PricewaterhouseCoopers: none.

Deloitte & Touche: one inward secondment for the period September 2003-March 2004. The secondee is managing delivery risks on the Identity Cards Programme.

Ernst & Young: There have been two inward secondments:

1. June 2003-June 2004: the secondee is working as senior analyst on criminal injuries compensation policy.

2. September 2003-September 2004: the secondee is working on public perceptions of policing policy.

KPMG: one outward secondment for the period November 2002-April 2004. The member of Home Office staff is working on occupational psychology in the field of recruitment.

Merseyside Police

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions Merseyside Police has arrested an individual for carrying an air weapon or imitation firearm in a public place without lawful authority or reasonable excuse since the inception of this power. [165922]

Ms Blears: Information on arrests collected centrally is based on persons arrested for "notifiable" offences by main offence group and police force area only. The information does not identify individual offences.

National Offender Management Service

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish a Gateway Zero Report in respect of the National Offender Management Service in accordance with Office of Government Commerce procedures. [161166]

Paul Goggins: The implementation of the National Offender Management Service is subject to the Gateway reporting process. In keeping with normal practice, it is not intended to publish the gateway Zero Report.

Police

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list those police forces in England and Wales who have spent money on radio advertising in each of the past five years for which figures are available; and if he will give the reasons for such expenditure in each case. [165421]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The Home Office has run central radio recruitment campaigns, but any money spent on advertising by individual forces is allocated by individual forces themselves, so the Home Office would not hold this information.

Mr. Cameron: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reason police forces including Thames Valley Police are investing in separate mobile data systems running on public access bearer networks to deliver data services alongside the airwave system. [166524]

Ms Blears: Airwave has the capacity to deliver voice and data services simultaneously. The voice network is now nearly complete and implementation of national mobile data applications such as access on the move to the Police National Computer is underway. A number forces are exploring alternative mobile data options to meet specific local requirements.

Prisons

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons are for the operating loss arising from Contract Services workshops in prisons. [164409]

Paul Goggins: It is not realistic for Contract Services workshop activities to break even. To cover all costs, including staffing would involve making charges that the market would be unlikely to bear.

Contract Services workshops employ some 4,000 prisoners. The difference between income received and the full cost of running contract services workshops represents the investment made in providing purposeful activity for large numbers of prisoners. Contract Services activities account for some 5,000,000 hours of purposeful activity a year.

Prisons (Alcohol Testing) Act

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many authorisations have been made under the Prisons (Alcohol Testing) Act 1997; and how many tests have been carried out. [163335]

Paul Goggins: Section 16B of the Prisons Act 1952, (which was inserted by the Prisons (Alcohol Testing) Act 1997) empowers a prison officer, in accordance with prison rules, to request a prisoner to provide a breath sample for the purpose of alcohol testing, in those prisons in which the Governor has authorised such action.

Amendments are to be made to prison rules shortly to provide appropriate disciplinary offences. No authorisations have yet been made under section 16B, and therefore no tests under this power have been carried out.

Public Bodies

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the *(a)* resource budget, *(b)* administration costs and *(c)* staff numbers were for 2003 of the (i) Community Development Foundation, (ii) Advisory Board on Restricted Patients, (iii) Poisons Board, (iv) Technical Advisory Board, (v) Insurance Cover Working Group, (vi) Ministerial Advisory Group on Retail Crime, (vii) Vehicle Crime Reduction Action Team and (viii) Review of the Law Relating to Bribery and Corruption. [164020]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Community Development Foundation (CDF) is an Executive Non-Departmental Public Body (NDPB) and, for the financial year 2003–04, had:

an estimated resource budget of £902,000;

estimated administrative costs of £755,000; and

average staff numbers of 46.7 full-time equivalents.

Advisory NDPBs do not have a resource budget. Their secretariat and administration costs are borne by the Department. Members of the Board are public appointees and are remunerated accordingly.

The Advisory Board for Restricted Patients has not met since 2001;

The Poisons Board has not met for the last 12 years; and

The Technical Advisory Board has no resource budget. The Home Office provides secretariat and administrative support. The Board consists of 13 members including a Chairman. All Board members are public appointees and work on a part-time basis. The Chairman's remuneration is £400 per day plus expenses and other members receive expenses only.

Ad hoc advisory groups and reviews are essentially Home Office working groups. They do not have a resource budget or permanent staff.

The Insurance Cover Working Group (ICWG) is a Home Office working-group, which meets three times a year. During the Financial Year 2003–04, the ICWG incurred an estimated administration cost of £1,206.

The Ministerial Advisory Group on Retail Crime is no longer operating and did not meet during the Financial Year 2003–04.

The Vehicle Crime Reduction Action Team (VCRAT) meets three times a year and, for the Financial Year 2003–04, incurred an estimated administration cost of £5,113.

The Review of the Law Relating to Bribery and Corruption has not met since June 2000.

Register of Interests

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the requirements are on officials in his

Department to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for his departmental officials. [164708]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirement for civil servants declaring any conflict of interest. The Home Office monitor declarations of interest annually, by written request. Replies are then kept in a register. All new senior staff are made aware on appointment of their duty to declare any conflicts of interest.

Sentencing (Magistrates Courts)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance he has given to magistrates courts about sentencing in respect of *(a)* antisocial behaviour and *(b)* youth street crime; and if he will make a statement. [165388]

Ms Blears: The Government recognise that breach of an Anti-Social Behaviour Order (ASBO) is a serious offence and should be treated as such by the court. We are aware that there have been some problems relating to inconsistent sentences for breach of ASBOs and this is something we are continuing to work on. In January 2004 the Magistrates Association for the first time produced sentencing guidelines for the offence of a breach of an ASBO which recognise the seriousness of the offence and direct the court to consider the impact of the offence on victims. The guideline is: "Is it so serious that only custody is appropriate?"

The Anti-Social Behaviour Unit will continue to work with the relevant Government Departments and with local practitioners, the Crown Prosecution Service and the courts to improve consistency in the courts' response to antisocial behaviour. Part of this is to ensure that in every case the courts have the right information available on which to base their decisions, including understanding the effect of anti-social behaviour on victims, witnesses and the wider community.

The Magistrates Association has issued sentencing guidelines to the magistrates courts, which cover the range of criminal offences dealt with by those courts. The Sentencing Guidelines Council, which was established by the Criminal Justice Act 2003, will in future set sentencing guidelines for the range of criminal offences, covering all criminal courts.

The Judicial Studies Board has issued training and guidance to magistrates, and at the start of the Street Crime Initiative, the then Lord Chancellor wrote to the Chairmen of all Panels, including the Youth Panels of magistrates' courts, detailing the changes in powers to remand youth defendants. The Lord Chief Justice has handed down a relevant judgment relating to street robbery in R *v.* Lobban & Sawyers and R *v.* Q [2002] 2 Cr App R (S) 274.

Sexual Assault Referral Centres

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the results of his Department's review of sexual assault referral centres will be published. [162983]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 23 March 2004]*: We are now expecting this research to be published in the summer.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Iraq

Mr. Chidgey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to offer guarantees to British companies working in the reconstruction of Iraq with regard to the safety of their *(a)* employees and *(b)* assets. [166608]

Mr. Timms: We do not offer guarantees to British companies regarding the safety of employees and company assets while working in Iraq. British companies considering sending staff to Iraq are advised to consult the current travel advice, published on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website, www.fco.gov.uk, which advises against all but the most essential travel to Iraq and that even the most essential travel to Iraq should be delayed, if possible. Companies with planned involvement in reconstruction projects are also advised to contact the Iraq Unit in UK Trade and Investment for further information.

We do not provide general advice and information on a range of issues to British companies wanting to assist in the reconstruction process in Iraq but it is for the companies themselves to assess the risks and take the necessary measures to ensure the safety of their employees and assets.

ACAS

Mr. Kenneth Clarke: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost to public funds is of the current national advertising campaign by the Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) to encourage greater use of its services; and what the total expenditure of ACAS on all publicity and advertising will be in financial year 2003–04. [166004]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The cost to public funds of the current advertising campaign by ACAS is £1,258,900. The total expenditure of ACAS on all publicity and advertising for the financial year 2003–04 was £1,981,000.

Bankruptcy

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the proportion of personal bankruptcies that involve owners of businesses. [165216]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The table as follows shows the number of bankruptcies broken down by self-employed and other individuals along with related percentages. This shows that over the period the number of bankruptcies involving owners of businesses has fallen, the increase in total bankruptcies being driven by bankruptcies of other individuals. The proportion of self-employed bankruptcies has fallen from 61 per cent. in 1995 to 36 per cent. in 2002.

Bankruptcies: Self-employed and other individuals from 1995 to 2002

	Self-employed	Other individuals	Total bankruptcies	Per cent. self employed	Per cent. other individuals
1995	13,282	8,651	21,933	61	39
1996	12,667	9,136	21,803	58	42
1997	11,269	8,623	19,892	57	43
1998	10,420	9,227	19,647	53	47
1999	10,723	10,888	21,611	50	50
2000	9,952	11,598	21,550	46	54
2001	9,839	13,638	23,477	42	58
2002	8,854	15,438	24,292	36	64

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many bankruptcies there were in Liverpool, Walton in each year between 1997 and 2003. [166970]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Bankruptcy figures are only available on the basis of the Official Receivers Office dealing with the cases, therefore it is not possible to separate bankruptcies pertaining to Liverpool, Walton. The following table gives annual figures for the number of individual bankruptcies dealt with by the Official Receivers Office in Liverpool, which covers the county courts of Birkenhead, Liverpool, St. Helens, Southport and the Wirral.

Bankruptcies registered at the Official Receivers Office in Liverpool 1997–2003

Official Receivers Office	Liverpool
1997	414
1998	416
1999	525
2000	563
2001	696
2002	747
2003	820

Business Start-ups

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many business start-ups there were in each ward in each county of North Wales in 2003, listed in descending order; [164855]

(2) if she will list the 100 wards with the *(a)* greatest and *(b)* lowest number of business start-ups in 2003. [164853]

Nigel Griffiths: Ward level data on business start-ups are not available.

Correspondence

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects to reply to the letter of 19 December 2003 from the hon. Member for Gordon on the operations of BAE Systems in South Africa. [166812]

Ms Hewitt: A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 20 April 2004.

Energy Production

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effects of clause 76(5) of the Energy Bill on the exercise by Scottish Ministers of their functions in relation to exploitation of areas outside the territorial sea for energy production. [165853]

Mr. Timms: The principal objective of Part 3 of the Energy Bill is both to facilitate development of the UK's considerable renewable energy resources—wind, wave and tidal—beyond territorial waters and to enable Government to regulate projects so development takes place in an appropriate manner. Clause 76(5) (now Clause 84(5)) recognises that new installations with associated safety zones and the strategy on decommissioning under the Bill could impact on devolved matters handled by Scottish Ministers such as fishing and environmental protection.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what functions Scottish Ministers have in relation to the consenting of offshore renewable energy generation plants *(a)* within and *(b)* outside the 12 nautical mile territorial seas around Scotland; and what effect the Energy Bill will have on these functions. [165854]

Mr. Timms: A Transfer of Functions Order made under the Scotland Act (SI 1999/1750) gave Scottish Ministers responsibility for considering applications under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 for offshore renewable energy generation plants in Scottish territorial waters. They also have powers to grant consents under the Coast Protection Act 1949 and licences under the Food and Environment Protection Act 1985, which are both required for offshore renewable energy installations.

The Government has agreed that Scottish Ministers should also have responsibility for granting section 36 consents for any installations planned for the Renewable Energy Zone off Scotland. Once the Energy Bill has been enacted, and section 36 powers are extended to the Renewable Energy Zone, the Government and the Scottish Executive intend to bring forward an Order under the Scotland Act 1998 to provide that this function be executively devolved to Scottish Ministers.

Clause 101 of the Energy Bill will give a power to Scottish Ministers to extinguish public rights of navigation where an applicant applies at the same time for a section 36 consent for a generating station which is planned for waters between the low water mark and the limit of the territorial sea around Scotland.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Manchester, Gorton have benefited from the national minimum wage. [167353]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimate specifically for the constituency of Manchester, Gorton. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

The DTI estimates that between 210,000 and 240,000 people in the North West stand to benefit from the October 2004 uprating of the national minimum wage.

New Businesses

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many new businesses have started up in Birkenhead since 1997; [166491]

(2) how many new businesses have been established in Birkenhead since 1997. [166493]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation (published 31 March 2004) includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 500 in Wirral Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Birkenhead), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 2,100 business start-ups in Wirral Local Authority in 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Wirral Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Birkenhead) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT Registration 1997–2002

	Wirral
1997	660
1998	595
1999	600
2000	600
2001	555
2002	510

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures
VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in Birkenhead since 1997. [166492]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for Greater Merseyside (GME) has provided assistance to 194 businesses in the Birkenhead constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 business Link operators (seven in the north west) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to these data.

The Business Link Operator has provided Business Start Advice to the 194 businesses, and in addition have provided assistance regarding Investors in People, Specialist Business Advice, Workforce development and the Consultancy projects to those companies needing help in these areas.

Eleven companies have received offers of grant from the Research and Development Grant scheme with a total value of £696,160 since 1997.

Under the Enterprise Grant Scheme which has now just come to a close (31 March 2004) 13 companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £334,170.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Wirral, South since 1997. [166628]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation (published 31 March 2004) includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 500 in Wirral Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Wirral, South), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 2,100 business start-ups in Wirral Local Authority in 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Wirral Local Authority (which contains the constituency of Wirral, South) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations 1997–2002	*Wirral*
1997	660
1998	595
1999	600
2000	600
2001	555
2002	510

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service.

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in Wirral, South since 1997. [166629]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for Greater Merseyside (GME) has provided assistance to 109 businesses in the Wirral, South constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the north west) to provide Business Support to small and

medium sized enterprises form April 2001. Before this date Government Support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to these data.

The Business Link Operator has provided Business Start Advice to the 109 businesses, and in addition have provided Specialist business advice, workforce development and consultancy projects to those companies needing help in these areas.

Fourteen companies have received offers of grant from the Research and Development Grant Scheme with a total value of £465,700 since 1997.

Under the Enterprise Grant Scheme which has just come to a close (31 March 2004) 11 companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £696,160.

Paid Leave

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Liverpool, Walton are qualified for paid leave entitlement. [166972]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Liverpool, Walton qualify for paid leave entitlements at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations.

Post Office

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how soon the outcome of and lessons learned from the process of the Post Office Urban Reinvention programme will be evaluated and published following the conclusion of that programme. [166820]

Mr. Timms: The urban reinvention programme is managed by Post Office Ltd. and decisions on any evaluation will be a matter for the company. The Government do, of course, monitor its expenditure on this programme and will require the company to confirm on completion that it has met its obligation to ensure that 95 per cent. of the urban population nationally continue to live within one mile of their nearest post office.

Since the programme began, Post Office Ltd. has worked with Postwatch, the consumer watchdog, to improve and refine the processes. This evolutionary nature of the programme has seen a number of significant developments, including my written statement to the House of Commons of 5 February 2004, which details changes to the programme in the light of concerns expressed in Parliament and elsewhere.

In addition, Postcomm, the independent regulator, reports annually to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on developments in the post office network. These annual reports are published on Postcomm's's website and copies are placed in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make the independent review of the facilities at the Crown post office in Bedford part of a wider review into the facilities of the post office network as a whole in Bedford and Kempston. [166821]

Mr. Timms: This is an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to my hon. Friend.

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the process leading to the decisions Post Office Ltd. has made concerning the closure of sub-post offices are covered by the Government Code of Practice on the release of official information. [167272]

Mr. Timms: No. The final decisions on post office closures following public consultation are operational matters for Post Office Ltd.

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) whether the rationale of the statement made by the Minister for Energy, E Commerce and Postal Services on 5 February concerning the Post Office Urban Reinvention Network was intended to apply as far as possible to the Area Plan proposals for the Bedford and Kempston parliamentary constituency which were subject to public consultation until 17 February; [167270]

(2) whether the statement made by the Minister for Energy, E Commerce and Postal Services on 5 February concerning the Post Office Urban Reinvention Network came into force with immediate effect. [167271]

Mr. Timms: The changes to the public consultation arrangements for closure proposals under Post Office Ltd.'s urban network reinvention programme announced in my statement of 5 February came into force with immediate effect but were not retrospective in their application. The changes therefore applied to the consultation on closure proposals for Bedford and Kempston to the extent compatible with the stage those consultations had reached as at 5 February.

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment has been made of the case for Post Office Ltd. developing a role for post offices as government general practitioners and of Government support for this as mentioned in the Performance and Innovation Unit Report of 2000, Chapter 8, page 16, conclusion 18; [166779]

(2) what assessment has been made of the case for Post Office Ltd. developing a role for the Post Office Network as internet and learning and access points as mentioned in the Performance and Innovation Unit Report of 2000, Chapter 8, page 16, conclusion 17. [166827]

Mr. Timms: In line with the Performance and Innovation Unit's recommendations, the Government contributed £25 million to the 'Your Guide' pilot to test the concept of the role for post offices as 'Government General Practitioner' and as internet learning and access points. It was made clear from the outset that the decision on whether or not to roll out a national service would depend on the results of the pilot. The 'Your Guide' pilot showed that a publicly funded national scheme would not represent value for money and we concluded that it should not be rolled out. However, Your Guide highlighted a number of areas in which Government Departments might deliver services through post offices in the future particularly if they could be linked with or channelled through a

commercially-based kiosk network. The evaluation report of the Your Guide pilot was published on 23 July 2002 and a copy placed in the Libraries of the House.

Call Centres

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations her Department has received as part of her review of the off-shoring of UK call centres. [166857]

Ms Hewitt: My Department has received a number of responses to our paper "Services and Offshoring: the impact of increasing international competition on services" which will be reflected in our Trade and Investment White Paper to be published in the summer. We have also commissioned a study to inform our understanding of the UK call centre sector and the key factors impacting on its competitiveness including offshoring. We expect to publish a report on the study in early May.

UK Trade and Investment

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* running costs of, *(b)* cost of staff salaries for and *(c)* number of people employed, broken down by grade, by UK Trade and Investment were in the last financial year for which figures are available. [165483]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 20 April 2004]*: The information is as follows:

(a) Total administration costs for 2002–03, including an apportionment of central overheads attributable to UK Trade & Investment (UKTI) activities by DTI and FCO, were as follows:

DTI: £45,464,000

FCO: £141,235,000

(b) The aggregate payroll costs of the DTI and FCO employees working for UKTI were as follows:

DTI: £21,402,000

FCO: £48,691,000

(c) UKTI is not an employing organisation. Staff working for UKTI remain the employees of either the DTI or the FCO. The average number of whole-time equivalent (WTE) persons working for UKTI during 2002–03, broken down by grade, was as follows:

	Number of whole-time equivalent persons
DTI	[1]620
Of which:	
Range	
2	18.6
3	8.0
4	148.2
5	8.5
6	174.5
7	13.4
8	119.8
9	35.8
10	55.6
11	20.9
SCS	17.0
FCO	1,638
Of which:	
UK-based total	353
Of which:	
SMS	64.7
D7/D6	61.8
C5	65.68
C4	105.97
B3	37.19
A2	15.04
A1	2.0
Locally engaged staff	1,285
Of which:	
LE1	348
LE2	154
LE3	712
LE4	61
LE5	10

[1] This figure varies from the figure published in the UK Trade & Investment Resource Accounts for 2002–03 as it does not include temporary/agency staff.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Afghanistan

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what new money his Department pledged to Afghanistan at the recent Donor Conference in Berlin. [166723]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK made a total pledge of £500 million over five years (2002–03 to 2006–07) at the international conference on Afghanistan in Berlin on 31 March–1 April 2004. That total includes funding for conflict prevention and counter-narcotics work to which the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) contributes, together with other Government departments, through the Global Conflict Prevention Pool and UK Counter-Narcotics strategy.

The Global Conflict Prevention Pool (funded jointly by FCO, DFID and MOD) has a three-year strategy totalling £52 million from 2003–04 to 2005–06. £11 million was disbursed in 2003–04, leaving £41 million to be spent in 2004–6.

The FCO component of the three-year UK Counter-Narcotics strategy (2003–04 to 2005–06) totals £47.2 million. £12.7 million of this was disbursed in 2003–04, leaving £34.5 million to be committed in 2004–06.

The British Embassy in Kabul also has an FCO budget of £250,000 for local project work in 2004–05.

British Citizens (Deaths Abroad)

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many deaths abroad of Britons *(a)* travelling and *(b)* living overseas, broken down by the numbers dying of (i) natural causes and (ii) the main categories of non-natural causes. [166526]

Mr. Mullin: In financial year 2002–03 3,998 Britons died overseas. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) only records the deaths of British nationals where our consular staff have been directly involved. We do not record statistics where our staff have been informed of a death and need take no further action.

The FCO does not maintain statistics recording either the nature of each death or the breakdown between the numbers of deaths of Britons travelling and living overseas.

Convention on Conventional Weapons

Mr. Frank Cook: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent steps his Department has taken to promote the Convention on prohibitions or restrictions on the use of certain conventional weapons which may be deemed to be excessively injurious or to have indiscriminate effects, with particular reference to the ratification of Protocol V. [165848]

Mr. MacShane: A legally binding Protocol V on Explosive Remnants of War was agreed at the meeting of States Panics to the Convention on Certain Conventional Weapons on 27/28 November 2003. The UK, along with EU partners, had long pushed for the adoption of a legally binding protocol and we are delighted that a consensus was reached. We received our certified true copy of the instrument from the United Nations in March 2004 and are currently looking at the necessary measures needed to implement the new Protocol. We hope to ratify in the near future. We would also encourage all states to ratify as soon as they are able and to keep to the spirit of the new Protocol in the interim period.

Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what meetings he plans to have with representatives of British peace organisations in advance of the next Preparatory Committee Meeting for the 2005 UN Review Conference on the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty. [166349]

Mr. MacShane: Officials have already met with members of a number of peace organisations prior to the forthcoming Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) Preparatory Committee which is due to take place in New York on 26 April to 7 May. The Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND), Christian CND, Abolition 20005 Network for Peace, and the World Court Project have all been represented on these occasions. The Government are committed to regular exchanges with representatives of non-governmental organisations as part of our on-going consultations during the NPT review cycle.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs who will represent the UK at the Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee in April/May in New York. [166418]

Mr. MacShane: The UK delegation will be headed by David Brouchen the United Kingdom's Permanent Representative to the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. He will be accompanied by officials from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Ministry of Defence and the Department of Trade and Industry.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will publish in advance statements to be presented by the British delegation at the Non-Proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee. [166419]

Mr. MacShane: The Government do not intend to publish in advance any statements to be presented by the UK delegation to the Non-proliferation Treaty Preparatory Committee. These are intended to reflect the latest developments including those at the conference itself. However, all statements will be placed in the Library of the House and on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website following the Preparatory Committee meeting.

Palestine

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he had with the US Administration before the UK cast its vote in the UN Special Security Council meeting called to discuss the assassination of Sheikh Yassin; and if he will make a statement. [166611]

Mr. Rammell: The UK engaged in negotiations with other United Nations Security Council members—including the US—to try to establish a resolution which would be acceptable to all. The UK made it clear that it would have voted for this resolution if its proposers had accepted an amendment condemning terrorist atrocities by Hamas against Israel. This would have reflected the position of the European Union. We regret that our proposed amendment was not accommodated.

US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he plans to lay before the House any amendments to the renewal of the 1958 Agreement for Co-operation on the Uses of Atomic Energy for Mutual Defence Purposes between Her Majesty's Government and the United States of America; and if he will make a statement. [166575]

Mr. MacShane: Subject to the outcome of our continuing discussions with the Government of the United States, we expect to lay before the House some amendments to the Mutual Defence Agreement, including provision for its renewal for a further 10 years. We would expect these amendments to be laid before the House later this year in accordance with normal procedures.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the scope of the discussions is between the United Kingdom and the United States Governments on the renewal of the 1958 Agreement for Co-operation on the Uses of Atomic Energy for Mutual Defence Purposes; and if he will make a statement. [166576]

Mr. MacShane: Discussions are continuing between the Governments of the United Kingdom and the

United States concerning the 1958 Agreement for Co-operation on the Uses of Atomic Energy for Mutual Defence Purposes. The Agreement requires renewal every 10 years and was last renewed in 1994. The present discussions concern the minor amendments and updating necessary to enable the Agreement to be renewed before it expires in December 2004.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will post a copy of the US-UK Agreement for Cooperation on the Uses of Atomic Energy for Mutual Defence Purposes (as amended in 1994) on his Department's website. [166577]

Mr. MacShane: When any amendments to the Mutual Defence Agreement are laid before Parliament, copies of the Command Paper and accompanying Explanatory Memorandum will be posted on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website in accordance with the practice established in 2002.

The FCO will also place a copy of the original Agreement and subsequent amendments on its website at that time.

HEALTH

Acrylamide

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the *(a)* prevalence of acrylamide in cooked and prepared food and *(b)* results of recent research commissioned by the Food Standards Agency. [165901]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Acrylamide has been found in a wide range of cooked and processed foods.

The Food Standards Agency has commissioned several research projects, including a survey of acrylamide levels in the United Kingdom diet. The dietary survey is due to be published this summer.

Health Services (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Birkenhead have access to free eye tests; [166215]

(2) how many residents in Birkenhead aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [166216]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens are not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the total number of national health service sight tests paid for patients aged 60 and over in Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority was 201,180. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 507,080. Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Birkenhead are receiving drug treatment. [166489]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Birkenhead is part of Wirral drug action team. There were 2,269 people receiving drug treatment in Wirral in 2000–01. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 have not been finalised and published.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses were employed in Birkenhead in each of the last seven years. [166217]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Birkenhead in each of the last seven years. [166218]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the tables.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority area by grade and by each specified organisation as at 30 September each specified year headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Q15 Cheshire & Merseyside SHA	4,922	5,122	5,324	5,562	5,959	6,317	6,702
of which							
Total specified organisations	1,201	1,215	1,246	1,256	1,281	1,406	1,439
5H2 Birkenhead and Wallasey PCT	—	—	—	—	—	76	59
Manager	—	—	—	—	—	1	3
Therapist	—	—	—	—	—	69	38
Scientist	—	—	—	—	—	3	
Technician	—	—	—	—	—	3	18
RBL Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	497	512	530	541	540	554	570
Manager	3	4	5	6	6	6	6
Therapist	241	241	246	254	240	260	268
Scientist	37	38	55	54	57	8	11
Scientific officer	81	78	73	73	71	133	142
Technician	131	148	148	151	163	145	141
Instructor/ teacher	4	3	3	3	3	2	2
RQ6 Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen	704	703	716	715	741	776	810
Manager	1	—	—	—	—	1	1
Therapist	231	245	256	261	267	277	286
Scientist	58	55	57	58	58	68	79
Scientific officer	205	191	190	181	192	195	195
Technician	202	200	202	205	210	221	235
Instructor/ teacher	6	6	5	4	4	6	6
Tutor	1	6	6	6	10	8	8

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list time for the residents of Birkenhead in the last seven years. [166219]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Out-patients waiting to be seen over 13 weeks for the Birkenhead area (Provider based)

	Quarter	Unit code	Unit name	Speciality	Patients waiting to be seen in number of weeks: Not seen 13 to 25	Not seen 26+
1995–96	4	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	873	704
1996–97	4	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	1,316	818
1997–98	4	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	1,202	558
1998–99	4	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	1,597	1,236
1999–2000	4	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	3,853	3,025
2000–01	4	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	1,586	2,419
2001–02	4	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	1,720	0

Patients waiting to be seen in number of weeks

	Quarter	Unit code	Name	Speciality	Not seen 13 to 17	Not seen 17 to 21	Not seen 21–26	Not seen 26+
2002–03	4	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	600	458	0	0
2003–04	3	RBL	Wirral Hospital NHS Trust	All specialties	370	0	0	0

Source:
Department of Health QM08.

Out-patients waiting to be seen over 13 weeks for the Birkenhead area (Resident based)

	Quarter	Unit code	Name	Speciality	Patients waiting to be seen in number of weeks: Not seen 13 to 25	Not seen 26+
1997–98	4	QDC	Wirral HA	All specialties	1,443	654
1998–99	4	QDC	Wirral HA	All specialties	1,781	1,351
1999–2000	4	QDC	Wirral HA	All specialties	4,130	3,261
2000–01	4	QDC	Wirral HA	All specialties	1,644	2,464
2001–02	4	QDC	Wirral HA	All specialties	1,684	1

Patients waiting to be seen in number of weeks

Collection ID	StHA code	Unit code	Name	Speciality	Not seen 13 to 17	Not seen 17 to 21	Not seen 21 to 26	Not seen 26+
2002–03	4	5F8	Bebington and West Wirral PCT	All specialties	204	137	0	0
2002–03	4	5H2	Birkenhead and Wallasey PCT	All specialties	375	292	0	0
2003–04	3	5F8	Bebington and West Wirral PCT	All specialties	117	2	0	0
2003–04	3	5H2	Birkenhead and Wallasey PCT	All specialties	269	3	0	0

Source:
Department of Health QM08R.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in Birkenhead saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [166220]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Waiting times for patients with suspected cancer referred urgently by their GP to first out-patient appointment: Wirral Hospitals NHS Trust

	Quarter	Percentage of patients seen in two weeks	Total patients seen	Patients seen in two weeks
2000–01	4	97.8	450	440
2001–02	1	97.7	474	463
2001–02	2	98.6	553	545
2001–02	3	99.5	611	608
2001–02	4	98.2	625	614
2002–03	1	93.6	706	661
2002–03	2	89.9	714	642
2002–03	3	80.2	696	558
2002–03	4	93.5	650	608

Waiting times for patients with suspected cancer referred urgently by their GP to first out-patient appointment: Wirral Hospitals NHS Trust

	Quarter	Percentage of patients seen in two weeks	Total patients seen	Patients seen in two weeks
2003–04	1	98.0	756	741
2003–04	2	98.3	835	821
2003–04	3	99.6	810	807

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Birkenhead. [166221]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In March 1997 there were 138 people waiting nine months and 40 people waiting over 12 months for heart surgery at the cardiothoracic centre—Liverpool National Health Service Trust. The latest available figures show that in February 2004, there were no people waiting nine months and over for surgery.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Birkenhead awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [166222]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not held centrally.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in Birkenhead. [166224]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are no rapid access chest pain clinics in Birkenhead. Rapid access chest pain clinics are held at Arrowe Park Hospital, Wirral.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a diagnostic and treatment centre located in Birkenhead. [166225]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no treatment centre in Birkenhead. There is a treatment centre on the Clatterbridge Hospital site, which is managed by the Wirral Hospital National Health Service Trust.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Birkenhead in each of the last five years. [166569]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Birkenhead in each of the last seven years. [166571]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Birkenhead, has increased from £596.24 in 1997–98 to £1,103.34 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Mobile Phones

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has evaluated on the impact of electro-magnetic fields on the dielectric properties of cells, in relation to mobile phones. [166837]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government established the independent expert group on mobile phones (IEGMP) under the chairmanship of Sir William Stewart and the IEGMP report on mobile phones and health was published in May 2000. That report considered both thermal and non-thermal mechanisms of interaction of electromagnetic fields from mobile phones and evaluated a wide range of biological effects including cellular effects.

A further review of health effects was carried out by an independent advisory group on non-ionising radiation (AGNIR), entitled "Health Effects from Radiofrequency (RF) Electromagnetic Fields", this is available at www.nrpb.org. This report was issued in January 2004 and provided an updated review of the biological effects including cellular effects and interaction mechanisms, noting that

> "Although there has been a wide range of diverse exposures and models investigated, no consistent pattern has emerged from the cellular studies of RF exposure. The balance of the findings on carcinogenesis is that there is little evidence and no known mechanism to support a direct or indirect effect of RF radiation on this process. Positive findings are not confirmed by other independent studies; apparently similar experiments fail to confirm each other and may even show contradictory results."

The AGNIR will continue to review the scientific literature both national and international that is relevant to the issue of mobile telephony and health.

Further research is being undertaken by the mobile telecommunications and health research (MTHR) programme with funding of £7.4 million. This was set up to investigate areas of scientific uncertainty highlighted by the IEGMP report and areas identified as important by the MTHR programme management committee. A range of research projects have been funded by MTHR including studies on cells, brain physiology and the fundamental dielectric properties of biological tissues. A number of these projects are scheduled for completion over the next year.

Accidents (Children)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many non-fatal accidents were recorded to have happened to children in England in each of the last five years. [165581]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available in the form requested. Estimates of the number of accidents are available from the health survey for England and are shown in the table. For children, aged two to 15, the annual accident rate per 100 persons for major and minor accidents from data for the three survey years 1995–97, aggregated together, and the two survey years 2001–02, aggregated together are shown. In the health survey, 'major accidents' include all those where a doctor was consulted or a hospital was visited, and 'minor accidents' include all accidents that caused pain or discomfort for over 24 hours.

Annual accident rate per 100 persons, 1995–97 and 2001–02, by age and sex

	Annual accident rate per 100 children	
	Males 2 to 15-years-old	*Females 2 to 15-years-old*
1995–97		
Major accidents	31	22
Standard error	1.1	0.9
Minor accidents	216	144
Standard error	11.6	8.9
2001–02		
Major accidents	26	19
Standard error	1.0	0.8
Minor accidents	226	174
Standard error	13.0	10.7
Bases		
1995–97	7,365	7,365
2001–02	5,372	5,283

Alcohol Treatment Services

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the alcohol treatment services in the North West offered by each NHS trust; and what the budget was for each of these services in each of the last three financial years. [165504]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The information requested is not collected centrally.

Alzheimer's Disease

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will estimate the number of patients with moderately-severe and severe Alzheimer's disease living *(a)* at home and *(b)* in institutional care; and if he will make a statement; [166203]

(2) how many patients are suffering from moderately-severe and severe Alzheimer's disease; and if he will make a statement. [166204]

Dr. Ladyman: Although the Department does not routinely collect this information, we estimate that of the 700,000 or so people with dementia in England and Wales, around 400,000 have Alzheimer's disease. Of these, we estimate around 200,000 have moderately severe or severe Alzheimer's disease.

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) if he will list for each *(a)* primary care trust and *(b)* strategic health authority area the total amount spent on drugs for severe Alzheimer's disease in the last year for which figures are available; [166562]

(2) what assessment he has made of the availability of drugs for advanced Alzheimer's disease throughout the UK; and if he will make a statement; [166563]

(3) what guidelines he has sent to primary care trusts regarding the availability of drug treatments for severe Alzheimer's disease patients; and if he will make a statement; [166564]

(4) what discussions he has held with *(a)* patient groups, *(b)* charities, *(c)* old age psychiatrists and *(d)* the drug industry concerning the availability of drug treatment for severe Alzheimer's disease patients; [166565]

(5) if he will make a statement on the funding for drug treatments for severe Alzheimer's disease in advance of a National Institute for Clinical Excellence appraisal; [166566]

(6) if he will list the licensed treatments currently available for moderately-severe to severe Alzheimer's disease patients. [166567]

Dr. Ladyman: The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), on behalf of the Licensing Authority, grants marketing authorisations for medicinal products provided that satisfactory quality, safety and efficacy data have been submitted for the medicinal product for use in the proposed indication and that the risk benefit is deemed favourable. According to the MHRA records, there is one licensed product, Ebixa (memantine hydrochloride), which is indicated for the treatment of moderately-severe to severe Alzheimer's disease.

Information on Ebixa dispensed at primary care trust and strategic health authority (SHA) level is not publicly available due to the small numbers involved. However, it is known that Ebixa was dispensed in the community in all 28 SHAs in England in 2002–03.

No formal discussions have taken place between Ministers and stakeholders concerning the availability of drug treatment for severe Alzheimer's disease patients.

The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is, however, appraising Ebixa as part of the eighth wave of its work programme. The anticipated publication date of its guidance is May 2005.

The Department has asked National Health Service bodies (in HSC 1999/176) to continue with local arrangements for the managed introduction of new technologies, including drugs such as Ebixa, where guidance from NICE is not published at the time the technology first became available. These arrangements should involve an assessment of all the available evidence.

When considering the funding of any treatment currently being appraised by NICE, or where no appraisal has been commissioned, funding authorities are expected to use their existing prescribing arrangements and consider the evidence available to them on the clinical effectiveness of the treatment.

Bank Nurses

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has issued to NHS trusts with regard to checking the credentials of bank nurses; and how the system is monitored. [164821]

Mr. Hutton: The Department issued a code of practice for the supply of temporary staff in July 2002. A copy is available on the Department's website. All temporary staff employed in the national health service, whether employed through NHS Professionals, private recruitment agencies or from local banks, are subject to the same checks as anyone applying for a substantive post. This includes criminal records checks, qualification checks, taking up references and checks on Nursing and Midwifery Council registrations.

Blood Donation

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what work is being undertaken by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence into the most efficient use of blood donations in the NHS. [163565]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Erythropoietin for the treatment of chemotherapy induced anaemia, as an alternative to blood transfusion, was referred to the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) as part of the ninth wave work programme in October 2003. Full details of the technology appraisal can be

found on NICE's website at www.nice.org.uk. No other topics on alternatives to blood transfusion are planned for referral to NICE at this time.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health upon what evidence his Department based its position that there is less risk of variant CJD infection via blood transfusions of pooled plasma than via blood transfusions from one blood donor. [163472]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A paper by Llewelyn CA. et al (2004); *Lancet*; Vol. 363, pp 417–421 reported that the risks from products prepared from large pools of plasma to a recipient are probably less than from blood transfusion. The paper has been placed in the Library. The lower individual risk is also indicated by the risk assessment carried out by Det Norske Veritas.

Cervical Cancer

Mr. Streeter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects the introduction of the new liquid-based cytology method of cervical cancer screening to have been completed in each of the strategic health authority regions, broken down by expected introduction date. [165912]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* We expect full implementation of liquid based cytology (LBC) to take up to five years, due to the retraining of all laboratory staff who read cervical screening tests and all sample takers in primary care. We provided £1.2 million in 2003–04 and are providing a further £6 million in 2004–05 to kick-start this process. The intention is that cytology training schools should be converted first in order to be in a position to train the rest of the programme. Strategic health authorities have been issued with advice on how best they can roll out LBC for their local populations, laboratories and primary care, and are developing plans accordingly. A national timetable of conversion over the next five years will become apparent as these plans progress.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease in *(a)* Morecambe and Lunesdale constituency and *(b)* Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust area; [165407]

(2) when the National Institute for Clinical Excellence Guidelines on the diagnosis and treatment of chronic obstructive pulmonary disease will be implemented by the Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust; [165416]

(3) whether pulmonary rehabilitation is offered by the Morecambe Bay Primary Care Trust to patients who consider themselves functionally disabled by chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. [165417]

Miss Melanie Johnson: These data are not collected on a constituency basis. However, the Department commissioned the Wessex Institute for Health Research and Development to produce a report on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD). The report estimated that, in a typical health authority of 500,000 people, around 3,000 in the 45 plus age group would have COPD.

As part of our commitment to improve services for patients with COPD, we commissioned the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to prepare clinical guidelines for the national health service in England and Wales for the prevention, diagnosis, management and treatment of COPD.

Now that the guidelines have been published, primary care trusts, in partnership with local stakeholders, will decide what local service improvements need to be made. They have the responsibility for deciding what services to provide for their populations, including those with COPD and other respiratory diseases. They are best placed to understand local health needs and commission services to meet them.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166393]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is available in the annual publication, Civil Service Statistics, which is published by the Cabinet Office. Copies of Civil Service Statistics 2002, which was published on 24 July 2003, is available in the Library and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. Civil Service Statistics 2003 will be published by the Cabinet Office in due course.

Committee on Safety of Medicines

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to his answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 913W, on the Committee on Safety of Medicines, what information was assessed by the Medicines and Healthcare Products Regulatory Agency in 2002; [165299]

(2) pursuant to his answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 913W, on the Committee on Safety of Medicines, what changes were made to the product information on risperidone in 2002. [165300]

Dr. Ladyman: The information assessed by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency in 2002 relating to cerebrovascular events associated with risperidone comprised: a review of serious cerebrovascular events in four randomised placebo controlled trials in dementia; two open-label extension trials in dementia and non-dementia studies; an analysis of non-serious cerebrovascular events (for example, very transient or mild transient ischaemic attack symptoms) in dementia studies; a review of relevant spontaneously reported suspected adverse drug reaction from the marketing authorisation holder's pharmacovigilance database. A review of the scientific literature was performed but did not locate any relevant articles or case reports.

The following warnings were added to the summary of product characteristics for risperidone:

"Cerebrovascular accidents have been observed during treatment with risperidone".

"Risperidal should be used with caution in patients with known cardiovascular disease including those associated with prolongation of the QT interval and the dose should be gradually titrated".

Consequential changes to the side-effects section of the patient information leaflet were made to clearly describe various symptoms of stroke, with an instruction to seek medical attention should these occur.

Consultant Contracts

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of NHS consultants had signed the new consultants' contract at 1 April. [166074]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 20 April 2004]:* Data is not available centrally on the take up of the consultant contract as at 1 April. Information on take up during April as a whole should be available by early May.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many of those NHS consultants who have not signed the new contract have reduced their commitment to NHS sessions below that indicated in their workload review; [166075]

(2) how many of those NHS consultants who have signed the new contract are contracted to provide fewer sessions than their workload review indicated they were formerly undertaking in the NHS. [166076]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answers 20 April 2004]:* Information on the content of individual consultant job plans is not held centrally.

Contraception

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many girls in England of school age were prescribed *(a)* contraceptive pills, *(b)* a contraceptive injection and *(c)* a contraceptive implant in each of the last seven years. [165492]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Contraceptives may be prescribed by general practitioners or by family planning clinics. Information regarding GP prescriptions broken down according to age is not available. The number of girls aged under 16 whose primary method of contraception was the pill, injection or implant obtained from family planning clinics in the period 1996–97 to 2002–03 is shown in the table.

First contacts with women aged under 16 at NHS family planning clinics by primary method of contraception, England, 1996–97 to 2002–03

	Pill	*Injection*	*Implant*
1996–97	23,000	1,000	100
1997–98	22,700	1,200	0
1998–99	21,800	1,300	0
1999–2000	22,700	1,500	0
2000–01	23,900	2,000	100
2001–02	24,100	2,300	100
2002–03	24,500	2,500	200

Source:
Department of Health Statistics Division; return KT31. Numbers rounded to the nearest hundred.

Dentistry

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of adults in the Cumbria and Lancashire Health Authority were registered with an NHS dentist in each of the last seven years. [165511]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows registration numbers and registration rates for Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority (SHA) for September in each year from 1997. These are for the general dental service (GDS).

Adult dental registrations in the general dental service (GDS) and registration rate in Cumbria and Lancashire SHA area[1]

September each year	*Adult registrations (thousands)*	*Adult registration rate (percentage of population)*
1997[2]	760.4	52.0
1998	675.0	46.1
1999	684.4	46.8
2000	688.5	47.0
2001	674.6	45.9
2002	669.9	45.3
2003	662.3	45.2

[1] Cumbria and Lancashire SHA area comprised five HAs before October 1992: South Lancashire, Morecambe Bay, East Lancashire, North West Lancashire and North Cumbria
[2] 1997 figures are not comparable with figures for later years. The registration period was reduced for new registrations to 15 months from September 1996 which affected registration numbers between September 1997 and September 1998.
Note:
Registration numbers cover people who have attended a general dental service dentist within the past 15 months. The figures exclude patients receiving GDS treatment on an occasional basis as well as occasional attenders, who have not attended within the past 15 months. The registrations figures exclude some national health service services as well as private dental services which many people may choose to have.
Source:
Dental Practice Board

Diabetes Centre

Ms. Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding is made available to the Diabetes Centre at the University Hospital of North Staffordshire; and what changes are planned to this allocation in coming years. [166719]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not held centrally.

Doctors

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many doctors there were per head of population in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [166652]

Mr. Hutton: The standard ratio used by the Department is per 100,000 population.

The data requested has been placed in the Library.

Drinking Water Standards

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to require bottled water to meet drinking water standards applicable to tap water. [165686]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Spring water and bottled drinking water already have to comply with the standards for tap water. Natural mineral water, which must come from a natural source and cannot be treated, may contain higher levels of minerals than those permitted in tap water. However, limits are in place for potentially toxic substances and microbiological parameters. The limits for natural mineral water, as with drinking water, spring water and bottled drinking water, are set on health grounds.

Health Services (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Wirral, South in each of the last five years. [166617]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Wirral, South. [166619]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In March 1997 there were 138 people waiting nine months and 40 people waiting over 12 months for heart surgery at the cardiothoracic centre, Liverpool National Health Service Trust. The latest available figures show that in February 2004 there were no people waiting nine months and over for surgery.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many residents in Wirral, South aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests; [166620]

(2) how many citizens in Wirral, South had access to free eye tests in 2003–04. [166621]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens are not collected centrally.

In 2002–03, the total number of national health service sight tests paid for patients aged 60 and over in Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority (SHA) was 201,180. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 507,080. The total number of NHS sight tests paid for by Cheshire and Merseyside SHA in the year 2002–03 was 453,250.

Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

Heart Choice Pilots

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which *(a)* NHS and *(b)* independent sector providers have treated patients under the Heart Choice pilots. [166649]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the lists.

NHS Providers
Papworth Hospital NHS Trust
St Mary's NHS Trust
Hammersmith Hospitals NHS Trust
Royal Brompton and Harefield NHS Trust
University College London Hospitals NHS Trust
Barts and the London NHS Trust
Guy's & St Thomas1 Hospital NHS Trust
King's College Hospital NHS Trust
St George's Healthcare NHS Trust
The Newcastle Upon Tyne Hospitals NHS Trust
South Tees Hospitals NHS Trust
Hull and East Yorkshire Hospitals NHS Trust
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
Blackpool, Fylde and Wyre Hospitals NHS Trust
South Manchester University Hospitals NHS Trust
Central Manchester & Manchester Children's University Hospitals
NHS Trust
Cardiothoracic Centre Liverpool NHS Trust
The Oxford Radcliffe Hospital NHS Trust
Southampton University Hospitals NHS Trust
Brighton and Sussex University Hospitals NHS Trust
United Bristol Healthcare NHS Trust
Plymouth Hospitals NHS Trust
Sheffield Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust
Nottingham City Hospital NHS Trust
University Hospitals of Leicester NHS Trust
North Staffordshire Hospital NHS Trust
Royal Wolverhampton Hospitals NHS Trust
University Hospital Birmingham NHS Trust
University Hospital of Coventry and Warwickshire NHS Trust

Independent Sector Providers
BMI Park, Nottingham
BMI Priory, Birmingham
BMI, London Independent
BMI Thornbury, Sheffield
BUPA Bristol
BUPA Cambridge
BUPA Chalybeate, Southampton
BUPA Leeds
BUPA Leicester
BUPA Washington
Cromwell Hospital, London
HCA, (Harley St Clinic, London Bridge Hospital/ Wellington Hospital)
HCI, Glasgow
King Edward VII Hospital, Midhurst, Sussex
Nuffield Leicester
Yorkshire Clinic

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of patients who have participated in the Heart Choice pilot have chosen an alternative provider; and what proportion of patients have been treated in the independent sector. [166650]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Of those clinically eligible, the proportion of patients who have participated in the heart choice pilot that have chosen an alternative provider is 50 per cent. We do not hold figures on the breakdown of heart choice between the national health service and independent sector.

This data is based on voluntary returns from NHS trusts during the pilot phase.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS patients have participated in the Heart Choice pilots. [166651]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The total number of patients that were eligible to participate in the heart choice pilots was 9,090. Of these 6,328 were deemed to be clinically eligible. The number of patients who made a choice was 6,010 and of these, 3,034 opted for treatment elsewhere.

This data is based on voluntary returns from national health service trusts during the pilot phase.

Magnetic Resonance Imaging Scanners

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department has taken towards ensuring that there is a magnetic resonance imaging scanner on site at every major hospital trust in England. [165346]

Miss Melanie Johnson: After decades of underinvestment, there has been an unprecedented level of central capital funding provided to purchase magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners since 2000, first through the New Opportunities Fund (NOF) and now through central Department of Health capital. These programmes are providing over 160 new MRI scanners from 2000 to 2006, resulting in a 150 per cent. increase in the number of MRI scanners available to the national health service since 1997.

Once the central programmes have been completed in 2006, all large acute and/or teaching NHS hospital trusts will have MRI on at least one hospital site.

The allocation of new MRI scanners has been agreed in conjunction with strategic health authorities. Allocations have been made to ensure equitable access to MRI services across the country.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the Government have spent in each of the last five years on *(a)* procurement of new magnetic resonance imaging scanners and *(b)* training staff to operate them; and what the projected expenditure is in each of the next five years. [165348]

Miss Melanie Johnson: From 1999 to 2004, approximately £38.5 million was spent in providing 57 magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) scanners via the New Opportunities Fund.

In 2003–04, approximately £33.5 million of Department of Health cancer capital was spent in providing new and replacement MRI scanners.

It is estimated that departmental cancer capital spending on MRI in 2004–05 will be approximately £46 million and in 2004–05 will be approximately £30 million.

The projected expenditure on MRI beyond 2005–06 is not known at this stage, although, on 8 April 2004, the Department launched a procurement from the private sector to provide an extra 80,000 mobile MRI scans per year for the national health service for five years.

Initial applications training for the use of new MRI equipment is included in the capital cost of that equipment and has therefore been provided to all NHS trusts in the central procurement programmes. Further training requirements will vary from centre to centre and are the responsibility of local NHS institutions.

Mersey Regional Ambulance Service

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the level and quality of service provided by the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service on the weekend of 26 and 27 March. [165342]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The Department does not collect information from ambulance trusts on a daily basis. Information is collected annually on volume of service and performance against required standards-details of the returns are in the statistical bulletin Ambulance Service, England: 2002–03.

A copy is available in the Library and also on the Department's website at www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sb0313.htm.

NHS Dentistry

Mr. Challen: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what has been the total spending on NHS dentistry in Morley and Rothwell in each year since 1997. [165169]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Gross fees paid to general dental service dentists in Leeds Health Authority area

£ million

	Gross fees
1997–98	20.7
1998–99	22.2
1999–2000	22.7
2000–01	23.0
2001–02	24.3
2002–03[1]	12.2

[1] First half of year only

Source:
Department of Health.

NHS Staff (Oxfordshire)

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* age, *(b)* gender, *(c)* ethnic background and *(d)* length of employment within the NHS breakdowns are of NHS staff working in the (i) Oxfordshire community hospitals of Townlands, Wallingford, Abingdon, Wantage, Wattington and Didcot and (ii) Oxford Radcliffe and Royal Berkshire hospitals. [166761]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not held centrally at individual hospital level. The information requested for age, gender and ethnic background is available at trust level. Information for the trusts responsible for the above hospitals has been placed in the Library.

The length of employment within the National Health Service for the above hospitals is not collected centrally.

Nursing

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's projected spending plans on the

Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health *(a)* were for 2003 and *(b)* are for (i) 2004, (i) 2005 and (iii) 2006. [166352]

Ms Rosie Winterton: In 2003–04, the budget for the Commission for Patient and Public Involvement in Health (CPPIH) was £34.9 million. This included £5.2 million for the national independent complaints advocacy service (ICAS) and around £8 million to support Community Health Councils until 1 December 2003. The budget for the CPPIH in 2004–05 and 2005–06 is £33.3 million and an additional £6.8 million is being made available for ICAS.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what targets have been set on introducing modern matrons; what the *(a)* baselines and *(b)* deadlines for these targets are; and what progress has been made against the targets. [166407]

Mr. Hutton: The introduction of modern matrons was signalled in the NHS Plan in 2000. In April 2001, my right hon. Friend the Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) said there would be 500 modern matrons by April 2002 and up to 2,000 by 2004.

A detailed progress report was published in April 2002, including results of a survey that showed that there were nearly 1,900 posts across England.

The most recent data show that there are now nearly 3,000 modern matrons across England.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on arrangements for the assessment of an individual for funded nursing home placement; under what circumstances a process is caused to be commenced; and how a relative can ensure that an assessment is performed. [164922]

Dr. Ladyman: Individuals should receive an assessment to determine their needs and then a care plan as to how those needs will be met. Where their needs will be best met in a care home providing nursing care, the national health service will determine whether their needs are such that the NHS will fund all their care, or whether the NHS will fund only the care provided by a registered nurse.

The Community Care (Delayed Discharges, etc.) Act 2003, requires the NHS and social services in England to assess patients who need further care from the NHS or social services before they are discharged from hospital. For others, the NHS and social services should provide an assessment when it appears necessary or when requested. Relatives and carers may request assessment or re-assessment of an older person's needs, and in doing so may specify the type of assessment they feel is most appropriate.

Personal Care Plans

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the cost of providing every patient with a long-term condition with a personal care plan. [164860]

Dr. Ladyman: We do not have information on how much it would cost to provide everyone with a long-term condition with a personal care plan.

Care plans are an important part of responding to the individual needs of patients with chronic conditions and managing their care to keep them healthier for longer. For example the first standard of the national service framework on renal disease states that:

> "all children, young people and adults with chronic kidney disease are to have access to information that enables them to make informed decisions and encourages partnership in decision-making, with an agreed care plan that supports them in managing their condition to achieve the best possible quality of life."

Prostate Cancer

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research he has evaluated on the effects of frequent ejaculation in protecting men from prostate cancer; and what advice his Department provides on this. [166852]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department's prostate cancer risk management programme was announced by my right hon. Friend, the Member for Darlington (Mr. Milburn) as part of the National Health Service prostate cancer programme in September 2000. However, no specific research has been carried out or evaluated on whether frequent ejaculation protects men from prostate cancer. A prostate cancer information sheet is available through the National Institute for Clinical Excellence website at www.nice.org.uk/.

Respiratory Conditions

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of school aged children in England suffer from respiratory conditions. [165540]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally. The latest hospital episode statistics which relate to diseases of the respiratory system in the age group five to 16 years of age are shown in the table. Admissions may relate to more than one episode for the same child.

Count of finished admissions episodes: age group 5 to 16 years. Primary diagnosis—Diseases of the respiratory system in NHS hospitals in England 2002–03

	Finished admissions
2002–03	65,939

Notes:

Ungrossed Data—figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).

Diagnosis (Primary Diagnosis)—the primary diagnosis is the first of up to 14 (7 prior to 2002–03) diagnosis fields in the Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) data set and provides the main reason why the patient was in hospital.

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Security Incidents (NHS)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many security incidents he estimates there were in the NHS in England in each year since 1997. [163504]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on security incidents is available for the period 1999 to 2002. This is shown in the table.

	Number
2001–02	166,667
2000–01	112,095
1999–2000	106,935

No statistics are available for the period 1997 to 1999 and 2002 to present.

Policy on the management of security in the national health service passed to the NHS Counter Fraud and Security Management Service on 1 April 2003.

Trust Finances

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* primary care trusts and *(b)* NHS trusts recorded a deficit at the end of the financial year 2003–04. [166659]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 20 April 2004]:* The audited information in respect of the 2003–04 financial position of all primary care trusts and national health service trusts will be published in their individual annual accounts and will be available centrally in autumn 2004.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Location Monitoring

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 15 March, *Official Report*, column 129W, on electronic tagging, if he will have a pilot scheme on location monitoring satellite tracking technology in Northern Ireland. [164947]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Pursuant to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for the Home Department (Mr Goggins), there is no legislation to permit electronic monitoring in Northern Ireland.

Alcohol Consumption

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what restrictions apply to the consumption of alcohol on local *(a)* trains and *(b)* buses. [166703]

Mr. Spellar: The Public Service Vehicles Regulations (NI) 1985 prohibit the consumption of alcohol on buses but not on trains. Railway Byelaws allow the consumption of alcohol to be banned on certain pre-advertised train journeys.

Animal Welfare

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to deliver a high standard of animal welfare within agriculture in Northern Ireland. [166829]

Mr. Pearson: A wide range of legislation has already been introduced in Northern Ireland to protect all species of animals, including farm animals, from cruelty and neglect, to provide them with adequate housing and transport conditions. In addition, DARD officials are currently actively engaged in replacing the existing range of advisory Welfare Codes for all the major species of farm animals with revised versions incorporating fresh developments in technology and our understanding of animal behaviours.

The main general welfare provisions are laid down in the Welfare of Farmed Animals Regulations (NI) 2000 which consolidates and replaces previous legislation, implements four EU Council Directives and reflects the European Convention on the Protection of Animals kept for Farming Purposes. The regulations lay down a general principle that the owners and keepers of animals kept for farming purposes must take reasonable steps to ensure the welfare on animals in their care and prevent them experiencing any unnecessary pain, suffering or injury. The requirements of the legislation are comprehensive, and DARD veterinary staff and meat hygiene officials actively enforce all of their provisions.

Asbestos

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his Department's policy is regarding the disposal of asbestos at district council amenity sites in *(a)* North Down and *(b)* Northern Ireland. [164538]

Angela Smith: Waste asbestos arising from households or commercial/industrial premises is classified as special waste under the Special Waste Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1998. Any facility, located in Northern Ireland, receiving such waste must be licensed to accept it under the Waste Management Licensing Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003.

Ballybeen Estate

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding contingency is held with respect to the current exclusion of the Ballybeen Estate in Dundonald from the Belfast Regeneration Offices Business Plan, should it become part of the East Belfast constituency as a result of the Boundary Commission Report. [166746]

Mr. Spellar: The level of funding available to an area is not determined by the parliamentary constituency within which it is situated and the outcome of the Boundary Commission Review will have no impact on the level of funds available to Ballybeen Estate in Dundonald. However, if following the Boundary Commission's report Ballybeen is included in a new East Belfast constituency the Department for Social Development will review internal administrative boundaries and the regeneration of the area may fall to the Belfast Regeneration Office. This would be a purely administrative change that will have no impact on how Government funding is allocated.

Benefit Entitlements

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the benefit entitlement available to those living in Northern Ireland on an ancestral visa. [165365]

Mr. Spellar: Immigration rules require that people who wish to travel to the United Kingdom through UK ancestry must intend to take or seek employment. They

should therefore be able to support and accommodate themselves without claiming certain state benefits. These include:

Income Support
Jobseeker's Allowance
Housing Benefit
Tax Credits
Social Fund Payments
Child Benefit
Any disability allowance

Boundary Reviews

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the timetable is for the forthcoming review of parliamentary boundaries and local government boundaries in Northern Ireland. [164432]

Mr. Spellar: The Parliamentary Boundary Commission for Northern Ireland intend to publish Provisional Recommendations in the spring of this year. Because the Review of Public Administration is continuing, the Secretary of State is not yet in a position to appoint a Local Government Boundaries Commissioner to undertake a review of local boundaries in Northern Ireland.

Brucellosis

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action is being taken to limit potential brucellosis outbreaks in cattle in Northern Ireland. [164921]

Mr. Pearson: My Department has in place a Brucellosis control programme which aims to bring about a substantial reduction in disease levels and the eventual eradication of brucellosis from Northern Ireland. The control measures are based on a programme of testing, the slaughter of infected animals, the restriction of movements of animals to and from infected herds and surrounding herds, and the tracing of contact animals.

The implementation of the Brucellosis Policy Review recommendations, which I announced last June, will ensure further progress towards eradication of the disease. The process of extending annual Brucellosis testing throughout Northern Ireland got under way in November. The public consultation exercise on the subordinate legislation needed to implement further revised measures was launched on 30 January 2004 and I hope to have the necessary subordinate legislation in place by mid 2004. Work is also under way on the feasibility of further measures that we hope to implement.

We are already seeing some effect from the control measures that have been implemented. During the year we have seen a reduction in the number of new herds restricted because of brucellosis. The number of new herds restricted during 2003 was 261. The comparable figure for 2002 was 361.

College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 868W on Peace II Programme, under what measure number the money was awarded to the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE); who authorised the approval to distribute the money to CAFRE; under whose name money was awarded to CAFRE; and what items of expenditure in addition to normal running costs of CAFRE the money funded. [166831]

Mr. Pearson: The money in respect of this project was awarded under Priority 1, Measure 6 (Training for Farmers) of the PEACE II Programme.

Training through technology development and transfer is an on-going programme delivered through the College of Agriculture Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE) which has been operational since January 2000. During 2003 when the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development (DARD) was assessing how the PEACE II N+2 targets could be met, this programme was considered under the "Innovative Actions" strand of activities seeking to ensure expenditure targets could be achieved. Such innovative actions were approved by the PEACE II Monitoring Committee.

The technology development and transfer programme was considered consistent with the terms of the PEACE II Programme and an application was submitted by CAFRE to Measure 1.6 for the project titled, Developing Agriculture through Technology Adoption (DATA). The application was considered in the normal manner by a three person Selection Panel against the Peace and Reconciliation and Measure Specific criteria and judged successful. The Selection Panel included a person independent of DARD. The success of this application enabled DARD to meet its N+2 targets and ensured no loss of PEACE II funding.

The Letter of Offer in respect of the DATA project was issued by Pauline McCloy, Director of Rural Development, on behalf of DARD, and accepted on behalf of the College by Paul McGurnaghan, CAFRE Deputy Director and John Fay, CAFRE Director.

As the DATA project is a training programme the money allocated covers staff costs and other expenditure solely related to the delivery of the project such as set-up costs associated with demonstrations and publicity booklets for the programme. None of the money allocated is used to fund any of the running costs associated with other CAFRE activities.

Contaminated Land

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of part 3 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 in tackling contaminated land in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [164540]

Angela Smith: The provisions of part 3 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 have not yet been brought into operation. In order to do so, it will be necessary to supplement the provisions of part 3 by further policy development and subordinate legislation. Until now priority in the allocation of resources within the Department of the Environment has had to be given to dealing with a backlog of overdue EU directives.

However, in preparation for the implementation of the forthcoming EU Directive on Environmental Liability, the Department is currently examining the work and resources that will be necessary to bring the statutory contaminated land regime into operation in advance of the directive.

Cory Reports Inquiry

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his policy is on meeting from public funds the costs of legal advice and representation to *(a)* present and *(b)* former servants of the Crown who are summoned to give evidence to a public inquiry established as a result of the Cory Reports. [166641]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Once the inquiries begin, reasonable costs of legal assistance will be met from the public purse for those invited to assist them, in accordance with the procedures that will apply to each inquiry. This will include any present or former public servants who are called to give evidence.

Crime Detection Rates

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the Police Service of Northern Ireland crime detection rates were in each month during the last two years, broken down by named geographic areas designated by individual district command units. [165846]

Mr. Pearson: The following table provides the information requested with the exception of figures forMarch 2004 which are not currently available.

Detection rates by DCU for 2002–2003 and 2003–2004 *Percentage*

	Antrim	Ards	East Belfast	North Belfast	South Belfast	West Belfast	Carrickfergus	Castlereagh	Larne
2002–03									
April 2002	30.4	21	9.7	11.6	18.0	22.7	28.1	11.7	42.3
May 2002	16.5	21.5	11.2	12.2	12.3	21.1	21.8	13.2	19.0
June 2002	15.6	23.2	10.1	13.2	12.5	21.1	14.2	9.7	29.8
July 2002	16.0	34.3	15.5	11.6	20.4	21.6	23.3	16.4	36.7
August 2002	19.9	19.6	21.2	12.6	13.4	20.0	23.3	13.1	27.2
September 2002	17.9	24.1	12.7	17.9	15.7	16.8	37.8	11.8	44.2
October 2002	9.3	28.8	16.3	22.6	18.3	17.6	30.3	16.7	25.9
November 2002	9.2	26.4	19.0	21.3	17.6	22.3	25.9	20.2	49.2
December 2002	16.4	27.2	14.8	18.8	15.7	21.6	28.3	16.7	35.0
January 2003	10.3	24.9	21.8	17.0	16.3	21.4	27.3	17.7	25.4
February 2003	8.9	29	27.4	18.4	17.2	12.9	21.1	25.5	38.1
March 2003	10.7	32.4	23.4	15.7	14.1	17.4	28.8	18.2	47.1
2003–2004[1]									
April 2003	15.0	26.5	19.1	15.7	17.0	20.6	25.2	14.9	42.3
May 2003	10.5	23.9	25.3	18.0	16.1	26.2	34.1	18.6	57.4
June 2003	15.6	25.9	20.5	15.7	23.0	19.4	26.2	13.5	35.3
July 2003	16.6	25.3	20.1	15.1	22.6	18.1	26.5	19.8	43.0
August 2003	14.2	24.0	23.1	17.6	20.4	18.4	26.7	32.9	33.1
September 2003	19.2	24.3	33.1	16.9	22.3	15.8	38.3	19.9	37.6
October 2003	20.7	29.5	35.5	21.3	17.6	16.9	35.7	14.1	39.5
November 2003	16.4	28.2	25.8	21.3	19.2	21.6	24.8	18.4	49.0
December 2003	18.5	22.6	33.2	23.5	17.1	18.9	30.6	23.9	31.7
January 2004	25.3	31.9	31.4	18.6	18.5	15.0	29.3	23.1	38.6
February 2004	23.1	36.0	40.8	23.2	19.3	12.4	58.5	20.3	30.4

Detection rates by DCU for 2002–2003 and 2003–2004 *Percentage*

	Down	Fermanagh	Foyle	Limavady	Magherafelt	Moyle	Newry and Mourne	Omagh	Strabane
2002–03									
April 2002	20.1	25.3	25.7	28.4	34.7	41.5	23.5	48.79	67.9
May 2002	21.9	30.0	26.6	26.9	31.0	43.1	22.5	39.9	32.0
June 2002	22.9	29.8	21.4	21.0	35.2	29.7	25.2	37.8	28.9
July 2002	17.7	21.7	22.8	27.3	21.2	18.9	29.5	45.7	42.9
August 2002	21.9	33.0	20.2	27.3	23.6	40.0	21.3	39.3	39.7
September 2002	28.6	39.6	22.3	24.2	20.6	41.6	23.9	60.2	44.7
October 2002	30.9	24.9	27.8	40.1	31.2	58.0	22.8	39.3	42.7
November 2002	25.2	35.0	26.3	39.4	21.1	29.6	24.3	38.2	60.4
December 2002	24.9	25.3	25.3	32.5	32.6	20.0	23.7	45.6	38.7
January 2003	37.6	30.2	30.6	29.5	34.2	39.5	28.0	41.7	46.7
February 2003	31.8	33.9	25.4	24.9	40.7	25.8	24.4	36.7	55.1
March 2003	25.2	25.7	21.3	37.3	41.1	48.5	24.0	31.1	70.2
2003–2004[1]									
April 2003	27.6	28.2	24.5	37.0	38.3	39.2	24.6	39.9	29.1
May 2003	29.3	24.8	26.6	23.3	36.9	20.5	24.9	29.6	45.1
June 2003	25.6	30.3	23.3	35.6	40.7	62.7	22.3	48.5	39.1
July 2003	30.0	36.3	25.0	38.8	36.8	34.0	34.0	42.1	47.9

Detection rates by DCU for 2002–2003 and 2003–2004 — *Percentage*

	Down	Fermanagh	Foyle	Limavady	Magherafelt	Moyle	Newry and Mourne	Omagh	Strabane
August 2003	23.7	25.4	23.7	27.3	35.8	35.0	29.4	55.7	44.6
September 2003	26.5	21.2	26.3	29.9	34.3	26.1	33.8	42.2	43.0
October 2003	30.5	33.3	31.5	37.7	41.1	43.5	27.7	55.1	52.5
November 2003	30.4	29.5	21.9	31.3	31.0	22.4	19.3	32.4	48.5
December 2003	27.0	23.3	17.5	24.3	21.7	30.1	28.1	39.2	44.1
January 2004	27.0	23.5	21.7	33.3	27.0	13.4	31.4	47.1	46.7
February 2004	29.7	36.1	23.1	33.9	52.3	25.4	30.0	33.5	61.4

Detection rates by DCU for 2002–2003 and 2003–2004 — *Percentage*

	Lisburn	Newtownabbey	North Down	Armagh	Banbridge	Ballymeana	Ballymoney	Coleraine	Cookstown
2002–03									
April 2002	19.4	11.5	15.7	33.6	34.5	49.3	32.7	29.3	33.5
May 2002	17.4	10.0	13.9	46.0	29.7	26.1	22.6	24.6	32.2
June 2002	28.4	10.8	13.4	38.7	37.5	30.8	26.1	18.3	29.1
July 2002	23.4	12.3	14.8	29.0	35.5	32.6	31.5	25.5	38.8
August	22.2	18.9	17.4	39.7	38.8	27.0	26.8	21.6	26.5
September 2002	21.3	13.5	21.9	28.1	52.0	27.5	47.4	22.0	25.7
October 2002	21.0	15.0	19.1	28.1	43.6	26.6	38.5	34.7	37.0
November 2002	24.2	15.9	20.5	39.6	38.7	41.1	31.5	30.5	27.3
December 2002	23.3	14.7	24.8	29.5	32.6	22.6	22.2	22.8	29.3
January 2003	24.3	15.6	33.4	29.8	37.6	24.7	61.7	30.5	31.8
February 2003	18.3	17.7	25.3	31.6	46.2	25.1	43.6	35.0	27.1
March 2003	11.5	27.2	38.0	43.6	38.3	28.3	59.8	46.4	21.7
2003–2004[1]									
April 2003	18.6	18.1	20.7	45.1	52.4	23.6	28.7	24.4	45.1
May 2003	23.8	18.4	26.5	53.5	40.6	35.6	23.8	22.1	35.6
June 2003	24.2	18.4	20.5	38.8	38.8	32.1	48.2	20.5	40.7
July 2003	22.4	19.8	28.5	39.0	38.3	26.1	39.8	36.0	41.5
August 2003	21.5	24.2	24.8	34.4	35.6	27.2	47.9	31.2	34.0
September 2003	24.1	22.7	27.0	33.0	32.6	36.1	27.5	32.7	37.6
October 2003	25.6	20.7	29.0	47.7	32.4	43.8	54.2	25.4	50.0
November 2003	22.5	19.0	31.7	44.3	31.1	37.7	40.0	28.4	49.7
December 2003	24.5	31.7	27.5	31.5	35.1	29.4	23.6	21.2	52.7
January 2004	20.9	20.7	28.2	36.0	30.3	43.7	25.8	27.3	56.3
February 2004	20.5	24.7	36.2	45.5	26.4	46.9	42.9	34.7	51.9

Percentage

	Craigavon	Dungannon and South Tyrone
2002–03		
April 2002	28.0	42.2
May 2002	21.2	35.1
June 2002	30.3	22.9
July 2002	21.3	34.5
August 2002	19.0	40.8
September 2002	18.0	24.4
October 2002	25.6	59.0
November 2002	22.7	28.9
December 2002	27.7	28.8
January 2003	17.6	23.0
February 2003	12.9	41.3
March 2003	18.4	30.2
2003–2004[1]		
April 2003	21.8	37.4
May 2003	12.2	29.9
June 2003	17.2	37.6
July 2003	24.2	45.9
August 2003	24.9	41.2
September 2003	28.9	48.7
October 2003	25.0	42.0
November 2003	21.2	35.8
December 2003	25.4	45.2
January 2004	29.9	47.1
February 2004	21.8	29.5

[1] Please note that clearance rates for March 2004 are not yet available. Clearance rates for 2003–2004 are provisional and as such are liable to revision.

Drugs

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* arrests were made, *(b)* people were charged, *(c)* cautions were issued and *(d)* convictions were made, for drug offences in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years, broken down by (i) drug classification category and (ii) Northern Ireland parliamentary constituency. [165771]

Mr. Pearson: I have placed in the Library, tables that provide the information requested for arrests, charges, and cautions for the financial years 2001–02 and 2002–03. Figures for 2003–04 are not yet available. As it is not possible to provide an analysis by Parliamentary constituency a breakdown by PSNI District Command Unit is provided instead. Data relating to convictions can be provided only by calendar year.

Education Ancillary Workers

Mrs. Iris Robinson To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will undertake a review of the effect of Jarvis PPP contract proposals on education ancillary workers. [166048]

Mr. Gardiner: A review of the effect of particular PPP contract proposals would not be appropriate. PPP projects are publicly advertised and contractors selected through an open competitive process. Successful contractors must satisfy all the criteria set for each project.

TUPE (Transfer of Undertaking Protection of Employment Regulations) will apply to the transferring staff, which means that their current contractual terms and conditions will be protected. On pensions, Jarvis has also given a commitment that it will apply for membership of the Northern Ireland Local Government Officers Superannuation Scheme.

I also understand the Chief Executive of the South Eastern Board has written to you recently offering a meeting to discuss your concerns.

Environmental Prosecutions

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many prosecutions have been brought under part 3 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 since its introduction; and what the average penalty has been. [164573]

Angela Smith: Part 3 of the Waste and Contaminated Land (Northern Ireland) Order 1997 has not yet been brought into operation. Consequently no prosecutions have been brought under its provisions.

Farm Fraud

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what types of farming fraud offences were detected; and how many cases of each occurred in the last 12 months. [166702]

Mr. Pearson: The types of farming fraud and the number of cases detected during the last year (April 2003 to March 2004) were as follows:

	Number of cases
Livestock Subsidy (Sheep Annual Premium Scheme)	65
Cattle Identification/Livestock Subsidy (Cattle)	28
Ear Tag Interference	2
Integrated Administration and Control (IACS)	8
Animal Disease Compensation	6

Fishing Industry

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many applications have been received under the current fishing vessel *(a)* decommissioning scheme and *(b)* tie-up scheme; how many applications have been granted for boats in (i) Portavogie, (ii) Ardglass and (iii) Kilkeel in each case; and how much money has been allocated to each scheme in each case. [166830]

Mr. Pearson: Requested information in respect of the 2003 Decommissioning Scheme and The Temporary Cessation Tie up scheme 2004 as at 16 April 2004 is shown in the tables.

Decommissioning

	Applications Received	*Applications Approved*	*Grant paid to date 16 April 2004 (£)*
Portavogie	20	5	1,077,767
Ardglass	7	3	489,900
Kilkeel	25	11	2,932,369
Total	52	19	4,500,037

Tie Up Scheme

	Applications Received	*Applications Approved*	*Grant paid to date 16 April 2004 (£)*
Portavogie	14	13	256,152
Ardglass	1	1	1,632
Kilkeel	15	13	190,569
Total	30	27	448,355

General de Chastelain

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the Answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 300W, on General de Chastelain, if he will list the full days since 1 January that General de Chastelain has spent in the Province. [165758]

Mr. Pearson: The Independent International Commission on Decommissioning has now advised that, on average, General de Chastelain spends one week per month in Northern Ireland on decommissioning work. In the year 2003, the General was in Northern Ireland for 82 days. So far this year he was in NI for 6 days in February. Further visits have been planned for April and May.

Hospital Shuttle Bus Services

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the cost in 2003–04 of the shuttle buses currently serving the Royal Victoria Hospital. [166701]

Mr. Spellar: Translink has advised that for the year 2003–04 the cost of providing the shuttle bus service to the Royal Victoria Hospital from Belfast City Centre was £80,300. Income from fares amounting to £69,400 went towards supporting this service.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will estimate the cost of introducing a shuttle bus service between the Ulster Hospital and Belfast City Centre. [166710]

Mr. Spellar: Translink has advised that the estimated cost of providing a shuttle bus service between Belfast City Centre and the Ulster Hospital at Dundonald would be approximately £156,600 per year, depending on the required hours of operation and frequency of service. Although Translink do not supply a dedicated bus to the Ulster Hospital, approximately 190 buses per day stop at a terminus, located adjacent to the hospital.

Local Area Partnerships

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the

membership and timetable for local area partnerships recommended by the Costello report, broken down by education board area. [166712]

Mr. Gardiner: Local Planning and Development Partnerships will comprise representatives of schools and school managing authorities in local areas. The arrangements to establish these partnerships are currently under consideration by the Department of Education with the aim of having them in place by the beginning of the next school year.

Nursing Homes

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what restrictions there are on the rates charged to residents by nursing homes. [166699]

Angela Smith: The rates charged to private residents by nursing homes are a matter for negotiation and agreement between both parties. In the case of residents who are supported with public funds it is the Health and Social Services (HSS) Trust that arranges the nursing home placement and agrees to pay an appropriate tariff to the nursing home. Nursing homes may not charge residents for accommodation or care, including the nursing care of private residents, paid for by HSS Trusts.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether nursing homes are permitted to charge different residents at differing rates. [166700]

Angela Smith: Nursing homes may charge individual residents different amounts based on the type and extent of care needed and the standard of facilities and accommodation provided. Nursing homes providing care for different classes of resident, i.e. elderly, mental health or other disablement, charge rates that are based on the level of care usually given to the specific class of resident the nursing home is authorised to accommodate. The four Health and Social Services Boards have set regional tariffs that Health and Social Services Trusts will normally pay for the appropriate standard placement for each class of resident. Trusts retain the authority to vary the amount payable where the resident is assessed to require additional services.

Paramilitary Offences

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to his answer of 17 March, *Official Report*, columns 305–6W, on paramilitary offences, how many of the 106 deaths have been solved through the arrest and conviction of the people responsible; and if he will make a statement. [165690]

Mr. Pearson: The following table provides details of the number of security related murders and charges in respect of these murders.

Persons murdered as a result of the security situation 11 April 1998 to 29 February 2004

	Perceived attribution[1]		
	By Loyalist	*By Republican*	*Total*
Number of persons murdered	53	49	[2]102
Number of murders for which someone has been charged	18	1	19

[1] Attribution is as perceived by PSNI based on the information available.

[2] Excludes 4 deaths where the deceased was not murdered by terrorists but died in security related circumstances.

With regard to criminal proceedings there have been convictions for murder in respect of four deaths; convictions for lesser offences in respect of three deaths (including two for manslaughter); and directions of no prosecutions by the DPP or acquittals at trial in respect of five deaths. Of the remaining seven deaths where murder charges have been brought by police, the relevant cases are awaiting direction by the DPP or have yet to reach trial.

Peace II Programme

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 868W on PEACE II Programme, if he will break down each of the monthly figures by organisation to which money was allocated; under what measure number the PEACE II money was allocated; and how much money not allocated from the PEACE II funds is accessible by the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. [166832]

Mr. Pearson: The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development's budget for 2003–04, excluding PEACE II, totalled £478.5 million.

It is not possible to provide a breakdown of the monthly expenditure figures provided in my answer of 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 868W. The figures given then were extracted from data that was collected by the Special EU Programmes Body for weekly reports and was not broken down at that time to project level.

The following data is drawn from the Structural Funds database at 16 April 2004 and represents a more up-to-date position of the expenditure entered onto the database during the six months in question:

Month	*PEACE II Measure*	*Project*	*Amount paid (£)*
July 2003			Nil
August 2003	1.6	DDA Training Services	72,160
		Acorn Business Centre	75,647
		Fermanagh College	75,003
		North Down and Ards Institute	90,444
		GG Enterprises Ltd.	68,020
		Info-Net IT Services	38,986

Month	PEACE II Measure	Project	Amount paid (£)
	1.7A	Fermanagh College	44,565
		Family Farm Development Ltd.	163,312
		Countryside Services Ltd.	113,459
		Laganside Rural Development Ltd.	66,643
		Rural Area Partnership In Derry	23,617
September 2003	5.7	Northern Ireland Seafood	33,774
October 2003	1.6	Acorn Business Centre	23,353
		Loughgiel Farmers Development Group Ltd.	2,315
		Coleraine LAG for Enterprise	70,416
		GG Enterprises Ltd.	30,318
		Info-Net IT Services	31,442
		Magherafelt Area Partnership Ltd.	73,051
	1.7A	Family Farm Development Ltd.	210,629
		Laganside Rural Development Ltd.	70,376
		Countryside Services Ltd.	179,937
		Fermanagh College	67,500
		Rural Area Partnership In Derry	1,925
	5.7	Northern Ireland Seafood	89,748
November 2003	1.2B	Mourne Heritage Trust	73,896
		Fermanagh Lakeland Tourism	48,100
		Causeway Coast and Glens Heritage Trust	12,817
	1.6	Armagh College	65,227
		DDA Training Services	3,879
		Fermanagh College	26,725
		Info-Net IT Services	6,706
		Desertmartin and District Farming Group	1,580
		North Down and Ards Institute	6,246
		College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise	8,652,472
		Magherafelt Area Partnership Ltd.	2,494
		Newry and Kilkeel Institute of Further and Higher Education	62,358
	1.7A	Fermanagh College	26,648
		Laganside Rural Development Ltd.	16,749
		Newry and Kilkeel Institute of Further and Higher Education	80,747
		Rural Area Partnership In Perry	75,477
	4.2B	Mourne Heritage Trust	20,000
	5.7	Northern Ireland Seafood	197,861
December 2003	1.2B	National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland	2,934
	1.6	Trillick and District Farmers Countryside Group	5,300
		Down Livestock Group	1,128
		Loughgiel Farmers Development Group Ltd.	2,315
		DDA Training Services	7,820
		Coleraine LAG for Enterprise	6,929
		Markethill Suckler Farmers Devt Gp Ltd.	2,000
	1.7A	Laganside Rural Development Ltd.	57,233
	4.2B	Cookstown Tourist Information Centre	4,698
	5.7	Northern Ireland Seafood	51,456

Police Service of Northern Ireland

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* regular, *(b)* full-time reserve and *(c)* part-time reserve police officers were (i) in the establishment plan and (ii) in place in North Belfast in each year since 1996. [156629]

Mr. Pearson: The following table shows the numbers of regular, full-time reserve and part-time reserve officers based in North Belfast since 1996. It should be noted that the establishment figure for each District Command Unit is determined by the Chief Constable.

Numbers of regular, full-time reserve and part-time reserve officers based in North Belfast since 1996

	Regular officers		Full-time reserve officers		Part-time reserve officers	
	Established	Actual	Established	Actual	Established	Actual
April 1996[1]	[2]—	343	[2]—	154	[2]—	139
April 1997[1]	[2]—	346	[2]—	139	[2]—	128
April 1998[1]	[2]—	355	[2]—	147	[2]—	121
April 1999[1]	[2]—	353	[2]—	145	[2]—	119
April 2000	362	336	148	128	153	108
April 2001	446	394	159	130	153	104

Numbers of regular, full-time reserve and part-time reserve officers based in North Belfast since 1996

	Regular officers		Full-time reserve officers		Part-time reserve officers	
	Established	Actual	Established	Actual	Established	Actual
April 2002	436	349	159	109	153	100
April 2003	377	355	151	86	153	91
February 2004	389	357	101	73	200	80

[1] CID not included.
[2] No establishment data available.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the number of police reservists who would lose their jobs within each Police Service of Northern Ireland District Command Unit if the police reserve were to be phased out. [164659]

Mr. Pearson: The Patten Report recommended that "the future police service should not include a Full Time Reserve", and this recommendation was accepted by the Government, subject to the security situation. In October 2002, the Chief Constable submitted a human resource strategy to the Policing Board. It proposed that, subject to no further deterioration in the security situation, and the continued success of recruitment to the Police Service, the Full Time Reserve would be phased out over an 18 month period starting in April 2005.

The Chief Constable will review these matters later this year, and will subsequently put forward advice to the Board. An assessment of the potential operational impact on individual District Command Units of any phasing out process will form part of the Chief Constable's review.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* protestant and *(b)* Roman Catholic applicants who have qualified for appointment to the Police Service of Northern Ireland since the introduction of 50:50 recruiting have not been offered employment with the PSNI; and how many such applicants have passed the entrance examinations on more than one occasion. [152461]

Jane Kennedy: From competitions 1 to 4, 1,706 non-Catholic and 604 Catholic applicants have qualified for appointment to the Police Service of Northern Ireland. Of these, 530 of each community background have been appointed. Of the qualified Catholic candidates, all were offered appointment, but some withdrew in the time intervening between qualification for appointment and the time of appointment.

Appointments from competition 5 have started, although the pool is not yet finalised, and the pool for competition 6 is not expected to be ready until April this year.

The information on the number of candidates who have passed the entrance examinations (i.e. have been successful in becoming qualified candidates and reaching the merit pool) more than once is taking some time to collate. As soon as the figures are available, they will be forwarded.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the transgressions that bar an individual from becoming a member of the Police Service of Northern Ireland are. [164924]

Mr. Pearson: Transgressions that bar an individual from becoming a member of the Police Service of Northern Ireland are set out in Schedule 1 of the Police (Recruitment) (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2001, entitled "Criminal Convictions etc", in respect of eligibility for appointment as a police trainee in the Police Service of Northern Ireland.

The Police Service of Northern Ireland (Recruitment of Police Support Staff) Regulations 2002 similarly set out the procedures in relation to support staff appointments.

Potato Ring Rot

Mr. Peter Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland pursuant to the answer of 3 February, *Official Report*, column 871W on potato ring rot, what vehicles purchased from modulation money for these purposes are now used. [166833]

Mr. Pearson: Following the recent finding of potato ring rot in Wales, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development increased its existing stringent preventive measures to ensure that there was no plant health risk to the Northern Ireland potato industry. The majority of the costs associated with these additional measures related to DARD staff time, though small capital expenditure was incurred in 2003 on diagnostic work related to potato ring rot. No vehicles were purchased for the purposes of potato ring rot control.

Power-sharing

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what power sharing arrangements have been adopted for the appointment of mayor, deputy mayor and committee chairs in each district council area. [166780]

Angela Smith: There are a number of formal and informal power sharing arrangements operated by district councils for the appointment of mayor, deputy mayor and committee chairs. These include proportionality systems such as the D'Hondt system, the rotation of posts or a combination of these. The following table is based on information provided to the Department of the Environment by district councils and shows for each district council whether power sharing arrangements are in place.

District council[1]	*Mayor*	*Deputy mayor*	*Committee chair*
Antrim BC	Formal (Rotation)	Informal (Rotation)	Informal (Rotation)
Ards BC	Information unavailable	Information unavailable	Information unavailable
Armagh C and DC	Information unavailable	Information unavailable	Information unavailable
Ballymena BC	Informal (Power Sharing by Unionist parties)	Informal (Power Sharing by Unionist parties)	Informal (Power Sharing by all parties)
Ballymoney BC	None	None	None
Banbridge DC	Formal (Proportionality)	Formal (Proportionality)	Formal (Proportionality)
Belfast CC	No formal arrangement	No formal arrangement	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)
Carrickfergus BC	Information unavailable	Information unavailable	Information unavailable
Castlereagh BC	None	None	None
Coleraine BC	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)
Cookstown DC	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Rotation)	Formal (Rotation)
Craigavon BC	None	None	None
Derry CC	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)
Down DC	Information unavailable	Information unavailable	Information unavailable
Dungannon and ST BC	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)
Fermanagh DC	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)
Larne BC	Informal (Power Sharing)	Informal (Power Sharing)	Informal (Power Sharing)
Limavady BC	Formal (Power Sharing)	Formal (Power Sharing)	Formal (Power Sharing)
Lisburn BC	None	None	None
Magherafelt DC	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	None	None
Moyle DC	Formal (Rotation)	Formal (Rotation)	[2]n/a
Newry and Mourne DC	Formal (Mix of Proportionality and D'Hondt)	Formal (Mix of Proportionality and D'Hondt)	Formal (Mix of Proportionality and D'Hondt)
Newtownabbey BC	Informal (Based on party strengths)	Informal (Based on party strengths)	Informal (Based on party strengths)
North Down BC	None	None	None
Omagh DC	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Formal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)
Strabane DC	Informal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Informal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)	Informal (Proportionality—D'Hondt)

[1] A number of councils have not been able to respond in the time available.
[2] Moyle District Council does not operate a committee system.

Punishment Beatings

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals now serving a sentence in Hydebank Wood Young Offenders Centre *(a)* were victims of punishment beatings and *(b)* were classed as exiles prior to being detained in the centre. [163604]

Mr. Pearson: The Northern Ireland Prison Service does not collect data in the manner requested above. This is due to the fact that many inmates refuse to disclose the level of threat to which they have been subject; nor do we have any information on 'exiles'.

The only information available to us is from a survey of the inmate population of Hydebank Wood, conducted in March 2004 by representatives from Queens University Belfast. In the course of this survey they did receive responses from the inmates regarding their experiences of violence and threats.

Out of a sample size of 187 inmates the following was obtained:

Inmates were asked:

"Have you ever been threatened or assaulted by paramilitaries"

59.4 per cent. said that they had been threatened.

51 per cent. said that they had been assaulted.

The inmates were asked a supplementary question:

"and in the last year, were you threatened or assaulted by paramilitaries".

12.8 per cent. said that they had been threatened in the last year.

7 per cent. said that they had been assaulted in the last year.

23.5 per cent. said that they had been threatened and assaulted in the last year.

The inmates were finally asked:

"By which grouping, Loyalist or Republican"

21 per cent. (39 people) said they had been threatened or assaulted by Loyalists in the last year

21 per cent. (39 people) said that they had been threatened or assaulted by Republicans in the last year.

1 per cent. (two people) said that they had been threatened or assaulted by both groups in the last year.

Pupil Behavioural Surveys

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the *(a)* cost, *(b)* number and *(c)* results of pupil behavioural surveys carried out in each education board area in the last year. [166715]

Mr. Gardiner: The information requested is not available in that form. However, each Education and Library Board does submit an annual statistical return

to the Department of Education giving details of the total number of pupils who have been suspended or expelled. The statistics for the 2002/03 school year are as follows:

Number of Pupils Suspended	5,320
Number of Pupils Expelled	70

In addition the Belfast Education and Library Board has recently published the findings of its "Behaviour in a Learning City—Best Value Review of the Provision of Behaviour Support".

Racism

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to combat racism in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [165772]

Mr. Spellar: The Government have frequently put on record its abhorrence of all forms of intolerance and racism. It is committed to eradicating such manifestations of hatred, whether based on racism or based on sectarianism and is developing a co-ordinated response to the problem in Northern Ireland.

Enforcement action by Police Service of Northern Ireland will continue to be the key to tackling such attacks, and PSNI enforcement action will be accompanied by a range of actions by the Northern Ireland Office and the Northern Ireland Departments. As well as new legislative proposals, these will include measures on education, housing, health and social policy issues. The final version of the Race Equality Strategy (which takes account of extensive consultation with all sections of NI society) will be published by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister this summer and specific actions will be included in a detailed implementation plan developed in line with the strategy.

The Government's Community Safety Strategy, being implemented through the Community Safety Unit of the Northern Ireland Office, identified offences motivated by prejudice and hatred as a central theme in making Northern Ireland a safer place for all its citizens. Specifically, the Strategy seeks to reduce the levels of crime motivated by sectarianism, and to promote and enhance the safety of minority ethnic residents. Currently, the Unit is facilitating a working group of voluntary and statutory organisations which aims to establish a clear framework and operational system for the recording and monitoring of a number of hate crimes. These will include sectarian, racist and homophobic incidents. It is hoped to bring forward the consultation on such an agreed framework by the end of June, with implementation intended by October 2004. Within its Community Safety grant programme, the Challenge Competition, the Unit has also provided funding towards four projects which have a central theme of countering prejudice and hatred to a total value of £273255.

I have also published for consultation, draft legislation for Northern Ireland aimed at tackling racially motivated offences. The draft Order proposes provisions that will require sentencers, where offences are aggravated by such hostility, to treat racial and religious aggravation as an aggravating factor when sentencing. The legislation will also cover offences motivated by hatred of sexual orientation. The proposals will also increase maximum sentences available for certain specified, mainly violent, offences including where racial, religious or sexual aggravation is proven.

The issues raised by racism are issues for all sections of society in Northern Ireland and in expressing abhorrence of racism, all of us must avoid the temptation to demonise entire areas and communities. It would be an act of prejudice itself to stereotype people because of where they live or because of their community background. I reiterate the acknowledgement in the Belfast Agreement of the unique opportunity that exists here to bring about a society which will recognise the full and equal legitimacy and worth of identities, senses of allegiance and ethos of all sections of the community in Northern Ireland.

Special Advisers

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what changes have been made to the number of special advisers employed at the Office of the First and Deputy First Minister since suspension of devolution in October 2002. [165737]

Mr. Paul Murphy: During devolution six Special Advisers were employed by the Office of the First Minister and Deputy First Minister. The employment of all six terminated on suspension but four were subsequently re-appointed and continue to be employed by that Department.

Special Needs Education

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what differences there are between the methods of delivering special needs education in integrated and mainstream schools; [163605]

(2) what provision for special needs education is made in the *(a)* integrated and *(b)* mainstream sector. [156104]

Mr. Gardiner: The assessment process and the provision put in place to meet a child's special educational needs (SEN) are determined by the needs of the individual and not the school sector in which the child is placed and there is therefore no difference across sectors in terms of the nature of support provided.

Each Education and Library Board is responsible for Statements of Special Educational Needs for pupils resident in its area. The Board will meet the educational costs associated with the Statement in respect of pupils in maintained schools and in controlled schools (including controlled integrated schools). The cost of the educational provision in Statements for children in grant—maintained integrated (GMI) schools is met by the Department because it has direct funding responsibility for these schools.

In addition, resources are allocated to schools (including GMI schools) through the various LMS formulae to assist pupils with special educational needs who do not require a Statement.

Stormont Castle

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the cost to the public purse has been of the recent refurbishment of Stormont Castle. [165993]

Mr. Pearson: Stormont Castle was refurbished on behalf of the Northern Ireland Executive. The refurbishment was completed in 2001. The total cost of the work was £8 million.

Terrorism

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he made to the Prime Minister prior to his visit to Libya last week about the victims of terrorists supplied by Libyan arms and explosives. [165220]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Government are aware of the recent calls by representatives of IRA victims and others that Libya should provide compensation for IRA victims.

The Prime Minister discussed a wide range of issues with Colonel Gadaffi including international and regional security issues, including terrorism.

Tree Preservation Orders

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what applications for tree preservation orders in the vicinity of Danesfort Crescent, Steelstown Road and Greenhaw Road, Derry have been received. [166777]

Angela Smith: Planning Service has received five applications for tree preservation orders in the vicinity of Danesfort Crescent, Steelstown Road and Greenhaw Road, Derry.

Ulster-Scots

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what representations he has made to the Government of the Irish Republic on ratifying the European Charter for Regional and Minority Languages in respect of Ulster-Scots in the Republic of Ireland. [166439]

Mr. Paul Murphy: No representation has been made to the Irish Government.

UVF Ceasefire

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his current assessment is of the UVF ceasefire. [164941]

Mr. Pearson: The Secretary of State keeps the ceasefires of all paramilitary organisations under review. The current judgment is that the UVF do not intend to end their ceasefire.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 22 April 2004

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

New Opportunities Fund

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Burnley in each year since 1997. [167901]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Burnley are shown in the table.

Financial year	£
1997–98	—
1998–99	—
1999–2000	38,000
2000–01	286,877
2001–02	872,209
2002–03	1,466,891
2004–03	220,000
Total	2,883,977

The information is derived from the Department's Lottery award database, which uses information provided by the Lottery distributors.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Preston in each year since 1997. [168142]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Preston are shown in the table.

Financial year	£
1998–99	—
1999–2000	4,378,682
2000–01	558,009
2001–02	3,068,323
2002–03	2,500,450
2004–03	1,730,044
Total	12,235,508

The information is derived from the Department's Lottery award database, which uses information provided by the Lottery distributors.

Smithfield General Market

Alan Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will spotlist the Smithfield General Market, the adjacent fish market and Red House. [165520]

Mr. Caborn: These buildings have previously been turned down for listing in 1990,1999 and 2003. However, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has asked English Heritage for further advice. She will take a decision on whether to list these buildings once this advice has been received.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Biofuels

18. **Mr. Robathan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from farming groups regarding biofuels. [167024]

Mr. Morley: Representations have been received, both at meetings and in correspondence, from the National Farmers Union, the Country Land and Business Association, the British Association for Biofuels and Oils, British BioGen, plant breeders, agricultural suppliers, farming consultants and other agricultural businesses.

Farm Subsidies

19. **Nick Harvey:** To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessments her Department has made of the effects of her proposals for single farm payments with respect to *(a)* tenant farmers, *(b)* new entrants and *(c)* farmers in severely disadvantaged areas; and if she will make a statement. [167026]

Alun Michael: Defra will publish shortly an analysis of the economic impact on the English farming industry of the decoupling of CAP direct payment and the decision to allocate entitlement on the basis set out in my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State's Statements to the House on 12 February and earlier today.

Aggregates Tax

Mr. Heath: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the environmental effects of the aggregates tax on Somerset. [167025]

Mr. Morley: The Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund was set up using revenue from the aggregates levy to address the impacts associated with aggregates extraction. Somerset is one of the three counties which receive funding direct from Defra to support projects to reduce local impacts.

Bovine Tuberculosis

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she plans to take to deal with the threat of bovine tuberculosis to cattle. [167018]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are currently consulting on a long-term strategy for dealing with bovine TB in Great Britain. In the short term our priority must be to prevent further spread of the disease and our consultation seeks views on various cattle-based measures designed to help us achieve this.

Coastal Protection

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with her ministerial colleagues in the Netherlands on similarities between the approaches taken in the UK and in the Netherlands to *(a)* the protection of the coastline, *(b)* the use of soft defences in coastal protection, *(c)* managed retreat and *(d)* managed realignment; and if she will make a statement. [164249]

Mr. Morley: I have had informal discussions with ministerial colleagues in the Netherlands on matters relating to coastal defences. However, officials from the two countries meet on a regular basis. Recognising the benefits to be gained by shared experiences both in respect of policy and engineering solutions, officials from the Netherlands, Germany, Belgium, Denmark and England agreed to meet on an annual basis more than five years ago and so formed the North Sea Coastal Managers Group. The English delegation is led by my Chief Engineer.

Meetings of the group have proved an invaluable forum for the exchange of information on the subjects raised by the right hon. Member. However it is important to recognise that there are differences between the Netherlands and England both in terms of the geography of the coastline and the proportion of the economic wealth at risk of flooding.

Employment Agencies

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the employment agencies which her Department and its predecessors have used to supply temporary staff in each financial year since 1996–97 to the most recent date for which figures are available. [163821]

Alun Michael: Defra was formed in June 2001. The information prior to this date cannot be provided, as it is not held centrally. For the financial years for which information is available centrally the main employment agencies which the core Department has used to supply temporary staff are as follows:

2001–2002:

Adecco UK Ltd.
Kelly Services UK Ltd.
Badenoch & Clark
FSS International Ltd.
Spherion UK Plc
Stopgap Ltd.
Brook Street (UK) Ltd.
Indigo Selection
Hays Accountancy Personnel
Accountancy Additions Ltd.
Michael Page International
Chain Solutions Ltd.
Riverside Recruitment
Barclay Simpson
Adept Recruitment
Manpower plc
Josephine Sammons Ltd.
Recruit Media
Griffiths Davies Recruitment
Lawson Bishop

2002–2003:

Adecco UK Ltd.
Kelly Services UK Ltd.
Badenoch & Clark
FSS International Ltd.
Stopgap Ltd.
Brook Street (UK) Ltd.
Indigo Selection
Hays Accountancy Personnel
Accountancy Additions Ltd.
Michael Page International
Chain Solutions Ltd.
Riverside Recruitment
Barclay Simpson
Adept Recruitment
Manpower plc
Josephine Sammons Ltd.
Recruit Media
Griffiths Davies Recruitment
Lawson Bishop
Swantame Ltd.
Hays Montrose
Parker Bridge
Ivor Morrish Associates
Russell Thomas Associates
FSS Financial
Atebion Recruitment Ltd.
Martin Ward Anderson
Drax Interim Executive
Cameron Kennedy
Marks Sattin
Manpower UK Ltd.
IMS Ltd.
D G Farran Consultants Ltd.
Contact Technical Services
Staffline
MSB International
Reed Staffing Services
TMP Worldwide ER
Blue Arrow Personnel Services Ltd.
Big Fish Little Fish
Reed Personnel Services plc
First Personnel Group plc
Office Angels
Cathedral Secretarial Agency
Recruitment South West Ltd.
Premiere Labourforce Ltd.
Executets
Parker IT
Randstad Employment Bureau Ltd.
Kellys International Ltd.
Michael Page Ltd.

2003–2004 (April to December):

Adecco UK Ltd.
Kelly Services UK Ltd.
Badenoch & Clark
FSS International Ltd.
Stopgap Ltd.
Brook Street (UK) Ltd.
Indigo Selection
Hays Accountancy Personnel
Accountancy Additions Ltd.
Michael Page International
Chain Solutions Ltd.
Riverside Recruitment
Barclay Simpson
Adept Recruitment
Manpower plc
Josephine Sammons Ltd.
Recruit Media
Griffiths Davies Recruitment
Lawson Bishop
Swantame Ltd.
Hays Montrose
Parker Bridge
Ivor Morrish Associates
Russell Thomas Associates
FSS Financial
Atebion Recruitment Ltd.
Martin Ward Anderson
Drax Interim Executive
Cameron Kennedy
Marks Sattin
Manpower UK Ltd.
IMS Ltd.
Hudson Global Resources Ltd.
Crone Corkill
Staffline
Big Fish Little Fish
Blue Arrow Personnel Services Ltd.
Cathedral Secretarial Agency
Recruitment South West Ltd.
Aptus Personnel Ltd.
FSS Financial
Excel Recruitment Ltd.
Travail Employment Group
Stop Gap
Office Angels
Spherion UK Plc

Other agencies may have been used by local managers when business needs have required resources which could not be provided from within the Department or a quick response. Data on these agencies is not held centrally.

GM Crops

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the *(a)* sampling procedures used in the Chardon LL VCU trials and *(b)* statistical validity of the results obtained. [166345]

Mr. Morley: The sampling procedures used in the Chardon LL Value for Cultivation and Use (VCU) trials were those specified in the trials protocol and used for all maize variety VCU trials. The procedures are designed to ensure that samples used in trials are as representative as possible of the variety in general. The results of the trials for Chardon LL were reviewed by maize trials experts on the Herbage VCU Group and members of the Interdepartmental Statisticians Group, who confirmed their statistical validity.

Local Food Production

Sir Paul Beresford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her Department's support for local food production. [167013]

Alun Michael: The Government recognise the benefits of local food and is keen to encourage a flourishing local food sector. In recognition of this, provision is available under the England rural development programme for supporting activities such as the establishment of farmers' markets, the development of regional and local branding of foodstuffs and the formation of collaborative groups to market quality products. For example, within the last year we awarded £100,256 to the National Association of Farmers' Markets to raise the profile of farmers' markets across England and to increase public awareness of them.

Defra has also helped finance a number of local sourcing workshops organised by the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD) designed to bring together supermarkets and small local producers to explore how barriers to local sourcing can be overcome. Following on from this, we helped fund the Business in The Community (BiTC) and IGD guide for small businesses looking to work with large food retailers and food service companies—"Local Sourcing—Opening the Door for Small Business". In addition to this, our Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative is designed to encourage public sector bodies to procure their food in a manner that promotes sustainable development and to encourage more small and local businesses to compete to supply them with food.

This work will be complemented at a regional level through the regional plans that each regional development agency (RDA) is drawing up to help deliver the Government Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food. Although the nature of this support will be determined according to regional priorities, issues to be addressed will include the production and supply of locally sourced food by encouraging food hubs and shared facilities and the linking of local producers with local retailers and tourist businesses.

Methyl Bromide

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what position Her Majesty's Government is taking over current applications to the United Nations for exemptions from the international ban on methyl bromide. [166573]

Mr. Morley: Methyl bromide is an ozone depleting substance and its production and supply are controlled under the Montreal Protocol. Its production is due to be phased out in developed countries after 31 December 2004.

However, in recognition that alternatives for all existing methyl bromide uses may not be available by 2005 a provision was made under Decision IX/6 of the Montreal Protocol, where critical use exemptions can be requested when there are no technically and economically feasible alternatives. The UK's view is that methyl bromide is being phased out by the Protocol and should not be phased back in by excessive critical uses.

Several Parties to the Protocol, including the UK, submitted applications for critical use exemptions and a package of exemptions was agreed at an Extraordinary Meeting of the Parties to the Protocol in Montreal (24–26 March 2004) Some further applications, including from the UK, will be due for decision by the Parties at a meeting of the Parties in November.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her best available estimate is of the cost of answering the questions on badgers and bovine TB asked by the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Paterson) in session 2003–04. [157135]

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost has been of providing answers to parliamentary questions asked by the hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Paterson) on the subject of bovine TB and related matters since 2003. [164210]

Mr. Bradshaw: The last estimate made of the average cost of answering a parliamentary question (April 2002) was £135.

The hon. Member for North Shropshire (Mr. Paterson) has tabled 450 questions on badgers and bovine tuberculosis during this parliamentary session. Thus the estimated total cost involved in answering these questions is £60,750.

This cost has been met by the diversion of resources from the development of policy and from scientific research in relation to both wildlife and to bovine TB. It has resulted in delays in responding to public correspondence and has held up work on areas such as the review of badger licensing, consultation on deer management, the review of the TB website and updating the advice to farmers in the booklet "Dealing with TB in Your Herd".

Temporary Staff/Consultants

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 9 March, *Official Report*, column 1391, on temporary staff, if she will list the amounts spent by her Department on *(a)* temporary staff and *(b)* consultants for each year; if she will publish the job descriptions of the consultants hired by her Department in (i) 2001–02, (ii) 2002–03 and (iii) 2003–04; and if she will make a statement. [164714]

Alun Michael: I am sorry the answer I gave the hon. Member on 9 March, *Official Report*, column 1391W, incorrectly included reference to consultants and did not accurately record the expenditure on temporary staff.

The correct figures from the Departmental accounts show payments to employment agencies for the supply of temporary staff for the three financial years as:

2001–02: £18.01 million

2002–03: £13.11 million, and

2003–04: £9.62 million respectively.

The figure for 2003–04 covers the period April to December 2004 only. Once financial year end reconciliations are complete, I can write to the hon. Member with the expenditure for the last three months of the financial year.

The job descriptions of the consultants hired by the Department in 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 are not held centrally and the information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

UK National Seed List

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on her responsibilities relating to the inclusion of GM crops on the UK National Seed List as it applies in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* Wales and *(c)* Northern Ireland. [166523]

Mr. Morley: The Seeds (National Lists of Varieties) Regulations 2001 (SI 2001/3510) deal with the acceptance of agricultural plant varieties onto the National Lists of varieties. These Regulations apply to both conventional and GM varieties. The National Lists are United Kingdom lists.

The National Authorities have the joint responsibility to decide whether a plant variety has met the criteria in the Regulations in order that it can be added to the relevant National List. The 'National Authorities' are defined for the purpose of the Regulations as:

in respect of England, the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs;

in respect of Scotland, the Scottish Ministers;

in respect of Wales, the National Assembly for Wales; and

in respect of Northern Ireland, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development.

Water Supply (Nitrate Pollution)

Sir Teddy Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the reasons for changes in the level of nitrate pollution in public water supplies; and what steps are being taken to reduce levels. [167020]

Mr. Morley: Unusual meteorological conditions caused an increase in nitrate levels in 2001. Results for 2002 show a significant improvement. We are supporting water company schemes for nitrate removal in the current periodic review of water price limits, provided there is sound evidence of the likelihood of future failures.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Al Tawhid

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement about the activities of Al Tawhid in the United Kingdom. [165904]

Mr. Blunkett *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Al Tawhid is a Sunni Palestinian organisation which appears to have close associations with the Palestinian Islamic Jihad and al-Qaeda. Its stated aim is to overthrow the Jordanian monarchy and replace it with a fundamentalist Islamic regime. However, though it has some support here, it does not appear to be formally active in the UK.

Al-Muhajiroun

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will proscribe al-Muhajiroun under the anti-terrorism legislation; [165905]

(2) if he will make a statement on the activities of al-Muhajiroun. [165906]

Mr. Blunkett *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Al-Muhajiroun was established in 1996 and has members throughout Britain. It originated in Pakistan and has groups in a number of countries including the US. Its stated aim is the establishment of a worldwide Islamic way of life by openly attracting popular support amongst Islamic communities.

The list of proscribed organisations is kept under constant and active review. As a matter of policy, we do not comment on whether a particular organisation is being considered for proscription or de-proscription. Such decisions are and will continue to be taken only after the most careful consideration and on the basis of the best possible security advice. That will remain the basis for all decisions in the future.

Antisocial Behaviour

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures are in place to ensure courts give particular consideration to the impact of antisocial behaviour on victims, witnesses and the wider community. [165917]

Ms Blears: Section 16 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 requires courts to give particular consideration to the impact of antisocial behaviour on victims, witnesses and the wider community in all nuisance-related housing possession cases.

The Magistrates' Association implemented new sentencing guidelines on 1 January 2004, including for the first time guidelines for the offence of breach of an antisocial behaviour order (ASBO). The guidelines reflect the seriousness of the offence and direct the magistrate to consider the impact on the victim.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many areas have been designated as an area of persistent antisocial behaviour by a senior Merseyside police officer since the inception of this power. [165919]

Ms Blears: Merseyside police tell me that three areas have been designated as areas where antisocial behaviour is a significant and persistent problem since these powers came into force.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the new antisocial behaviour prosecutor teams in the Crown Prosecution Service. [166682]

The Solicitor-General: I have been asked to reply.

My right hon. Friend the Attorney General, together with the Secretary of State for the Home Department and the Director of Public Prosecutions, will be announcing today that 12 specialist Anti-Social Behaviour Expert Prosecutors have now taken up their post in hot spot areas around the country.

They will be dedicated to working closely with their local communities and colleagues in the Criminal Justice System, to combat antisocial behaviour, which, although at the lower end of the criminal scale of offences, are the cases which most affect law-abiding people, who remain trapped in their homes through fear of crime.

The Home Office, Crown Prosecution Service and Department of Constitutional Affairs will be working closely together to ensure that the Anti-Social Behaviour Expert Prosecutors will achieve their objective of ensuring that the maximum benefit is derived from the new powers given to them by the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 as well as spreading best practice and providing expert advice.

Background Checks (EU)

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with his EU counterparts regarding requirements for checks on people coming to the UK from other EU countries before they can take up positions working with children or vulnerable people. [165832]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* On 18 March 2004 the Home Office held a seminar on collecting and sharing of information on child sex offenders across Europe. The seminar provided an opportunity for policy officials from across Europe to discuss how we can improve the collection and sharing of information on those who pose a risk of sexual harm. In particular the seminar examined how member states can ensure that people who pose a risk to children do not evade any requirements or disqualifications put on them in one country by moving to another.

We are now considering the options that arose from discussions at the seminar on how we can take this area of child protection forward.

Car Crime

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many car crimes there have been in each year since 1997; and how many resulted from the theft of car keys. [166836]

Ms Blears: The number of thefts of and thefts from vehicles (including cars, light vans, motorbikes and mopeds) since 1997 as measured by the British Crime Survey (BCS) are provided in the table.

Numbers of thefts of and thefts from vehicles 1997 to 2002–03 BCS interviews

Period	*Thefts of vehicles*	*Thefts from vehicles*
1997	370,000	2,157,000
1999	328,000	1,807,000
2001–02 interviews	315,000	1,491 ,000
2002–03 interviews	278,000	1,425,000

The BCS also provides the proportion of thefts of or from cars or light vans where entry into the vehicle involved the use of car keys (unlike for the numbers of offences above, these proportions do not include motorbikes or mopeds). The percentages from 1997 to 2001–02 are provided in the table.

Proportion of thefts of and thefts from cars/vans where the method of entry was with a key

Percentage

Period	*Thefts of vehicles*	*Thefts from vehicles*
1997	7	4
1999	8	1
2001–02 interviews	12	2

Chromatography Tests

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research he has evaluated on chromatography tests for traces of explosives in human hair. [166844]

Mr. Blunkett: A preliminary study into the recovery of explosive traces from the surface of human hair was carried out by the Forensic Explosives Laboratory, Defence Science and Technology Laboratory on behalf of the Home Office.

Subsequent research into the analysis of explosive traces extracted from human hair was carried out and included evaluation by gas chromatographic techniques. This work was published by Sanders et al in *Science and Justice* vol. 42, No. 3 (2002) pp137–142. I will send a copy to my hon. Friend.

Correctional Policy HQ Command

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the intended size of the Correctional Policy Headquarters Command is. [165881]

Paul Goggins: The size of the Home Office Correctional Policy, Prison Service and Probation Service Headquarters is being considered as part of the ongoing departmental reform exercise.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment has been made of the Correctional Policy Headquarters' administrative requirements; and what estimate has been made of the costs. [165882]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office Correctional Policy, Prison Service and Probation Service Headquarters administration requirements are being considered as part of the ongoing departmental reform exercise. Headquarters costs in 2004–05 will be met from within existing provision. Funding for 2005–06 onwards will be agreed as part of the current spending review.

Criminal Records Bureau

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what additional powers the Criminal Records Bureau would require to carry out checks on all people coming from abroad before they were able to take up positions working with children or vulnerable people. [165831]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Part 5 of the Police Act 1997, under which the Criminal Records Bureau operates, does not empower the Bureau to search databases outside the United Kingdom for conviction and other information shown on its Disclosures. Inquiries made about arrangements in force in other countries have shown both how varied they are and how complex it would be to introduce widespread arrangements to link up with records in a range of other countries. The Bureau has taken the initiative by establishing its overseas information service for the benefit of employers who are considering recruiting staff from outside the UK. The service provides detailed information about the arrangements for checks in other countries, including where such information can be obtained, how to go about obtaining a check, the cost and the time taken. At present, this arrangement covers 16 countries, including nine in Europe, and work is in hand to extend the service to a further 15 countries, including 14 in Europe.

Guantanamo Bay

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he made of the consistency with international law of the interrogation methods deployed by the US at Guantanamo Bay before sanctioning the involvement of MI5 in that process. [162883]

Mr. Blunkett *[holding answer 22 March 2004]:* The Government have a duty to protect national security. This is the context in which Security Service conducted interviews at Guantanamo Bay. All Security Service interviews were carried out in accordance with United Kingdom law.

Merseyside Police

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions a Merseyside police officer has taken a child home after 9 pm from a designated area since the inception of this power. [165921]

Ms Blears: Merseyside police tell me that they have taken home eight unsupervised children in three specific areas since these powers came into force.

National Offender Management Service

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which not-for-profit organisations have been invited to comment on the proposed National Offender Management Service. [165186]

Paul Goggins: Reducing Crime—Changing Lives, which invites comments on the proposed National Offender Management Service, was sent to an extensive list of stakeholders and is available on the Home Office website. The National Offender Management Service Implementation Team is also engaged in an ongoing consultation with key stakeholders.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish legislation to introduce a National Offender Management Service; and whether he plans for it to be subject to pre-legislative scrutiny. [163105]

Paul Goggins: The National Offender Management Service will be introduced from 1 June 2004. Many of the changes needed to establish the service will not require legislation but where legislation is required this will be introduced as the legislative timetable allows.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department which bodies his Department has consulted on the proposals for a National Offenders Management Service. [163107]

Paul Goggins: Copies of "Reducing Crime—Changing Lives", the Government's proposals for reform of the correctional services, were distributed to an extensive list of organisations, individuals and stakeholders and made available on the Home Office website. The National Offender Management Service implementation team is involved in ongoing consultation with key stakeholders.

Police

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what disciplinary measures have been taken against police officers as a result of the breach of security on the parliamentary estate on 20 March. [165872]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* In the immediate aftermath of the incident on 20 March, the Metropolitan Police Service instigated an investigation into the incident, to ensure that they had delivered the appropriate and professional response. That investigation continues, and I would not want to prejudge the outcome of that investigation.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons were for the decision not to charge the officers who made racist comments while filmed by an undercover journalist for the BBC documentary "The Secret Policeman". [166072]

Ms Blears: The Crown Prosecution Service makes the determination in all cases where criminal charges are being considered. The Crown Prosecution Service informs us that matters in respect of two of the 10 officers are the subject of further investigation. Once this investigation has been completed a file will be submitted for the Crown Prosecution Service's further consideration.

The remaining eight officers were not prosecuted because the Crown Prosecution Service considered there was insufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction.

All 10 officers concerned were allowed to resign. Their police forces considered it in the public interest to end their relationship with the police service as quickly as possible rather than force them to remain to face police misconduct proceedings.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what change there has been in police numbers in *(a)* the Avon and Somerset police authority and *(b)* Weston-super-Mare in each year since 1997. [167504]

Ms Blears: The increase in police numbers for the Avon and Somerset constabulary for each year since 1997 is set out in the table.

	Police officer strength	*Increase decrease*	*Percentage change*
31 March 1997	2,989	—	—
31 March 1998	2,976	-13	-0.43
31 March 1999	2,999	+23	+0.77
31 March 2000	2,934	-65	-2.17
31 March 2001	2,960	+26	+0.89
31 March 2002	3,096	+136	+4.59
31 March 2003	3,149	+53	+1.71
31 December 2003	3,371	+222	+7.05
Overall increase	—	382	+12.78

Weston-super-Mare is part of the North Somerset Basic Command Unit (BCU). Information on strength at BCU level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the North Somerset BCU increased by 4.9 per cent. (from 203 to 213). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Stephen Pilkington QPM) and within the North Somerset BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Manchester Gorton has been since 1997. [167466]

Ms Blears: Manchester Gorton is part of the South Manchester Basic Command Unit (BCU). Information on strength at BCU level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the South Manchester BCU increased by 0.8 per cent. (from 954 to 962). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Michael Todd QPM) and within the South Manchester BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

The number of police officers in Greater Manchester Police has increased by 848 since March 1997 to 7,770 in December 2003.

Probation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the effect has been on probation areas in England and Wales of the 2 per cent. underspend imposed in December 2003; and how many areas have appealed against the decision. [160807]

Paul Goggins: The 2 per cent. underspend and compulsory carry forward requirement was introduced for the following reasons:

The Probation Service was heading for a forecast overspend in 2003–04 and it was necessary to reduce spending to bring expenditure back into line with budget.

The probation areas had an average 11 per cent. increase in resources for 2003–04 and the increase for 2004–05 is much lower at 3.5 per cent. It was therefore considered desirable to smooth the annual settlements by moving 2 per cent. from 2003–04 to 2004–05, therefore making the relative financial settlements 9 per cent. and 5.5 per cent.

28 areas have managed to carry forward the full 2 per cent. or more into their budget for 2004–05. A further eight areas have managed partial carry forwards.

The remaining six areas have appealed against the decision to have their budgets reduced by 2 per cent.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons were for the increase of £47.2 million for Probation Headquarters in the Spring Supplementary Estimates; and how this money will be spent. [165876]

Paul Goggins: A transfer of £30.5 million was made from the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service to the National Probation Directorate primarily to fund Electronic Monitoring, the Standard Technical Environment for the Probation Service (STEPS) Information Technology roll-out and Probation Loan Charges.

A further transfer of £16.7 million was made from the Criminal Justice Information Technology Group to fund the STEPS Information Technology rollout.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Afghanistan

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what new money he pledged to Afghanistan at the recent Donor Conference in Berlin. [166724]

Hilary Benn: At the Afghanistan donor conference in Berlin I announced an increase of the UK pledge to Afghanistan from £200 million over 5 years, to £500 million over the same period.

When DFID made the pledge of £200 million over five years in Tokyo in January 2002, this only related to DFID funds for humanitarian and reconstruction work. Since then funding for Afghanistan has become available from other parts of Whitehall, with the Global Conflict Prevention Pool establishing a programme for Afghanistan (£55 million over three years), and the formulation of a counter narcotics strategy with specific funding (£70 million over three years). Inclusion of these figures in the pledge announced allows them to now be properly recognised by the Afghan Government.

Since the pledge took effect in March of 2002, DFID has disbursed over £150 million. The new pledge takes our reconstruction funding for Afghanistan to £375 million, this represents £175 million in new money.

EU Development Assistance

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to promote the human rights of the indigenous people of Chaco in Bolivia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167079]

(2) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to defend human rights in Colombia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167080]

(3) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to strengthen institutional support for human rights in Mexico; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167081]

(4) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to provide a landmine expert to Sudan; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167082]

(5) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled Participation Management of National Resources in Berau in Indonesia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167083]

(6) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, on rehabilitation and reconstruction in Afghanistan; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167084]

(7) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled Second Recovery Programme in Afghanistan; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167085]

(8) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Peru; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167086]

(9) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to reinforce civil society in Guatemala; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167087]

(10) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to reinforce democracy in Venezuela; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167088]

(11) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to reinforce the judicial system in Colombia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167089]

(12) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to undertake a landmine technical survey in the Inhambane and Maputo provinces of Mozambique; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167093]

(13) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to undertake a landmine impact survey; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167094]

(14) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 effort, financed by EU Development Assistance, to deliver micro-projects in Malawi; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167095]

(15) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to provide *(a)* reconstruction at Sona and *(b)* medical assistance in the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167096]

(16) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to help displaced communities to return home to Djbouti; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167097]

(17) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to reintegrate Ethiopians displaced from Eritrea; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167098]

(18) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to clear mines in Eritrea; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167099]

(19) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to support refugees and internally displaced people in Eritrea; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167100]

(20) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to provide emergency demobilisation and reintegration support in Eritrea; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167101]

(21) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to deliver micro projects in *(a)* the Central African Republic and *(b)* Angola; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167102]

(22) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to deliver micro projects in Togo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167103]

(23) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance on the reintegration of ex-combatants in rural areas of Guinea Bissau; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167104]

(24) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to improve healthcare provision in the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167105]

(25) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU development assistance to deliver micro projects in the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167106]

(26) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to provide complementary support to the rehabilitation programme in Burundi; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167107]

(27) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to provide emergency support to the peace process in Angola; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167108]

(28) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to support displaced people in *(a)* Eastern and Southern Africa and *(b)* the Indian Ocean; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167109]

(29) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects, financed by EU development assistance, entitled Education-Environmental Capacity Development Programme in *(a)* Ghana, *(b)* Namibia, *(c)* South Africa, *(d)* Mozambique and *(e)* Angola; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [167110]

(30) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to reduce rural poverty and manage forest sustainability through development of non-timber products and community institutions in Ethiopia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167111]

(31) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to deliver community-based fisheries management and coral reef restoration in *(a)* the Caribbean and *(b)* the Pacific; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [167112]

(32) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to deliver sustainable forest management in Kenya; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167113]

(33) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to provide infrastructure technical assistance in Sempoa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167114]

(34) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to provide sanitation in St.Pierre; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167115]

(35) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to deliver micro-projects at a cost of €7.0 million, linking relief, rehabilitation and development in the Dominican Republic; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167116]

(36) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled Bugesera/Karenge drinking water supply in Rwanda; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167117]

(37) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled Karasburg Sanitation in Namibia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167118]

(38) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to provide *(a)* community based natural resource management and *(b)* carbon management in Mozambique; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [167119]

(39) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled Beira Sanitation in Mozambique; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167120]

(40) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to undertake social forestry in Malawi; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167121]

(41) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to provide water supply for six towns in Lesotho; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167122]

(42) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects, financed by EU Development Assistance, to manage natural resources in semi-arid regions in *(a)* Kenya and *(b)* Somalia; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [167123]

(43) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to use a new wildlife management method in Gabon; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167124]

(44) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to manage protected forest areas through Government NGO and civil society partnerships in Cameroon; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167125]

(45) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to improve rural water distribution in Burkina Faso; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167126]

(46) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to deliver a solid waste programme in the Dominican Republic; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167127]

(47) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to provide sustainable forest management in Tanzania; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167128]

(48) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to deliver a water sector support programme in South Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167129]

(49) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, on education reform in El Salvador; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167136]

(50) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects, financed by EU Development Assistance, on ecology in Brazil; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [167137]

(51) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to strengthen the capacity of citizens in Colombia to exercise their rights; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167138]

(52) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, on human rights in Guatemala; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167139]

(53) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, on re-unification in Peru; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167140]

(54) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, on the defence and promotion of the rights of the indigenous people and those of African origin in Nicaragua; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167141]

(55) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to counter discrimination on grounds of ethnicity in Guatemala; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167142]

(56) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to strengthen organisational processes in 120 communities in Colombia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167143]

(57) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to counter racial discrimination in Paraguay; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167144]

(58) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects, financed by EU Development Assistance, to rehabilitate victims of torture in *(a)* Argentina, *(b)* Chile and *(c)* Peru; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [167145]

(59) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to prevent torture in Peru; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167146]

(60) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to provide an electoral observation mission in Ecuador; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167147]

(61) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, to create a code of ethics and of education in Ecuador; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167148]

(62) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, on public engagement in the electoral process in Columbia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167149]

(63) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 micro projects, financed by EU development assistance, at a cost of €1,300,000 in *(a)* Colombia, *(b)* Guatemala and *(c)* Mexico; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [167150]

(64) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, on the reform and modernisation of public administration in Honduras; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167151]

(65) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, on the modernisation of the administration of justice in Mexico; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167152]

(66) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, on the development of commerce and promotion of investment in Bolivia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167153]

(67) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, on academic co-operation in Latin America; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167154]

(68) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, on rural development in Nicaragua; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167155]

(69) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU development assistance, on help for small rural producers in Panama; and what assessment he has made of the project; [167156]

(70) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to *(a)* provide education in South Sudan on the banning of landmines, *(b)* train refugees in Tanzania in self-reliance and *(c)* secure demobilisation and reintegration in (i) the Great Lakes and (ii) Eritrea; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167157]

(71) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to *(a)* support the Office of the Attorney General and *(b)* provide the rapid reaction mechanism to (i) Afghanistan, (ii) Indonesia, (iii) Nepal, (iv) Sri Lanka and (v) Cambodia; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167158]

(72) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled *(a)* Asia-Urbs (increase), *(b)* ASEAN-IPR (increase), *(c)* Asia-Europe Foundation Phase II, *(d)* Asia Invest II and *(e)* IT and C for Asia (increase); and what assessment he has made of each project; [167159]

(73) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled *(a)* framework contract/studies for Asia, *(b)* medicinal plants in Bhutan and *(c)* APRIS institutional strengthening at a cost of €4 million; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167160]

(74) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to *(a)* support the SME Development fund in Vietnam, *(b)* provide multilateral trade assistance to Cambodia and *(c)* provide support to the process of government reform in Pakistan; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167161]

(75) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled *(a)* WTO II (support to China's integration) in China and *(b)* small project facility in (i) Indonesia and (ii) the Philippines; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167162]

(76) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled *(a)* Vietnamese Government Interpreters Training Programme in Vietnam, *(b)* European TA programme for Vietnam (ETU2) and *(c)* labour market facility in Vietnam; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167163]

(77) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, *(a)* to provide multilateral trade assistance to Laos, *(b)* on renewable energy in Nepal, *(c)* to develop rural towns in Bangladesh and *(d)* to provide support for community health services in Indonesia; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167164]

(78) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled *(a)* SEDF-Enterprise development in Bangladesh, *(b)* Reproductive Health/UNFPA II in Asia and *(c)* Drugs-Reach Out II in Pakistan; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167165]

(79) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, entitled *(a)* Northern Pakistan Education Programme, *(b)* Support for Basic Education in Laos and *(c)* SMILING (Support to NGOs in Bangladesh); and what assessment he has made of each project; [167166]

(80) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, *(a)* to provide assistance for street children in Vietnam, *(b)* to support healthcare reform in Thailand and *(c)* to deliver an HIV/AIDS project within the UN joint plan of action in Burma; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167167]

(81) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, *(a)* to provide support to the education sector in Cambodia and *(b)* to provide European studies in China; and what assessment he has made of each project; [167168]

(82) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 micro-projects, financed by EU Development Assistance, in *(a)* Zimbabwe and *(b)* Tanzania; and what assessment he has made of each project. [167169]

Hilary Benn: DFID has been involved in the projects, or programmes described in a number of ways. Firstly by contributing the UK's share of the European Commission budget allocated to the projects cited and secondly, wherever possible through in-country consultation with the EC office over project and

programme design. DFID also attend the relevant Management Committees that approved the EC strategies and programmes under which the projects were or are being implemented. Finally, in some cases, DFID has formed part of a multi-donor in-country programme management committee that oversaw or is overseeing project implementation.

Some of the projects cited are ongoing and an assessment will only be possible once they have been completed. The EC, through its results-orientated management system and strengthened evaluation systems, is best placed to carry out such an assessment. DFID is however often involved in, or consulted on, such assessments. Assessments carried out to date have identified both significant success and areas for improvement. DFID continues to work with the European Commission to improve the quality and impact of its development assistance.

I refer the Hon. Member for Buckingham to the information available in the '2003 Annual Report from the European Commission to the Council and the European Parliament on the EC Development Policy and the Implementation of External Assistance 2002' and the European Commission's website http://europa.eu.int for further details about individual programmes and projects. I will place copies of the report in the Libraries of the House.

Uganda

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the efficacy of his Department's contract with the World Food Programme to distribute food to Teso in North East Uganda. [166760]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development has a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the United Nation's World Food Programme in Uganda. The current MoU has been in place since December 2002. It clearly sets out the UK's expectations in relation to our bilateral financing, and gives the World Food Programme (WFP) obligations to fulfil.

The WFP has the full capacity required to provide food relief in the North and East of Uganda effectively. WFP is the UN agency mandated to provide food aid in such a large-scale emergency, and the only agency on the ground equipped with the necessary staff, resources and experience necessary to respond adequately to the situation. DFID closely monitors the WFP's performance through the reports it submits directly to DFID, the monthly Humanitarian Updates it provides to the donor community as a whole, and regular discussions with WFP representatives in Kampala.

PRIME MINISTER

Committee on Standards in Public Life

Claire Ward: To ask the Prime Minister when he will announce new appointments to the Committee on Standards in Public Life; and if he will make a statement. [168455]

The Prime Minister: I am pleased to announce that I have appointed Sir Alistair Graham as Chairman of the Committee on Standards in Public Life in succession to Sir Nigel Wicks with effect from Monday 26 April. Sir Alistair has been a Member of the Committee since 1 October 2003.

I have also appointed Lady Elizabeth Vallance as a Member of the Committee in succession to Sir Alistair following his appointment as Chairman.

Both appointments have been made fully in accordance with the Commissioner for Public Appointments' Code of Practice.

I am very grateful to Sir Nigel for his excellent leadership of the Committee, and for the significant contribution he has made to upholding and improving standards in public life.

Food Imports

Andrew George: To ask the Prime Minister which Government Departments are responsible for ensuring that *(a)* EU member states' and *(b)* EU accession states' food imports to the UK meet the appropriate EU (i) slaughter, (ii) production, (iii) processing, (iv) labelling, (v) hygiene, (vi) food safety and (vii) traceability standards. [167322]

The Prime Minister: It is the responsibility of the relevant authorities in each EU member state and accession state to ensure that all food is produced and exported in accordance with EU legislation. The European Commission's Food and Veterinary Office is responsible for ensuring that authorities comply with these responsibilities.

Food coming to the UK from accession states before 1 May 2004 (and after this date for accession states not due to join the EU on 1 May) will be subject to the same import controls as food from other non-EU countries. Such food is subject to routine food safety and standards checks at UK ports by local authorities.

The Food Standards Agency and the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and its agencies are responsible for food safety and food standards in the UK. Enforcement responsibilities are delegated to environmental health and trading standards departments in local authorities, who carry out checks on food to ensure compliance with food safety and food hygiene standards.

Foreign Ministerial Visits

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what his policy is on the length of time it is appropriate for Cabinet Ministers to be out of the country. [167798]

The Prime Minister: Section 7 of the Ministerial Code provides guidance to Ministers making overseas visits.

Jonathan Powell

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister for what reasons Mr. Jonathan Powell has the power to direct civil servants. [167797]

The Prime Minister: Jonathan Powell has executive powers under article 3(3) of the Civil Service Order in Council. He has direct responsibility for leading and co-ordinating operations across Number 10 and reports to me.

Mayor of London

Mr. Randall: To ask the Prime Minister when he last met the Mayor of London. [168001]

The Prime Minister: I have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals, including the Mayor of London. As with previous administrations, it is not my practice to provide details of all such meetings, under exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Michael Meacher

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister for what reasons the hon. Member for Oldham West and Royton left his post as Environment Minister. [167773]

The Prime Minister: As has been the practice under successive administrations, all ministerial offices are at the disposal of the Prime Minister. Details of resigning Ministers have been announced on each occasion.

Ministerial Cars

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what steps he is taking to reduce the dependency of *(a)* himself and *(b)* his Ministers on ministerial cars. [167800]

The Prime Minister: Under the terms of the Ministerial Code, Ministers are required to make efficient and cost-effective arrangements, taking account of security considerations.

All ministerial travel on official business is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in "Travel by Ministers".

Surveillance Commissioner

Tom Levitt: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the reappointment of the Surveillance Commissioner under Part III of the Police Act 1997. [168424]

The Prime Minister: In accordance with Section 91 of the Police Act 1997, I have agreed to re-appoint Sir Philip Otton as Surveillance Commissioner from 1 February 2004 to 31 January 2007. The remit of each Surveillance Commissioner covers the whole of the United Kingdom so that any Surveillance Commissioner can act in jurisdictions other than his own.

The right hon. Sir Philip Otton has served as a Surveillance Commissioner since 2001. I am delighted that Sir Philip has accepted his re-appointment and am grateful for his continuing work.

Use of Government Property

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what his policy is in respect of the use of Government property by individuals other than special advisers to carry out work for New Labour. [167795]

The Prime Minister: Guidance to Ministers on the use of Government property is set out in section 6 of the Ministerial Code.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Katharine Gun

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Solicitor General pursuant to her answer of 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 314W, on Katharine Gun, if the Attorney-General will place copies of the correspondence between Ministers and himself on the Katharine Gun case in the Library. [164241]

The Solicitor-General: The correspondence between the Attorney-General and Ministers relates to the "Shawcross" exercise undertaken by the Attorney-General. The Attorney wrote to ministerial colleagues asking for views and any issues which may impact upon his decision whether or not it was in the public interest to consent to the prosecution of Katharine Gun for an offence under section 1 of the Official Secrets Act. The correspondence falls within exemptions 1, 2 and 4 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. The correspondence includes information whose disclosure would harm national security and was a consultation between Ministers where their advice and views were sought. The Attorney-General considers that to disclose this would harm the frankness and candour of internal discussion. He has concluded the harm likely to arise from disclosure of this material outweighs the public interest in making the information available. In addition the correspondence related to legal proceedings and therefore comes under exemption 4.

Copies of correspondence between Ministers and the Attorney-General on the Katharine Gun case will not therefore be placed in the Library.

TRANSPORT

Buses (Merseyside)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what incentives have been provided to upgrade buses used within the Merseyside transport system. [166979]

Mr. McNulty: Under the LTP process, Merseyside's five year Plan and 10 year Strategy include significant investment in the development and promotion of bus services. Merseytravel are working with local bus operators to improve standards through the Quality Corridors initiative in the LTP. Corridor Q, for example, was launched in St Helens in March 2003, involving a package of bus priorities, new bus stops, information systems and low floor buses. Merseytravel have also encouraged operators to fit particulate filters to 140 city buses through an Energy Saving Trust supported programme to encourage lower vehicle emissions.

Congestion Charge

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he last met representatives of *(a)* Transport for London and *(b)* the Greater London Authority to discuss the congestion charge. [166907]

Mr. McNulty: The London congestion charging scheme is the responsibility of the Mayor, not the Government. However, Ministers have regular meetings with the Mayor at which a wide range of transport matters are discussed.

Driving Test Waiting Times

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average wait for a driving test is *(a)* at Mill Hill test centre, *(b)* in London and *(c)* in each of the other regions of the United Kingdom; what plans he has to improve delays in giving test dates; and if he will make a statement. [167091]

Mr. Jamieson: The Driving Standards Agency has a national target for the average annual waiting time for a practical car driving test in England, Scotland and Wales of six weeks. The current national average waiting time for a test is 9.8 weeks. The current waiting time for a practical car driving test at the Mill Hill test centre is 17 weeks. The average waiting time for a test in the London and South East area is 13.3 weeks. Waiting times for a practical car driving test vary in the other areas of Great Britain as follows:

Area	*Average waiting time (weeks)*
Midlands and Eastern	10.3
Wales and Western	7.2
Northern	9.7
Scotland	4.9

In Northern Ireland, the Driver and Vehicle Testing Agency has a target average waiting time for a practical car driving test of 23 days. The average waiting time across test centres in Northern Ireland is currently 27 days.

In order to reduce the current high waiting times for tests in Great Britain to the six week waiting time target, the Driving Standards Agency recruited 283 new driving examiners in the last financial year and plans to recruit a further 330 in the coming year. An extra 7.30 am test slot is being added to weekday programmes in some test centres and tests are now offered on Sundays. The agency is deploying as many driving examiners as possible from Scotland to the London and South East area to tackle the problem of high waiting times there. In the context of its Business Plan for 2004–05, I have set the agency a target to bring national waiting times down to six weeks by January 2005.

Electronic Vehicle Licensing System

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to the answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1571W, on Electronic Vehicle Licensing System, when the Electronic Vehicle Licensing System will be implemented for cars over 3-years-old; and what the completion date for the full scheme is. [166997]

Mr. Jamieson: The electronic system for vehicles over 3-years-old will require a link between DVLA and the new MOT computer system. This should be fully available by early 2006.

Green Minister

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in the last three months in that capacity; [166063]

(2) what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that capacity; [166064]

(3) if he will list the meetings at which his Department has been represented on the delivery of sustainable development across Government as coordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers; [166065]

(4) what steps he is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government; [166066]

(5) what progress has been made on his Department's sustainable development strategy. [166067]

Mr. McNulty: Since becoming the Department's Green Minister, I have attended a number of meetings with Defra Ministers, including the Environment Minister, Elliot Morley, during which a range of sustainable development issues of concern to both our Departments were discussed.

I am also a member of ENV(G). It has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

In my role as Green Minister, I have overseen the publication of the Department's Sustainable Development Policy Statement which was published on the DfT website in March of this year. This outlines how DfT is integrating the principles of sustainable development into decision-making. It complements the Department's existing 'Green Operations Policy Statement' (also on the website), which sets out our objectives for improving the environmental performance of the estates of the Department and its Executive Agencies.

Liverpool Airport

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to review the role of Liverpool Airport within the national airport strategy. [166980]

Mr. McNulty: The White Paper The Future of Air Transport, published in December, recognised the benefits to the local economy resulting from the expansion of Liverpool Airport and supported its further growth to accommodate increased demand. It is now for the airport operator to bring forward specific development proposals. We will report progress on the policies and proposals set out in the White Paper in 2006.

Traffic Calming

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has had from the emergency services since June 2001 on the removal of *(a)* speed humps and *(b)* pinch points on the road network. [165960]

Dr. Howells: The emergency services have made no requests for the removal of traffic calming measures. The London Ambulance Service has however requested that before any measures are introduced full consideration be given in order that the right balance is struck between effective traffic calming and allowing ambulances to continue with minimum hindrance.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* factors and *(b)* statistics relating to road humps his Department is planning to monitor; and when monitoring will commence. [167226]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has conducted a number of monitoring exercises into the effects of road humps in recent years. The results of this work have been published in Traffic Advisory Leaflets and technical reports. Details of these projects are contained in Traffic Advisory Leaflet 5/01 entitled Traffic Calming Bibliography. Copies are available from the House of Commons Library. There are no plans to conduct further monitoring exercises at the present time.

Transport Services (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Birkenhead since 1997. [166497]

Dr. Howells: 4.05 miles of new cycle lanes have been constructed in Birkenhead since 1997. This includes both on-road and off-road cycle provision, and the breakdown is as follows:

	Miles
Millennium Route (part)	2.80
Beaufort Road cycle route	0.69
Beechwood cycle route	0.56
Total	4.05

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Birkenhead since 1997. [166499]

Dr. Howells: 0.60 miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Birkenhead since 1997. They are as follows:

	Miles
Hamilton Square	0.08
Borough Road (West)	0.25
Borough Road (East)	0.06
Singleton Avenue	0.03
A41 near Bolton Road	0.10
Woodchurch Road (Prenton)	0.08
Total	0.60

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Departmental Communications

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Leader of the House (1) how many staff are employed in the Office to work in the communications field, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others; [158159]

(2) what the total expenditure on communications for his Office has been in 2003–04, broken down by expenditure on *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others. [158206]

Mr. Hain: The information requested is as follows:

Expenditure in 2003–04	£
GICs	0
Press Officers	[1]0
Special Advisers	[2]—
Others	[3]41,348

[1] My Office does not employ any GICs staff or Press Officers directly. Press Office services are provided by the Cabinet Office at no charge.

[2] The Special Advisers' Code of Conduct sets out the sort of work a special adviser may undertake on behalf of their Minister. This includes communications activity. Details of the costs of Special Advisers are given on an annual basis. Information for the financial year 2003–04 will be published in due course.

[3] Cost of development and hosting of a new website. This work is contracted out by this Office.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

EU (Recognition of Qualifications)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the proposed European Directive on the mutual recognition of professional qualifications, with particular reference to the impact on the free movement of healthcare professionals; and what assessment she has made of the report adopted by the European Parliament on the Directive. [166873]

Jacqui Smith: I welcome the simplification and rationalisation of existing rules relating to professional recognition, in particular new flexibilities proposed for temporary, cross-frontier provision of services. Simpler conditions for services provision will help improve labour mobility across the European Union and contribute to the creation of a real single market in services.

The European Commission and Council have recognised the need for controls for health professionals and I agree that prior checks of qualifications are necessary in some sectors, where human health and safety are at risk. In the case of health professionals, the UK is seeking to maintain current provisions for temporary and automatic recognition applying to doctors, dentists, general care nurses, midwives and

pharmacists, and is pressing for prior checks before temporary services provision in the cases of other health professionals.

The European Parliament has proposed a large number of amendments to the text of the draft Directive, which have yet to be incorporated by the Commission into a revised text. A re-assessment of the draft Directive will be made by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education when the revised text has been presented to the Council.

Internet Fraud

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions she has had with the Home Office about combating fraud committed over the internet. [166737]

Mr. Timms: The Home Office leads on e-crime and sets a comprehensive framework of action. DTI and HO officials are in regular contact to consider the whole range of cybercrime issues and how they impact on the interests of businesses and consumers. DTI officials are represented on the Internet Crime Forum which brings together Government, law enforcement agencies and internet industry to tackle crime and foster business and public confidence in the use of the internet. The Forum is actively considering future work on internet fraud. My officials are also in regular contact with the relevant law enforcement authorities to explore how best to convey crime prevention messages and how best users may manage their systems to enable the efficient detection and investigation of on-line crime.

Miners' Compensation

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list law companies who have not responded to the request to repay amounts overcharged to miners and their widows in respect of processing miners' compensation claims; and if she will make a statement. [166422]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 21 April 2004]*: Following is a list of solicitors who have either stated they do not intend to repay claimants, or did not respond to my letter about refunding overpayments or who have requested that they be removed from the DTI list of approved solicitors.

As you will be aware, my letters of December 2003 and February 2004 to all firms of solicitors handling these claims asked that those who had unfairly taken a proportion of miners' compensation to repay the money. I wrote to the Law Society asking them to take action to ensure that their members voluntarily refund any fees taken, rather than wait for miners to contact them. I also passed the names of all firms who did not reply, to the Law Society asking them to take urgent action to ensure that the firms comply with my request.

After looking into the issue, the Law Society has concluded that such double charging is unlikely to be justified, and is 'likely to give rise to a finding of inadequate professional service'.

List of all solicitors written to in December and/or February who have been removed from the website because they either failed to respond or asked to be removed

Alan Curtis Solicitors
Allan McDougall & Co. Solicitors
Andrew P. Walker & Co. Solicitors
Ashington Denton with Bingley Dyson & Furey
Barber Cartain Solicitors
Birchall Blackburn
Bleasdale & Co.
Brearleys Solicitors
Brown & Lloyd Solicitors
Bury & Walkers Solicitors
Carter Hodge Solicitors
Castle Sanderson Solicitors
Clarke & Ross W.S
Clive Ashman Solicitors
Coleman Solicitors
Coley & Tilley
Cunningham Turner
D. W. Shaw Solicitors
DA Milligan & Co. Solicitors
Dave Johnson
David Handy Solicitors
DMH
Easthams Solicitors
Edgar Cule & Evans Solicitors
Edwards Abrams Doherty Solicitors
Elsbury-Priddin Solicitors
Emsleys
Emsleys Solicitors
Endlars Solicitors
Evans & Greaves
Everatt & Co.
Freed Kemp Rapport
Freeman Johnson
G. M. Wilson Solicitors
Gabb & Co.
Gabb & Co.
Gartside Harding & Davies
Grainger Appleyard & Fleming
Granville-West Chivers & Morgan
Granville-West Chivers & Morgan
Grunhut Makepeace & Duffy
Hamilton Joseph & Co. Solicitors
Hardesty Elleanor Solicitors
Harris & Cartwright Solicitors
Harrison Bundey & Co.
Harvey Ingram Solicitors
Hattersleys Solicitors
Heyman & Co.
Hickmotts Solicitors
Holmes & Moffitt Solicitors
Howard & Co. Solicitors
Inghams
Ingrams Solicitors
Ingrams Solicitors

J. H. Powell & Co. Solicitors
J. N. Bell B.A. Solicitor
J. P. Hall Solicitors
J. Peter Davies & Partners
Jack Thornley & Partners Solicitors
James Pearce & Co.
Jamiesons
John D. Williams Solicitors
John E. Millar & Co.
John Hogg & Co.
John Howell & Co. Solicitors
John O'Neill Solicitors
Jones-Keppe
Kate Patterson & Co. Solicitors
Lester Morrill Solicitors
Lofthouse & Co. Solicitors
Lopian Wagner Solicitors
Lucas & Co.
Maclaren Britain
Maidments Solicitors
Maidments Solicitors
Matthew O. Byrne Law Office
Miller Samuel & Company Solicitors
Moseley Chapman & Kemp
Murray, Hamilton & Chalmers
Nimmo Thomson & McLean Solicitors
Park Hutchison Solicitors & Notaries
Payne Marsh & Stillwell
Plancey & Co.
Pollard Coutts & Co.
Ralph & Co. Solicitors
Richards & Lewis Solicitors
Roger James, Clements & Partners
Scanlan Westgarth Solicitors
Schofields
Sentley Wilson Bowen Solicitors
Silverbeck Rymer Solicitors
Silverman Livermore Solicitors
Spicketts
Stephensons Solicitors
Stripes Solicitors
Thomas & Co. Solicitors
Thomas Eggar Church Adams.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent discussions she has had with the British Chamber of Commerce on the subject of regulatory impact assessments. [166454]

Nigel Griffiths: I meet Mr. David Frost, the Director General of BCC regularly, most recently at the BCC Conference on 21 April where I took part in a panel discussion on RIAs. I understand the BCC welcomes the Government's work on RIAs.

Renewable Energy

Angela Watkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress her Department is making on promoting the environmental benefits of renewable energy. [167003]

Mr. Timms: I launched the "It's only natural" campaign in February. This will initially target key decision makers in the financial and planning sectors to ensure that they are equipped with the best information for making decisions regarding renewable energy. The campaign will continue to the end of March 2005 and there is a £2 million budget for the project.

Royal Mail

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent assessment she has made of the operational efficiency of Royal Mail; what action she is taking to improve the standards of delivery of domestic mail; and if she will make a statement. [167199]

Mr. Timms: The assessment of the operational efficiency of Royal Mail and any action to be taken to improve the standards of delivery of domestic mail is a matter for the postal regulator, Postcomm.

Small Businesses (Tynemouth)

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent action her Department has taken to support small businesses in Tynemouth constituency. [165362]

Nigel Griffiths: In his budget statement my right hon. Friend the Chancellor announced a number of steps to help small businesses including an increase of capital allowances to 50 per cent. and raising VAT registration threshold to 58 per cent. all of which helps Small Businesses in Tynemouth.

The Chancellor also announced that the Employer Training Pilot, which has been running in Tyne and Wear for the last year, would be rolled out and made available to businesses throughout the North East. This helps businesses to improve the skills of their workforce by providing training tailored to their needs. The programme not only offers free tailored advice on training but also the unique prospect of subsidised training and wage compensation to employers for the time workers are away from work—traditionally one of the biggest barriers to training in smaller companies.

The core funding provided to Business Link Tyne and Wear, has provided a foundation on which the Business Link has sourced additional funding projected at £14.5 million for the benefit of businesses in Tyne and Wear, for the year 2004–05.

Around £3.5 million of this is available, including a subsidy of up to 50 per cent. for management development training and upskilling the workforce to SME's across Tyne and Wear.

Businesses can also benefit from a range of Workforce Development services to help SMEs achieve the Investors in People Standard and develop their workforce. One business based in Tynemouth, received 50 per cent. subsidy to help them towards paying their Investors in People assessment fees. SMEs with between

5 and 49 employees are also eligible for additional funding towards helping them to reach the standard. In the past, financial subsidies towards consultancy costs were only available to businesses over 36 months old and these were restricted to specific projects. Now, a subsidy of up to 45 per cent. can be accessed by businesses of any age or size towards the cost of any business related consultancy. Around £4 million is available for this purpose.

Local SMEs can also benefit from up to 45 per cent. funding towards the cost of exhibition space and the design build and dressing of a stand. In conjunction with this, Business Link Tyne and Wear have held three 'Meet the Buyer' events over the last two years as a means for local SMEs to meet buyers from both within and beyond the region, offering SME's the opportunity to become integral cogs in supply chains.

Business Link Tyne and Wear has helped a number of businesses in the Tynemouth area to access financial assistance, one such SME received a 45 per cent. subsidy to help them to develop their website. They also went on to receive an additional 50 per cent. subsidy towards the cost of training, to enable staff to update the website once developed.

In addition, a restaurant in Tynemouth, received 50 per cent. funding towards Management Development training, they also had consultancy assistance, to help them to develop a marketing strategy.

Unsecured loans of up to £15,000 are also available to businesses in the North East that have had difficulty accessing finance elsewhere. Businesses must work with a mentor and repay the loan within five years.

Over the past 15 months Business Link has received 660 inquiries from existing businesses and people looking to start their own business in North Tyneside. Of these, 43 existing, and 22 start up inquiries were from Tynemouth. 670 businesses have started in North Tyneside. They are offered an independent service of one-to-one 'counselling' and given intensive advice on business planning, marketing and finance.

An adviser from Business Link and North Tyneside Council's advisers work side by side at North Tyneside Council's premises in North Shields to provide advice and support to businesses based in North Tyneside, including Tynemouth. In addition, an adviser is based in Tynemouth and North Tyneside Colleges two days a week to offer advice to anyone that is looking to start or already running a business.

Tyne and Wear Small Business Fund, through the Regional Development Agency's Single Programme Funding, (Managed by Tyne and Wear Development Company and delivered by each local authority) is a 50 per cent. Capital Equipment Grant of between £500 and £2,500 available to pre-start and new businesses—up to 12 months old.

The Regional Service for Clustering (RSC), also funded by the Dti, through the RDA, helps groups of SME's collaborate support across Tyne and Wear—this project is based in North Tyneside.

North Tyneside Council also provides free business advice and guidance to all businesses setting up in North Tyneside.

Steel

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the supply of steel in the UK for manufacturing industries. [167188]

Jacqui Smith: Global steel prices have risen sharply in recent months as a result of rising input costs and market demand. This is causing difficulties for certain steel using industries where they have limited scope for passing on the increased cost to customers. There have been reports of tightness in the steel supply market, with imports to the EU reduced, but I understand that all types of steel remain available, although prices are high. There is no shortage of supply from UK steel producers.

Textiles

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people were employed in the textile industry in 1997; and how many are employed in it now. [165383]

Jacqui Smith: The information requested is as follows:

thousands

	Employee jobs in textile and clothing industries (SIC 17–18)
June 1997	347
June 2003	180
December 2003	171

Source:
Office for National Statistics Annual Business Inquiry and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment Northern Ireland Quarterly Employment Survey.
Employee jobs in local units of Standard Industrial Classification division 17 (textiles) and division 18 (clothing).

Wind Energy

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost is per kilowatt hour of electricity generated by *(a)* offshore wind and *(b)* onshore wind; and if she will make a statement. [167200]

Mr. Timms: Modelling carried out to support the recent Innovation Review puts the current estimated cost of onshore wind generation at 3.1–4 p/kWh expected to fall to ~2.5–3.2 p/kWh by 2020 and offshore wind generation at 6.0–7.6 p/kWh expected to fall to ~3.0–4.6 p/kWh by 2020.

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the environmental impact of wind farms. [167012]

Mr. Timms: The Energy White Paper published in February 2003 set out the Government's energy policy to tackle the crucial environmental challenge of climate change. The challenge we face is to reduce the levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, one of the main causes of climate change, which have risen by more than a third since the industrial revolution and are now rising faster than at any time in the past.

The Government has set the target of obtaining 10 per cent. of our electricity from renewable sources by 2010, with the aspiration of doubling this by 2020.

Renewable energy will make an important contribution to the Government's wider climate change programme. It is estimated that increased renewable energy generation, to meet the 2010 target, will deliver additional carbon savings of some 2.5 million tonnes of carbon per year by 2010, and that doubling this by 2020 would achieve further cuts of some 3 to 5 million tonnes of carbon per year above that by 2020. Wind power is expected to make the largest contribution of between 7 and 8 per cent. towards the 2010 renewable electricity generation target and the positive environmental impact that will make.

Under the normal planning regime and for consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989 or the Transport and Works Act 1992 wind farm developers are required to consider all environmental aspects of wind energy projects and produce an Environmental Impact Assessment. These assessments are available to the public.

Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with the IT industry about the recommendations of the industry forum for Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access; and if she will make a statement. [166883]

Mr. Timms: Worldwide Interoperability for Microwave Access, commonly referred to as Wi-Max, is a North American based industry initiative to promote open interoperability between products designed for broadband wireless access. We welcome efforts to improve standards of interoperability between vendor products through industry initiatives. The Department participates in several fora where these standards are generated and used. My officials have discussed the initiative in regular meetings with companies concerned in this sector. Use of wireless relies on availability of essential spectrum, which in the UK is now the responsibility of the new independent regulator for communications—Ofcom. Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond to my hon. Friend. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

HEALTH

Allergies

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the extent of Government research and development programmes on allergies. [165062]

Dr. Ladyman: Details of research projects relating to allergies funded by, or of interest to, the national health service are recorded on the National Research Register (NRR) at www.update-software.com/national. The NRR currently contains details of over 100 on-going projects in this area, as well as a larger number of completed projects. Much of this work is funded through allocations made annually to NHS providers for research and development to meet the priorities and needs of the NHS and to meet the costs to the NHS of hosting research supported by external funders. The total amount allocated to NHS providers in 2003–04 for research and development was £442 million. In addition, the Department is funding research on air pollution and asthma under its policy research programme.

In 2001–02, expenditure by the Medical Research Council on its respiratory disorders portfolio was an estimated £11.9 million, which included work on allergies and asthma.

The Food Standards Agency funds research on food allergy and intolerance, with particular emphasis on severe allergies, how they occur and what causes them. A large programme of research on food intolerance and allergy, costing around £1 million a year is ongoing.

Consultants

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital consultants retired in the last quarter of *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04. [165886]

Mr. Hutton: Retirement data in the format requested and figures for 2003–04 are not available. The number of consultants in England and Wales, who received a pension from the National Health Service Pension Scheme in the year to 31 March 2003, is shown as follows:

1 April 2002 to 31 March 2003

Consultant Pension Awards: 451

Pension scheme records are continually, and retrospectively, being updated to reflect further membership activity and revised data. This data extract therefore represents a snapshot in time as at August 2003.

Dementia

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what data collection systems are in place to record the *(a)* number and *(b)* costs of drugs for dementia supplied to acute and mental health trusts; [166549]

(2) what steps he is taking to ensure that accurate outturn figures are available for the *(a)* number and *(b)* costs of drugs for dementia supplied to acute and mental health trusts; [166550]

(3) if he will discuss with acute and mental health trusts the provision of systems to ensure accurate outturn figures for the *(a)* number and *(b)* costs of drugs for dementia supplied to acute and mental health trusts. [166551]

Dr. Ladyman: In 2002–03 national health service trusts in England spent £1,942.8 million on the purchase of medicines, including medical gases. Detail of the break down of this figure into different therapeutic classes of medicines is not available.

The national programme for information technology is charged with delivering the IT strategy for the NHS. Details were set out in "Delivering 21st Century IT Support for the NHS". The implementation of this national IT strategy will enable the collection and analysis of more detailed information on the use of medicines by the NHS.

Foundation Trusts

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what statistics will be available centrally from his Department on NHS foundation trusts. [166438]

Mr. Hutton: The Department will continue to publish statistics on the performance of the national health service as a whole. This will include information on services commissioned by primary care trusts and provided by NHS trusts, NHS foundation trusts, diagnosis and treatment centres and independent sector providers.

General Practitioners

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many general practitioners there were per head of population in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority in each year since 1997. [166653]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of general practitioners (excluding retainers) per 100,000 population in England and in each strategic health authority (SHA) since 1997 is shown in the table.

The Office for National Statistics has not yet published 2003 population data by SHA. Therefore, information for 2003 has only been provided on a national level.

All General Medical Practitioners[1] (excluding GP Retainers) per 100,000 of the population by Strategic Health Authority: 1997–2003, England

Number (headcount)

	1997		*1998*		*1999*	
	All practitioners (excl. Ret)	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret)*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret)*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*
England total	29,389	60	29,697	61	29,987	61
North East total	1,485	58	1,506	59	1,520	60
County Durham and Tees Valley	649	57	650	57	656	58
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	836	59	856	61	864	62
North West total	4,040	59	4,044	60	4,124	61
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,421	60	1,413	60	1,456	62
Cumbria and Lancashire	1,134	60	1,147	60	1,158	61
Greater Manchester	1,485	59	1,484	59	1,510	60
Yorkshire and the Humber total	3,021	61	3,028	61	3,092	63
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	999	62	991	62	1,011	63
South Yorkshire	758	59	758	59	772	61
West Yorkshire	1,264	61	1,279	62	1,309	63
East Midlands total	2,338	57	2,361	58	2,369	58
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	908	60	902	59	898	58
Trent	1,430	56	1,459	57	1,471	57
West Midlands total	3,026	58	3,057	58	3,093	59
Birmingham and The Black Country	1,327	58	1,343	59	1,357	60
Shropshire and Staffordshire	792	54	813	55	830	56
West Midlands South	907	60	901	60	906	60
East of England total	3,080	58	3,141	59	3,156	59
Bedford and Hertfordshire	915	59	944	60	948	60
Essex	849	54	862	54	860	54
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	1,316	62	1,335	62	1,348	62
London total	4,532	65	4,515	65	4,496	64
North Central London	788	69	802	70	786	68
North East London	888	62	896	62	894	61
North West London	1,209	73	1,188	71	1.134	67
South East London	868	60	862	59	901	61
South West London	779	62	767	61	781	62
South East total	4,682	60	4,788	61	4,830	61
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1,060	61	1,070	61	1,089	62
Kent and Medway	904	58	916	59	918	59
Surrey and Sussex	1,486	59	1,518	60	1,522	60
Thames Valley	1,232	60	1,284	62	1,301	63
South West total	3,185	66	3,257	67	3,307	68
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	1,325	63	1,374	65	1,404	65
Somerset and Dorset	794	68	820	70	843	72
South West Peninsula	1,066	69	1,063	69	1,060	68

Number (headcount)

	2000		*2001*	
	All practitioners (excl. Ret)	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret)*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*
England total	30,252	62	30,685	62
North East total	1,536	61	1,603	64
County Durham and Tees Valley	661	58	696	61
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	875	63	907	65
North West total	4,134	61	4,174	62
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,459	62	1,481	63
Cumbria and Lancashire	1,152	61	1,174	62
Greater Manchester	1,523	60	1,519	60
Yorkshire and the Humber total	3,123	63	3,192	64
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	1,021	63	1,039	64
South Yorkshire	778	61	794	63
West Yorkshire	1,324	64	1.359	65
East Midlands total	2,384	58	2,437	58
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	877	57	894	57
Trent	1,507	58	1,543	59
West Midlands total	3,142	60	3,157	60
Birmingham and The Black Country	1,380	61	1,391	61
Shropshire and Staffordshire	838	56	825	55
West Midlands South	924	61	941	62
East of England total	3,183	59	3,204	59
Bedford and Hertfordshire	955	60	965	60
Essex	857	53	851	53
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	1,371	63	1,388	64
London total	4,548	64	4,545	62
North Central London	819	70	804	67
North East London	925	62	899	59
North West London	1,125	66	1,150	65
South East London	886	60	904	60
South West London	793	62	788	61
South East total	4,839	61	4,943	62
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1,099	62	1,122	63
Kent and Medway	901	57	915	58
Surrey and Sussex	1,531	60	1,571	61
Thames Valley	1,308	63	1,335	64
South West total	3,363	69	3,430	69
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	1,424	66	1,442	67
Somerset and Dorset	846	71	867	73
South West Peninsula	1,093	70	1,121	71

Number (headcount)

	2002		*2003*	
	All practitioners (excl. Ret)	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret)*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*
England total	31,182	63	32,593	66
North East total	1,645	65	n/a	n/a
County Durham and Tees Valley	701	62	n/a	n/a
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	944	68	n/a	n/a
North West total	4,247	63	n/a	n/a
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,536	65	n/a	n/a
Cumbria and Lancashire	1,200	63	n/a	n/a
Greater Manchester	1,511	60	n/a	n/a

Number (headcount)

	2002		2003	
	All practitioners (excl. Ret)	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret)*	*All practitioners (excl. Ret) per 100,000 population*
Yorkshire and the Number total	3,253	65	n/a	n/a
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	1,065	65	n/a	n/a
South Yorkshire	808	64	n/a	n/a
West Yorkshire	1,380	66	n/a	n/a
East Midlands total	2,466	58	n/a	n/a
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	910	58	n/a	n/a
Trent	1,556	59	n/a	n/a
West Midlands total	3,255	61	n/a	n/a
Birmingham and The Black Country	1,428	63	n/a	n/a
Shropshire and Staffordshire	861	58	n/a	n/a
West Midlands South	966	63	n/a	n/a
East of England total	3,223	59	n/a	n/a
Bedford and Hertfordshire	976	61	n/a	n/a
Essex	846	52	n/a	n/a
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	1,401	64	n/a	n/a
London total	4,609	63	n/a	n/a
North Central London	806	66	n/a	n/a
North East London	945	61	n/a	n/a
North West London	1,139	64	n/a	n/a
South East London	902	60	n/a	n/a
South West London	817	63	n/a	n/a
South East total	5,017	62	n/a	n/a
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	1,112	62	n/a	n/a
Kent and Medway	911	57	n/a	n/a
Surrey and Sussex	1,587	62	n/a	n/a
Thames Valley	1,407	67	n/a	n/a
South West total	3,467	70	n/a	n/a
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	1,460	67	n/a	n/a
Somerset and Dorset	895	75	n/a	n/a
South West Peninsula	1,112	70	n/a	n/a

n/a = Not available

[1] All Practitioners (excluding GP Retainers) includes GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Schemes and GP Returners.

SHA population figures are derived from the 1992–2000 first revised sub national population estimates published by ONS 27 February 2003 and so are not consistent with the interim revised national population estimates for 1992 2002 published by ONS 23 October 2003.

Data have been converted to match Strategic Health Authority structures for 2002.

Data as at 1 October 1997–99,30 September 2000–03.

Sources:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

2001 ONS Population Census.

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many whole time equivalent general practitioners there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* each strategic health authority in each year from September 1997 to September 2003. [166654]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of whole time equivalent (wte) general practitioners (GPs) (excluding retainers) in England and in each strategic health authority in each year since 1997 is shown in the table.

All practitioners (excluding GP retainers)[1] by strategic health authority boundaries: 1997 to 2003

estimated whole time equivalents

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*March 2002*	*2002*	*March 2003*	*2003*
England	27,660	27,848	28,033	28,154	28,439	28,540	28,740	29,180	29,777
North East	1,402	1,418	1,426	1,434	1,488	1,494	1,523	1,542	1,602
Northumberland, Tyne and Wear	782	802	807	812	836	852	866	855	890
County Durham and Tees Valley	620	617	619	622	652	642	657	688	712
North West	3,834	3,822	3,880	3,874	3,903	3,923	3,943	4,002	4,058
Cumbria and Lancashire	1,079	1,083	1,090	1,079	1,093	1,107	1,103	1,116	1,128
Greater Manchester	1,409	1,404	1,420	1,424	1,422	1,422	1,409	1,444	1,459
Cheshire and Merseyside	1,346	1,335	1,370	1,371	1,388	1,395	1,430	1,442	1,471

All practitioners (excluding GP retainers)[1] by strategic health authority boundaries: 1997 to 2003

estimated whole time equivalents

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	March 2002	2002	March 2003	2003
Yorkshire and the Humber	2,848	2,843	2,892	2,911	2,950	2,979	2,988	3,037	3,131
North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire	944	934	951	959	968	985	989	998	1,037
West Yorkshire	1,188	1,198	1,221	1,227	1,248	1,266	1,257	1,298	1,327
South Yorkshire	716	711	720	725	734	728	742	741	767
East Midlands	2,220	2,233	2,227	2,225	2,261	2,236	2,275	2,311	2,357
Trent	1,363	1,382	1,386	1,408	1,434	1,405	1,439	1,462	1,472
Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland	857	851	841	817	827	831	836	849	886
West Midlands	2,877	2,901	2,920	2,959	2,962	3,001	3,034	3,051	3,122
Shropshire and Staffordshire	757	776	787	792	779	781	806	818	833
Birmingham and The Black Country	1,261	1,272	1,279	1,299	1,305	1,317	1,330	1,323	1,371
West Midlands South	859	853	853	869	878	903	898	910	918
East of England	2,901	2,955	2,963	2,979	2,987	2,997	2,991	3,040	3,134
Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire	1,227	1,243	1,250	1,268	1,276	1,276	1,277	1,297	1,346
Bedford and Hertfordshire	869	892	894	897	906	906	914	918	938
Essex	805	819	819	814	805	814	800	826	849
London	4,225	4,212	4,198	4,217	4,212	4,229	4,288	4,398	4,490
North West London	1,107	1,097	1,055	1,044	1,064	1,043	1,056	1,085	1,087
North Central London	738	741	727	748	746	755	759	760	797
North East London	835	845	844	866	841	859	888	919	913
South East London	814	810	840	825	833	820	830	872	893
South West London	731	720	732	735	727	752	755	762	799
South East	4,410	4,482	4,512	4,507	4,579	4,602	4,608	4,670	4,711
Thames Valley	1,145	1,186	1,198	1,202	1,218	1,236	1,268	1,273	1,279
Hampshire and Isle of Wight	996	999	1,014	1,017	1,037	1,041	1,022	1,047	1,080
Kent and Medway	860	867	868	853	860	855	854	863	868
Surrey and Sussex	1,410	1,430	1,432	1,435	1,464	1,469	1,464	1,487	1,485
South West	2,942	2,981	3,014	3,048	3,097	3,079	3,091	3,128	3,172
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire	1,225	1,257	1,281	1,289	1,301	1,300	1,302	1,316	1,338
South West Peninsula	990	981	972	1,000	1,025	1,012	1,006	1,039	1,040
Somerset and Dorset	727	744	761	759	771	768	783	773	794

[1] All practitioners (excluding GP retainers) includes GMS unrestricted principals, PMS contracted GPs, PMS salaried GPs, restricted principals, assistants, GP registrars, salaried doctors (Para 52 SFA), PMS other, flexible career scheme GPs and GP returners.

Notes:

1. Data as at 1 October 1997–99, 30 September 2000–03, 31 March 2002–03.
2. WTE data has been estimated using the results from the 1992–93 GMP Workload Survey; Full time—1.00 wte; three quarter time—0.69 wte; job share—0.65 wte; half time—0.60 wte.

Source:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

NHS Staff

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of *(a)* medical and dental staff and *(b)* administration and estates staff was in each year from 1997–98 to 2002–03 (i) in cash terms and (ii) as a proportion of total NHS expenditure. [166656]

Mr. Hutton: Table 1 shows expenditure on medical and dental staff in cash terms in England, for financial years 1997–98 to 2002–03.

Table 2 shows expenditure on administrative and estates staff in cash terms in England, for financial years 1997–98 to 2002–03.

Table 3 shows expenditure on medical and dental staff as a proportion of total national health service expenditure, for financial years 1997–98 to 2002–03.

Table 4 shows expenditure on administrative and estates staff as a proportion of total NHS expenditure, for financial years 1997–98 to 2002–3.

Table 1: Hospital and community health services expenditure on medical and dental staff in England 1997–98 to 2002–03

£

	Total expenditure
1997–98	3,021,917,492
1998–99	3,300,976,457
1999–2000	3,664,710,847
2000–01	4,,138,320,465
2001–02	4,790,866,706
2002–03	5,445,120,598

Table 2: Hospital and community health services expenditure on administration and estates staff in England 1997–98 to 2002–03

£

	Total expenditure
1997–98	2,962,032,067
1998–99	3,122,153,228
1999–2000	3,368,608,095
2000–01	3,705,851,155
2001–02	4,175,084,314
2002–03	4,710,704,403

Table 3: Hospital and community health services expenditure on medical and dental staff in England 1997–98 to 2002–03 as a proportion of total net NHS expenditure (England)

	Percentage of total expenditure
1997–98	8.72
1998–99	9.02
1999–2000	9.19
2000–01	9.42
2001–02	9.72
2002–03	10.02

Table 4: Hospital and community health services expenditure on administration and estates staff in England 1997–98 to 2002–03 as a proportion of total net NHS expenditure (England)

	Percentage of total expenditure
1997–98	8.54
1998–99	8.53
1999–2000	8.45
2000–01	8.43
2001–02	8.47
2002–03	8.67

Sources:

Expenditure on administration and estates staff:

Annual financial returns of NHS trusts 1997–98 to 2002–03

Annual financial returns of health authorities 1997–98 to 2001–02

Annual financial returns of strategic health authorities 2002–03

Annual financial returns of primary care trusts 2000–01 to 2002–03

Total expenditure:

From 1997–98 to 1999–2000—Departmental Report 2001 (Cm 5103)

From 2000–01 to 2002–03—Departmental Report 2003 (Cm 5904).

Nursing

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) for what reason his Department ceased in October 2001 to collect data on the proportion of student nurses who successfully complete courses in *(a)* general nursing, *(b)* paediatric nursing, *(c)* midwifery and *(d)* psychiatric nursing; [166353]

(2) what targets his Department has for reducing the attrition rate among student nurses; [166354]

(3) what targets his Department set in March 2001 for reducing the attrition rate among student nurses. [166355]

Mr. Hutton: The English National Board for Nursing (ENB) collected information on the attrition rate from nursing and midwifery courses until its abolition in March 2002 with the creation of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC). A new attrition data collection system administered by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) has been put in place, from which the information will be available in due course. A single and consistent definition of attriton has also been agreed with higher education institutions.

The latest complete information on attrition from nurse training courses relates to the 1997–98 cohort and averaged 20 per cent. across all branches. The human resources performance framework, published in October 2000, set a target of 13 per cent. attrition for students entering nurse training in 2000–01. Workforce development confederations and strategic health authorities are working with higher education institutions to meet this target locally.

Postcode Prescribing

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to tackle the large local variations in the availability of chemotherapy and other systemic therapies across England identified by the National Audit Office in its report on cancer services. [R] [164684]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the response I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Norwich, North (Dr. Gibson) on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 173W.

Primary Care Trusts

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will undertake a review of the funding allocation for the Buckinghamshire primary care trusts before 2006. [166817]

Mr. Hutton: Work on the next round of funding allocations, covering the period up to 2007–08, has already commenced. The Advisory Committee on Resource Allocation will oversee issues relating to the next round of funding allocations. The development of the allocations policy will involve consideration of funding for all primary care trusts.

Social Services Departments

Miss Widdecombe: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many social services departments do not have an intervenor service for deafblind children. [166854]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 21 April 2004]:* Guidance published by the Department in 2001 required local authorities to ensure the provision of specifically trained one-to-one support workers for deafblind people assessed as needing one. The 2001 guidance refers to intervenor services as one form of support. Sense, the charity for deafblind people, recently estimated that 19 per cent. of social services departments are providing intervenors for at least one person.

Supporting People Scheme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent discussions he has had with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Treasury on the overspend on the Supporting People budget. [167855]

Dr. Ladyman: I met my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (Yvette Cooper) on 13 January. I attended an inter-ministerial meeting on this subject on 14 January.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice he has given to local Supporting People teams on the implications of the budget overspend. [167856]

Dr. Ladyman: Advice to local Supporting People teams is the responsibility of my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Apprenticeships (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Manchester, Gorton have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [167437]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1996 to March 2001 in the six Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) that amalgamated into Greater Manchester LSC—Bolton and Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and High Peak and Wigan.

Number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) plus number of starts in the six Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs)

TEC/LSC	Advanced MAs	Foundation MAs
April 1998 to March 1999[1]		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	800	600
Manchester	2,400	700
Oldham CCTE	400	300
Rochdale CCTE	500	100
Stockport and High Peak[2]	800	100
Wigan CCTE	700	300
April 1999 to March 2000[1]		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	900	1000
Manchester	2,800	1,800
Oldham CCTE	500	500
Rochdale CCTE	500	600
Stockport and High Peak[2]	700	700
Wigan CCTE	700	600
April 2000 to March 2001[1]		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	700	1,200
Manchester	3,200	2,600
Oldham CCTE	500	700
Rochdale CCTE	400	700
Stockport and High Peak[2]	800	1,000
Wigan CCTE	900	800
April 2001 to July 2002[1]		
Greater Manchester LSC	4,800	9,800
March 2001 to July 2002[1]		
Greater Manchester LSC	2,900	6,800

[1] Time period.
[2] TEC also became part of Derbyshire LSC
Source:
TEC management information
LSC Individualised Learner Record

Degree Courses

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what proportion of students graduated from *(a)* skills-based and *(b)* academic degree courses in each year between 1997 and 2003; and if he will make a statement. [153536]

Alan Johnson: The available information on first degree graduates is taken from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record and is given in the table. Figures are given on a subject of study basis.

First Degree Graduates[1] from UK HE institutions by subject

Subject group	1997/98		1998/99		1999/2000	
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage
Medicine and dentistry	5,900	2	5,842	2	5,966	2
Subjects allied to medicine	16,284	6	17,593	7	17,789	7
Biological sciences	16,885	7	17,359	7	18,449	7
Veterinary science	494	0	528	0	558	0
Agriculture and related subjects	2,266	1	2,329	1	2,342	1
Physical sciences	13,296	5	13,056	5	13,184	5
Mathematical sciences	3,939	2	4,250	2	4,094	2
Computer science/IT	9,991	4	10,380	4	11,211	4
Engineering and technology	22,574	9	22,012	8	20,551	8
Architecture, building and planning	7,273	3	7,223	3	6,587	2
Social, economic and political studies	20,736	8	21,574	8	22,715	9
Law	9,889	4	9,982	4	10,210	4
Business and administrative studies	29,401	11	30,937	12	31,905	12
Librarianship and information science	3,468	1	3,803	1	4,597	2
Languages	16,388	6	15,965		616,619	6
Humanities	10,391	4	10,411	4	10,362	4
Creative arts and design	19,390	7	20,300	8	21,263	8
Education	13,788	5	13,520	5	11,935	4
Combined	36,400	14	36,607	14	34,930	13
Total	258,753	100	263,671	100	265,267	100

Subject group	2000/01 Number	2000/01 Percentage	2001/02 Number	2001/02 Percentage	2002/03 [2,3] Number	2002/03 [2,3] Percentage
Medicine and dentistry	5,964	2	6,079	2	6,114	2
Subjects allied to medicine	19,474	7	20,934	8	22,252	8
Biological sciences	18,550	7	18,185	7	23,168	8
Veterinary science	581	0	622	0	561	0
Agriculture and related subjects	2,297	1	2,315	1	2,109	1
Physical sciences	13,021	5	12,187	5	12,096	4
Mathematical sciences	4,220	2	4,066	2	4,993	2
Computer science/IT	12,504	5	13,857	5	17,385	6
Engineering and technology	19,802	7	19,760	7	18,742	7
Architecture, building and planning	6,246	2	6,180	2	6,267	2
Social, economic and political studies	21,982	8	21,757	8	24,435	9
Law	10,034	4	9,866	4	11,405	4
Business and administrative studies	32,635	12	32,628	12	38,677	14
Librarianship and information science	4,547	2	5,245	2	7,146	3
Languages	16,550	6	15,488	6	19,670	7
Humanities	9,855	4	9,816	4	13,071	5
Creative arts and design	22,207	8	23,026	9	26,054	10
Education	11,784	4	12,474	5	9,301	3
Combined	33,093	12	32,569	12	9,343	3
Total	265,346	100	267,054	100	272,788	100

[1] Figures include both home and overseas students.
[2] Figures for 2002/03 are provisional.
[3] The Joint Academic Coding of Subjects (JACS) coding frame was introduced in 2002/03 and replaces HESA's HESACODE classification which was used for years up to and including 2001/02. The main effect of this is to reduce the number of students in the Combined course category and increase those who are allocated to specific subject groups.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what proportion of students enrolled on *(a)* skills-based and *(b)* academic degree courses in each year between 1997 and 2003; and if he will make a statement; [153538]

(2) how many and what proportion of students he estimates will enrol on *(a)* skills-based and *(b)* academic degree courses in each year between 2004 and 2010; and if he will make a statement. [153537]

Alan Johnson: The available information on first degree enrolments is taken from the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) Student Record and is given in the table. Figures are given on a subject of study basis.

Projections of student numbers on a subject basis are not available centrally.

First Degree Enrolments[1] at UK HE institutions by subject

Subject group	1997/98 Number	1997/98 Percentage	1998/99 Number	1998/99 Percentage	1999/2000 Number	1999/2000 Percentage
Medicine and dentistry	28,508	3	29,032	3	29,202	3
Subjects allied to medicine	67,474	7	72,288	7	75,517	8
Biological sciences	65,932	7	66,550	7	67,624	7
Veterinary science	2,547	0	2,689	0	2,846	0
Agriculture and related subjects	7,766	1	8,045	1	7,518	1
Physical sciences	50,723	5	50,222	5	49,113	5
Mathematical sciences	15,990	2	15,677	2	15,633	2
Computer science/IT	47,797	5	52,008	5	55,973	6
Engineering and technology	87,079	9	84,783	8	81,372	8
Architecture, building and planning	28,394	3	27,372	3	26,561	3
Social, economic and political studies	77,561	8	79,856	8	81,601	8
Law	40,528	4	40,535	4	39,457	4
Business and administrative studies	112,727	11	116,658	12	117,408	12
Librarianship and information science	13,789	1	14,584	1	17,121	2
Languages	63,119	6	61,487	6	61,699	6
Humanities	36,186	4	35,127	4	34,589	3
Creative arts and design	73,628	7	76,576	8	78,819	8
Education	51,896	5	49,702	5	47,138	5
Combined	117,466	12	118,570	12	111,020	11
Total	989,110	100	1,001,767	100	1,000,211	100

Subject group	2000/01 Number	2000/01 Percentage	2001/02 Number	2001/02 Percentage	2002/03 [2,3] Number	2002/03 [2,3] Percentage
Medicine and dentistry	30,008	3	31,324	3	33,063	3
Subjects allied to medicine	77,795	8	84,131	8	88,535	8
Biological sciences	68,108	7	68,913	7	93,373	9
Veterinary science	3,015	0	3,251	0	3,043	0
Agriculture and related subjects	7,418	1	7,418	1	7,171	1
Physical sciences	46,838	5	44,575	4	48,111	4
Mathematical sciences	15,869	2	15,974	2	19,426	2
Computer science/IT	62,245	6	68,709	7	80,672	8
Engineering and technology	79,665	8	79,777	8	78,774	7
Architecture, building and planning	25,657	3	25,221	2	25,543	2
Social, economic and political studies	81,517	8	82,248	8	96,528	9
Law	39,887	4	41,599	4	49,936	5
Business and administrative studies	118,336	12	121,012	12	144,712	13
Librarianship and information science	18,608	2	21,252	2	29,376	3
Languages	59,575	6	58,275	6	76,804	7
Humanities	34,972	3	36,042	3	50,632	5
Creative arts and design	82,221	8	86,515	8	99,855	9
Education	47,704	5	49,908	5	38,104	4
Combined	104,474	10	106,184	10	9,131	1
Total	1,003,912	100	1,032,328	100	1,072,789	100

[1] Figures include both home and overseas students.
[2] Figures for 2002/03 are provisional.
[3] The Joint Academic Coding of Subjects (JACS) coding frame was introduced in 2002/03 and replaces HESA's HESACODE classification which was used for years up to and including 2001/02. The main effect of this is to reduce the number of students in the combined course category and increase those who are allocated to specific subject groups.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Early Years Development

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many playgroup places were available in each year since 1997. [163141]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested. The available information is shown in the table.

Number of registered childcare places[1] by type of provider England 1997–2003—Position at 31 March each year

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	[2]2002	[3]2003
Day nurseries [4]	193,800	223,000	247,700	264,200	285,100	n/a	n/a
Full day care[5]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	383,200
Playgroups and pre-schools[4]	383,700	383,600	347,200	353,100	330,200	n/a	n/a
Sessional day care[5]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	279,700
Childminders	365,200	370,700	336,600	320,400	304,600	n/a	317,200
Out of school clubs[4]	78,700	92,300	113,800	141,100	152,800	n/a	n/a
Holiday schemes[4,5]	209,000	256,500	435,300	[6]490,400	550,400	n/a	n/a
Out of school day care[7]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	322,200
Creche day care[7]	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	37,200

n/a = Not available
[1] Figures have been rounded
[2] 2002 was a transitional year when Ofsted established its databases and validated the actual number of individuals and organisations that were providing childcare
[3] The number of childcare places and providers are not directly comparable because they were collected differently
[4] Data Source: Children's Day Care Facilities
[5] From 1999, places at holiday schemes were counted once for each school holiday during the year. Prior to 1999, places were counted once only
[6] Includes those schemes exempt from registration
[7] Data Source: Ofsted

With the introduction of the National Day Care Standards and the transfer of responsibilities for registration and inspection to Ofsted, childcare places are classified according to whether they are full day care, sessional day care, childminder, out of school day care or crèche day care places. Previously, childcare places were classified according to whether they were provided by day nurseries, playgroups and pre-schools, childminders, out of school clubs or holiday schemes. Figures for 2003 are not directly comparable with figures for earlier years because they are collected on a different basis. Some playgroups and pre-schools provide full day care and some former playgroups and pre-schools have converted to day nurseries.

Statistics on the number of childcare places registered in England were published on 19 February 2004 in a report by Ofsted "Registered Childcare Providers and Places in England, 31 December 2003'. The report is available on the Ofsted website www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications.

University Attendance (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people attended university from Greater London in each year since 1996, broken down by local education authority. [163069]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions service (UCAS) and covers all applicants accepted through UCAS to full time first degree and HND courses. Figures are given in the table.

Home domiciled applicants accepted for entry to HE through UCAS

	Year of entry						
LEA	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Barking	292	481	497	517	517	592	714
Barnet	2,325	2,653	2,643	2,643	2,727	2,809	2,870
Bexley	801	897	926	817	961	990	1,032
Brent	2,027	2,288	2,176	2,387	2,444	2,415	2,479
Bromley	1,446	1,696	1,688	1,638	1,714	1,807	1,849
Camden	1,383	1,296	1,167	1,139	1,252	1,266	1,218
City of London	44	25	38	72	59	104	128
Croydon	1,869	1,969	1,903	2,011	2,224	2,200	2,194
Ealing	1,823	2,161	2,130	2,337	2,378	2,476	2,600
Enfield	1,605	1,805	1,687	1,780	1,768	1,884	1,981
Greenwich	945	1,019	989	1,021	1,049	1,233	1,129
Hackney	867	1,249	1,174	1,229	1,246	1,386	1,374
Hammersmith and Fulham	870	963	849	876	886	967	970
Haringey	1,300	1,565	1,550	1,535	1,541	1,546	1,549
Harrow	1,709	1,875	1,841	1,999	2,025	2,131	2,173
Havering	747	836	796	844	859	914	832
Hillingdon	1,049	1,192	1,231	1,219	1,315	1,389	1,538
Hounslow	1,291	1,415	1,429	1,424	1,635	1,560	1,610
Islington	662	976	901	973	1,063	1,053	1,028
Kensington and Chelsea	922	1,041	925	960	958	980	983
Kingston Upon Thames	876	938	948	945	996	1,113	1,191
Lambeth	1,387	1,577	1,511	1,591	1,628	1,794	1,836
Lewisham	1,096	1,370	1,291	1,295	1,428	1,511	1,545
Merton	1,158	1,144	1,048	1,157	1,149	1,201	1,241
Newham	1,235	1,625	1,689	1,948	1,938	2,191	2,127
Redbridge	1,581	1,708	1,705	1,731	1,931	2,061	2,187
Richmond Upon Thames	1,035	1,237	1,306	1,216	1,170	1,278	1,207
Southwark	1,165	1,375	1,394	1,501	1,476	1,607	1,758
Sutton	855	935	914	907	957	1,024	1,096
Tower Hamlets	768	810	865	949	1,085	1,158	1,199
Waltham Forest	1,031	1,322	1,295	1,322	1,379	1,473	1,527
Wandsworth	988	1,550	1,484	1,509	1,474	1,559	1,544
Westminster	783	1,110	1,082	1,029	1,033	1,082	1,157
Total Greater London[1]	37,935	44,103	43,132	44,521	46,265	48,754	49,866

[1] Figures exclude those domiciles of unknown LEA.

Source:
UCAS

Further Education

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students have applied to take *(a)* foundation degrees and *(b)* Higher National Diplomas in each of the past three years. [152648]

Alan Johnson: The available information covers those applying through the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) to full-time foundation degrees and HMDs. Figures are given in the table. There is no central record of applicants to part-time courses.

Number of applicants[1] through UCAS to foundation degree and HND courses

Year of entry	*Foundation degrees*	*HMDs*
2001	1,330	52,584
2002	5,383	45,417
2003	10,956	38,046

[1] Applicants applying to both foundation degree and HND courses will be counted in both columns.

Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Higher Education

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of whether the proposed reforms to the funding of higher education will affect the choice of place of study of *(a)* students residing in England and *(b)* students residing in Wales (i) during the period of this term of the Welsh Assembly Government when an opt-out applies in Wales and (ii) in a future term of the Welsh Assembly Government should it adopt comparable higher education reforms in Wales. [165424]

Alan Johnson: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Education and Skills and I are in regular contact with the National Assembly on these issues. Data from the Higher Education Statistics Agency shows that the percentage of Welsh-domiciled full-time undergraduate students studying in Wales rose from 57 per cent. in 1997–8 to 62 per cent. in 2002–03: the proportion of English-domiciled full-time undergraduates studying in Wales has remained at 3 per cent. over the same period. All the evidence we have on sensitivity of demand to

raising and deferring a fee of up to £3,000 suggests the impact of higher fees on these trends is unlikely to be significant. If the Higher Education Bill currently before Parliament proceeds to Royal Assent, future decisions on tuition fees will be for the National Assembly. The Assembly has already committed to providing Welsh students who study in England with a package of financial support that is similar to that available to English students, including fee deferral and a grant worth up to £2,700 for low income students.

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students from England attended higher education institutions in Scotland in each academic year since 2000–01. [164892]

Alan Johnson: Figures for the number of English domiciled, full time, undergraduates enrolled at Scottish HE institutions are given in the table.

English domiciled full time undergraduates at Scottish HE institutions

Academic Year	*Enrolments*
2000–01	14,723
2001–02	14,841
2002–03	14,291

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency

Mr. Lazarowicz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students from Scotland attended higher education institutions in England in each academic year since 2000–01. [164893]

Alan Johnson: Figures for the number of Scottish domiciled, full time, undergraduates enrolled at English HE institutions are given in the table.

Scottish domiciled full time undergraduates at English HE institutions

Academic year	*Enrolments*
2000–01	5,802
2001–02	5,891
2002–03	5,950

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the level of public spending per student in higher education will be in the current financial year and each of the two subsequent financial years. [166687]

Alan Johnson: The table as follows, published in our 2003 Departmental Report, shows publicly planned funding per student to 2005–06. Spending on higher education in 2005–06 will be reconfirmed, and the budgets for 2006–07 and 2007–07 will be set, once the spending review settlement announced on 17 March has been allocated within the Department.

Table 3.8 Funding[1] per Student[2] in Higher Education, 1996–97 to 2005–06

	1997–98 actual	*1998–99 actual*	*1999–2000 actual*	*2000–01 actual*	*2001–02 actual*	*2002–03 provisional*	*2003–04 plans*	*2004–05 plans*	*2005–06 plans*
Funding per student[3] Real terms (£)	5,050	5,050	5,040	4,980	5,020	5,020	5,150	5,190	5,340
Real terms index[4]	100	100	100	99	99	99	102	103	106

[1] Publicly planned funding on higher education institutions in England includes block grants from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and the Teacher Training Agency, and public and private contributions towards the costs of tuition.
[2] Full-time equivalent students
[3] The maximum student contribution to fees in 2002–3 is £1,100. This forms part of the funding above and represents between 20 and 25 per cent. of the average costs of a course.
[4] Real terms index has been based with 1997–98 set as 100 and using the April 2003 gross domestic product deflators.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the individual public sector budgets from which grants have been made to higher education institutions in the past two financial years. [166688]

Alan Johnson: In the last two years, higher education institutions in England have received public funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England, the Teacher Training Agency; the Learning Skills Council; the Student Loans Company; local authorities; the Office of Science and Technology; the Research Councils; the Arts and Humanities Research Board; other Government departments, which commission research or buy services from HEIs, (including the Department of Health, Department for Education and Skills and the Ministry of Defence), and from the European Union, for example from European Social Funds.

Medical Students

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the attrition rates for medical school undergraduates were in each year of training since 1997. [162096]

Alan Johnson: Information on non-completion rates for higher education students broken down by subject is not held centrally. For full-time first degree students who began their studies in 2000/01, the overall non-completion rate for the UK was estimated by the Higher Education Funding Council for England to be 16 per cent., one of the lowest in the OECD.

Part-time Undergraduates

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the age profile is of part-time undergraduate students in the UK. [152684]

Alan Johnson: The available information is given in the table.

Part time undergraduate enrolments[1] at UK institutions 2002/03

Age band	*Number*
Under 18 years	2,285
18 to 24 years	73,926
25 to 34 years	138,599
35 to 44 years	141,947
45 to 54 years	77,916
55 to 64 years	33,839
65 years and over	21,446
Unknown	9,935
Total	499,893

Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA).

School Location

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school pupils in Greater London live more than three miles from the school they attend, broken down by local education authority. [165838]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Numbers of pupils living more than three miles[1] from the maintained primary and secondary schools[2] that they attend—January 2003

	Primary		*Secondary*	
	Number of pupils	*Percentage of pupils*	*Number of pupils*	*Percentage of pupils*
Barking and Dagenham	269	1.4	662	5.7
Barnet	847	3.3	5,571	26.4
Bexley	450	2.1	2,230	12.6
Brent	1,034	4.5	2,291	14.1
Bromley	748	3.1	4,113	18.8
Camden	226	2.0	1,253	13.0
City of London	30	13.5	n/a	—
City of Westminister	487	4.6	1,841	22.1
Croydon	844	2.7	2,889	15.6
Ealing	459	1.7	1,550	9.9
Enfield	725	2.7	2,982	14.1
Greenwich	359	1.7	1,786	12.2
Hackney	270	1.5	312	3.9
Hammersmith and Fulham	218	2.2	1,940	26.5
Haringey	364	1.7	671	6.2
Harrow	576	2.9	889	9.9
Havering	734	3.6	2,712	16.6
Hillingdon	625	2.5	2,159	12.4
Hounslow	450	2.3	2,774	16.8
Islington	250	1.7	699	9.0
Kensington and Chelsea	292	4.2	736	20.7
Kingston upon Thames	204	1.7	1,615	17.8
Lambeth	460	2.3	1,224	16.5
Lewisham	348	1.5	1,191	10.2
Merton	229	1.6	1,264	14.8
Newham	237	0.8	612	3.4
Redbridge	580	2.4	2.194	11.1
Richmond upon Thames	227	1.8	1,016	13.7
Southwark	324	1.4	1,016	9.4
Sutton	215	1.4	2.322	15.1
Tower Hamlets	388	1.8	682	4.7
Waltham Forest	346	1.6	582	4.2
Wandsworth	562	3.2	1,568	15.5
Greater London total	14,379	2.3	55,346	13.2

[1] Distances calculated are straight line
[2] includes middle schools as deemed
Source: Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census

Speech Therapists

Angela Watkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many colleges in London offer speech therapy courses; and how many places are available on each course. [164162]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The latest available information from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) website (www.ucas.ac.uk). shows that two institutions in London, University College London and City University offer courses in Speech Therapy or Speech Science. The number of students on these courses is not held centrally.

Angela Watkinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many students started speech therapy courses at colleges in London in each year from 1997 to 2004; [164163]

(2) how many students dropped out of speech therapy courses at London colleges in each year since 1997; [164172]

(3) how many students *(a)* qualified as speech therapists from London colleges and *(b)* entered the profession in each year since 1997. [164173]

Alan Johnson: Information on the number of students entering and qualifying from speech therapy courses is not held centrally. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HECFE) publish non-completion rates of students on all full-time undergraduate courses but these are not calculated for individual subjects or courses.

Student Drop-out Rate

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the drop out rate was for each *(a)* higher education and *(b)* further education institution in the latest year for which figures are available. [157565]

Alan Johnson: For higher education institutions, the available information on non continuation rates is contained in "Performance Indicators in Higher Education", published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE). The figures cover full-time first degree courses only, and show, for each individual HE institution in the UK, the numbers and proportion of entrants who failed to complete their course. Copies of the HEFCE publication are available for students starting courses in 1996–97, 1997–98, 1998–99 and 1999–2000, and are available from the House Library; data for 2000–01 is available from the HEFCE website at http://www.hefce,ac,uk/learning/perfind/2003/

In Further Education, figures are routinely presented in terms of the percentage of learners who are retained. In-year retention rates for Further Education Institutions in England can be found in the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) publication "Summary Statistics for Further Education Institutions: England 2000/2001", available at http://www.lscdata.gov.uk/summary statistics/. A printed version of the relevant table showing in-year retention rates for each institution, along with summary information will be placed in the Commons Library.

CABINET OFFICE

Civil Servants

Chris Ruane: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many civil servants are employed in each constituency listed in descending order. [166676]

Mr. Alexander: Data on numbers of Civil Servants employed in each constituency is not collected centrally. A breakdown of the number employed in each Government Office Region is published annually in the Civil Service Statistics. Copies of Civil Service Statistics are available in the Library and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics.

New Deal

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office How many New Deal 50 plus clients were employed in each of the last three years by *(a)* his Department and *(b)* all other central Government Departments. [167193]

Mr. Alexander: Data on the number of people starting employment under the New Deal 50 plus scheme has been collected on a quarterly basis by the Cabinet Office since July 2002. The available information is shown in the following table.

Annual	*Number of New Deal 50 plus—Cabinet Office*	*Number of New Deal 50 plus—central Government Departments*[1]
2 January 2003–1 January 2004	0	40
2 July 2002–1 January 2003[2]	1	8

[1] Number of people starting employment under the New Deal 50 plus scheme in all central Government Departments and agencies excluding Cabinet Office.
[2] Information is not available prior July 2002 when collection began.
Source:
Cabinet Office—New Deal Data Collection.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Local Government Finance

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the 10 *(a)* least and *(b)* most indebted local authorities are. [167063]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The 10 English local authorities that had the least net debt as at 31 March 2003 are:

City of London
Barking and Dagenham
Basingstoke and Deane
Bromley
South Oxfordshire
St. Edmundsbury
Dorset
Crawley
East Hertfordshire
Huntingdonshire

(b) The 10 English local authorities that had the most net debt as at 31 March 2003 are:

Newham
Islington
Southwark
Kent
Lambeth
Liverpool
Sheffield
Leeds
Birmingham
Manchester.

Source:
ODPM monthly and quarterly borrowing returns.

It should be noted that authorities with high levels of debt are generally those which have undertaken capital investment. Long-term borrowing to finance capital expenditure was regulated through the issue of credit approvals up until 31 March 2004 and, as from 1 April 2004, is subject to the Prudential System.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the Government intends to change the formula for distribution between authorities of housing revenue account and management and maintenance allowances; and what the sums involved are. [166891]

Keith Hill: Following wide consultation with local authorities and others last year, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced changes to the distribution of management and maintenance allowances within HRA subsidy to take effect from April 2004. Full details of each authority's allocation and the new methodology were published on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website on 18 December 2003, as part of the General Determination of Housing Revenue Account Subsidy for 2004–05. We are considering some minor, technical improvements to the new formulae for 2005–06 and will of course consult before introducing any further change.

The changes are purely about distribution and have not made any difference to the total resources available for management and maintenance allowances. Transitional arrangements mean that all authorities will receive at least inflationary increases in their allowances in both 2004–05 and 2005–06, with most receiving more.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the latest allocation of Planning Delivery Grant to each local authority and region. [166899]

Keith Hill: The latest allocations of Planning Delivery Grant for 2004–05 has been made available in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he intends to cap the council tax rise imposed by Herefordshire council; and if he will make a statement. [167293]

Mr. Raynsford: When the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced the council tax increases for 2004–05 on 25 March, we confirmed that we were ready

to use our targeted capping powers if necessary and that we aimed to notify any authorities which might be in line for capping by the end of April. I cannot say in advance which authorities these may be.

Correspondence

Mr. Paice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he expects to reply to the *(a)* letters from the Chairman of South Cambridgeshire District Council of 30 January and 2 April and the *(b)* letter from the hon. Member for South East Cambridgeshire of 30 March, on the Smithy Fen travellers' site at Cottenham and requests for a meeting. [167174]

Yvette Cooper: I replied to these letters on 21 April 2004.

Development Planning

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his latest timetable is for implementing *(a)* regional spatial strategies and *(b)* local development documents. [166943]

Keith Hill: On commencement of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill, the majority of existing Regional Planning Guidance documents will become Regional Spatial Strategies and should be implemented in accordance with the implementation proposals set out in those documents over the 15 to 20 year periods they relate to.

Commencement of the Bill will also enable LPAs to prepare and adopt Local Development Documents in accordance with the programmes outlined in their Local Development Schemes. The Local Development Schemes will have to be in place by the end of this year and will set out a three-year programme for the preparation of Local Development Documents.

Drugs Litter

Mr. Todd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether powers exist to permit officers of a local authority to enter private property to retrieve drugs litter. [166793]

Phil Hope: Any tenant or owner-occupier has the right to enjoy their premises without disturbance. Local authority officers cannot enter private property without permission unless they have been given a specific power to do so. There are no specific powers that we are aware of, which relate to retrieval of drugs litter.

Fire Safety/Construction Products

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he plans to consult *(a)* the Association of Fire Consultants, *(b)* the Passive Fire Protection Confederation and *(c)* the Active Fire Industry Confederation about European Commission proposals to amend the law on fire safety and construction products. [167223]

Mr. Raynsford: The European Commission has not yet published its proposals for amending the construction products directive. When it does, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will consult relevant UK industry bodies in the usual way. We will ensure that the organisations referred to by the hon. Member are included in any such consultation.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Government's policy on European Commission proposals to make the use of a CE mark mandatory for construction products. [167224]

Keith Hill: The European Commission has not yet published any proposals concerning the mandatory or voluntary nature of CE marking. When they do, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will consult UK industry in the usual way before deciding on the Government's policy on this matter.

Fires

Mr. Watson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the number of fires caused by cigarettes in each of the last five years; and how many deaths there were in such fires. [166841]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is in the following table:

Fires and fatal casualties in fires attended by United Kingdom Fire and Rescue Services that were started by cigarettes and other tobacco products, UK, 1998–2002

	Fires[1]	*Fatal casualties*
1998	8,134	160
1999	7,919	130
2000	6,660	143
2001	6,839	146
2002[2]	6,192	123

[1] Estimate based on sampled data.

[2] Excluding a period of 10 days of industrial action in November 2002

Green Belt

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Government's strategy on building on the Green Belt is. [166945]

Keith Hill: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 15 December 2003 *Official Report*, Hansard (column 748W).

Houses in Multiple Occupation

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what consultations he has had with landlords and landlords' representatives regarding the method by which licensing of houses of multiple occupation will be introduced. [166290]

Keith Hill: Landlords and their representatives were consulted on the draft Housing Bill and were subsequently invited to present evidence to the Select Committee that scrutinised the Bill. Ministers and officials have had a number of meetings with landlords' representatives on the licensing provisions in the Bill and how they might be implemented. The Government are committed to continue consultation with stakeholders, including landlords, on the implementation of the licensing provisions.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to introduce a pilot scheme for licensing of houses of multiple occupation in England and Wales. [166291]

Keith Hill: The Government have no plans to introduce a pilot scheme for licensing of houses in multiple occupation in England and Wales.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what consultations he has had with landlords and landlords' representatives regarding the manner in which central Government will monitor licensing of houses of multiple occupation; and what the results were. [166292]

Keith Hill: The Government has not yet consulted landlords or their representatives, on the manner in which it will monitor licensing of houses in multiple occupation. It has undertaken to review licensing within three years of its implementation and it will consult stakeholders (including landlords' representatives) on the terms of reference for that review once plans have been worked up.

Housing

Mr. Pike: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of how the Starter Homes Initiative has affected the residents of Burnley. [168313]

Keith Hill: Between September 2001 and 31 March 2004, the Starter Home Initiative helped key workers into home ownership in areas where the high cost of housing was undermining recruitment and retention of skilled staff in our key public services. The programme was not available to key workers in Burnley.

The new Key Worker Living programme which started on 1 April 2004 superseding the Starter Home Initiative is helping key workers in London, the South East and the Eastern regions.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homes have been made available within Liverpool, Walton under *(a)* the Starter Homes Initiative and *(b)* the Abandoned Homes Initiative. [166947]

Keith Hill: Between September 2001 and 31 March 2004, the Starter Home Initiative (SHI) helped key workers into home ownership in areas where the high cost of housing serves to undermine recruitment and retention of skilled staff in our key public services. The SHI was available in London and the South East region and in some housing hotspots in the East, South West and West Midlands regions. It was not available to key workers in the North West region.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not aware of an Abandoned Homes Initiative. However, our Market Renewal Pathfinders is a comprehensive programme to tackle low demand and abandonment in nine English areas, including Merseyside. The boundaries of the Merseyside scheme were drawn up following an analysis of local housing markets to identify those areas most acutely affected by low demand and abandonment. The integrated approach to spatial and economic issues being adopted by the pathfinders should bring substantial benefits to the wider sub-region.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect of the Starter Homes Initiative on the residents of Manchester, Gorton. [167464]

Keith Hill: Between September 2001 and 31 March 2004, the Starter Home Initiative helped key workers into home ownership in areas where the high cost of housing was undermining recruitment and retention of skilled staff in our key public services. The programme was not available to key workers in Manchester.

The new Key Worker Living programme which started on 1 April 2004 superseding the Starter Home Initiative is helping key workers in London, the South East and the Eastern regions.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what evaluation he has undertaken of the link between the current level of housing construction and the time it takes to obtain full planning permission. [166900]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister recognises that good performance on planning including having up to date plans in place and an efficient and effective development control service are important to achieving agreed housing numbers although, as the Barker review concluded, they are not the only factors. That is why we are seeking to reform the planning system and increase its resourcing to drive improved performance in these areas.

Housing Act 1986

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what measures are in place to assess the effectiveness of the implementation of the Housing Act 1986; and what their findings are; [166314]

(2) what measures are in place to assess the impact of the Housing Act 1986 on the housing market; and what their findings are. [166315]

Keith Hill: The effectiveness and impact of the provisions within the Housing and Planning Act 1986 have been assessed as part of the development of different aspects of housing policy which led to the bringing forward of subsequent housing legislation. This has led to many of the provisions in the 1986 Act being amended or repealed by:

the Housing Act 1988;

the Local Government and Housing Act 1989;

the Housing Act 1996;

and other legislation on housing.

Housing and Planning

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the names and functions are of the organisations and agencies within his Office that relate to housing and planning; what budget is allocated to each; how the efficiency of the different organisations and agencies within his Office that relate to housing and planning is evaluated; and what the efficiency rating is of each such organisation and agency; [166339]

(2) what mergers of organisations and agencies there have been since 1997 within his Office that relate to housing and planning; what evaluation has been made of the effectiveness of such mergers; and what the results were; [166340]

(3) how many staff were employed in 1997 in organisations and agencies relate to housing and planning; and how many staff are employed now in organisations and agencies within his Office that relate to housing and planning. [166341]

Keith Hill: An organisational chart showing the current structure and complements of the directorates dealing with housing, planning and related issues in the Sustainable Communities Delivery Unit within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has been made available in the Library of the House.

The allocation for the Housing Directorate's administration expenditure for 2004–05 is £7.216 million. The allocation for Planning is £6.774 million.

There have been separate housing and planning directorates throughout the period since 1997, although the directorates work very closely together within the Sustainable Communities Delivery Unit.

The efficiency of these directorates is measured by the progress made against the public service agreement targets for which they are chiefly responsible. This is reported in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's annual report.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established on 29 May 2002. Information prior to this date is not available. On 1 April 2004, there were 281.14 full time equivalent staff working in the housing and planning directorates.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many PFI projects have been undertaken within the remit of the housing and planning section of his Office since private finance initiative projects were introduced. [166342]

Keith Hill: Since the introduction of Private Finance Initiative (PFI) projects, the Office of the Deputy prime Minister has undertaken 28 Housing PFI projects of which nine are signed, and a further 19 are in procurement.

Under the Planning section, the Office has not undertaken any PFI projects to date.

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what functions the EU requires his Office to undertake with regard to housing and planning. [166343]

Keith Hill: Housing and planning are not areas for which the EU has competence. However, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Planning Directorate has policy responsibility for the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive and the Strategic Environmental Assessment Directive.

Housing Bill

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the Government estimates the implementation of the provisions of the Housing Bill will cost; and what funds the Government have committed to the implementation of the provisions of the Housing Bill. [166287]

Keith Hill: The Housing Bill was introduced in the House in December 2003. At that time, the Government made available the Regulatory Impact Assessments for each of the Parts of the Bill. These set out our initial estimates of the costs of implementing the Housing Bill provisions. These included start-up costs for the introduction of the Housing Health and Safety Rating System and licensing provisions. They also included start up costs and some additional enforcement costs for the introduction of home information packs.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently in discussion with the Local Government Association about these estimated costs. Final decisions on the commitment of funds are subject to the outcome of the Government's spending review.

Local Development Frameworks

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made by local authorities in meeting their Public Service Agreement 6 Target to complete all their Local Development Frameworks by 2006; how many authorities he expects to meet the target and how many he expects will not; and what plans he has to use his powers to intervene directly to enable local authorities to meet this target. [166887]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects that all local planning authorities will meet the target by having up to date planning policies consisting of policies in saved development plans and new policies in Local Development Documents. At present, there are no plans to intervene directly with local authorities, but we will keep this under review in the light of the authorities' first Local Development Schemes.

Local Government Finance (Liverpool)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much grant has been paid to Liverpool City Council each year since 1997. [166946]

Mr. Raynsford: Total grant paid to Liverpool City Council since 1997 is tabled as follows:

Total Grant

	£ million
1997–98	384.4
1998–99	411.7
1999–2000	431.4
2000–01	469.4
2001–02	514.4
2002–03	558.7
2003–04[2]	583.7

[1] Includes Revenue Support Grant, Redistributed Non-Domestic Rates and Specificand Special Grants inside AEF.

[2] Budgeted figures

Source:

1997–98 to 2002–03 Revenue Summary Returns and 2003–04 Budget Estimate Return.

Management and Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average management and maintenance allowance per dwelling in England was for each year from 1990–91; and what the planned figure is for 2005–06. [166587]

Keith Hill: The following table shows the average management and maintenance allowances per dwelling in England from 1990–91 to 2004–05. Allowances for 2005–06 will not be announced until December 2004. However they are expected to increase by around 10.5 per cent.

Average management and maintenance allowances per dwelling in England

	£
1990–91	742.57
1991–92	772.85
1992–93	837.60
1993–94	874.86
1994–95	906.83
1995–96	945.09
1996–97	959.99
1997–98	960.52
1998–99	960.03
1999–00	977.84
2000–01	1,006.45
2001–02	1,035.65
2002–03	1,112.70
2003–04[1]	1,188.33

[1] Based on advanced claims for HRA subsidy. Other years from final audited claims.

Oxfordshire (Barker Report)

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the implications of the Barker Report for Oxfordshire. [166762]

Keith Hill: It is too early to take any view about the implications of the Barker report for any particular area. Kate Barker's report sets out a challenging agenda for change which will help to carry forward the objectives of our Communities Plan. The Government agrees that, in order to deliver long term stability in housing markets where demand is highest, a substantial increase in housing supply is needed.

This needs to be delivered as part of a package which includes planning reform, a more responsive house building industry and more investment in affordable housing and infrastructure. At the same time, the economic case for increased development needs to be balanced against its social and environmental implications.

The Barker report looked at the national picture. Any plans to implement its recommendations will also have to take account of the widely differing housing market conditions across the country and our consideration will include the regional and sub-regional dimension. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects to establish a long term market affordability goal, linked to housing supply, and consult on its implications at national and regional level within the next 18 months.

Planning Officers

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many qualified planning officers are employed by local government in England; and how many will be required to implement the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill. [166897]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost—However, it is believed that just over 6,100 chartered Town Planners are in post. It is for individual local authorities to determine how many qualified planners they require to fulfil their functions, but the Government have provided Planning Delivery Grant worth £350 million during 2003–06 to help implement planning reforms and improve performance.

Regional Assemblies

Ann Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he proposes that the proposed temporary borrowing powers for cash management purposes for possible regional assemblies will be guaranteed by central Government. [167341]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister proposes to give elected regional assemblies temporary borrowing powers for cash management purposes. It would be unnecessary for central Government to guarantee such borrowing.

Social Housing

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister for the years 1997 and 2003 *(a)* how many houses were sold under (i) the right-to-buy scheme and (ii) the right-to-acquire scheme, *(b)* how many council houses were built and *(c)* how many registered social landlord houses were built. [166898]

Keith Hill: The figures are available for financial years 1996–97 and 2002–03 and are tabled as follows:

	1996–97	*2002–03*
Right-to-buy sales—LA tenants	33,206	63,394
Right-to-buy sales—RSL tenants	2,300	10,473
Right-to-acquire sales	0	228
RSL new build completions	24,630	13,330
Council new build completions	451	271

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his policy is regarding the percentage of social housing that should be built on land released for residential use by the Ministry of Defence and the additional infrastructure that will be required; and what recent discussions he has had with the Secretary of State for Defence on this subject. [166915]

Keith Hill: Government policy on the proportion of affordable housing to be provided in new developments is set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note 3: "Housing" (2000). This states that local planning authorities should identify suitable areas and sites on which affordable housing is to be provided and the amount of provision which will be sought. Additional infrastructure required by new developments varies from site to site and is a matter for agreement between the parties. Former Ministry of Defence sites are treated in the same way by the planning system as any other development site.

There is regular contact between Ministry of Defence and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, including at ministerial level. English Partnerships has been given the role under the Sustainable Communities Plan (February 2003) to find and assemble land, especially brownfield and publicly owned land, for sustainable development.

Telecommunications Masts

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to amend planning guidance in relation to telecommunications masts. [166941]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to amend planning guidance in relation to telecommunications developments at present.

Travellers

Mr. Paice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice he has received on the impact on appeals by travellers against planning enforcement where it can be proven that the appellants own property elsewhere in the EU. [167175]

Yvette Cooper: Decisions on planning applications and appeals, including enforcement appeals, are based on the land-use merits of each proposal. Under our 'plan-led' system of development control, applications and appeals—including enforcement appeals—have to be decided on their individual merits in accordance with the local planning authority's development plan for the area with reference to other material considerations.

Mr. Paice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effects of the Human Rights Act 1998 on planning decisions relating to travellers' sites. [167176]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has made no overall assessment of the effects of the Human Rights Act 1998 on planning decisions, whether they relate to traveller sites or other types of development.

TREASURY

Special Purpose Vehicles

Mrs. May: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many special purpose vehicles have been set up since October 2002. [166213]

Dawn Primarolo: Information on signed private finance initiative projects is submitted to the Treasury by Departments. This information, which includes the capital value and nature of each project, is available from the HM Treasury website: http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/public_private_partnerships/ppp_pfi_stats.cfm

Child Tax Credit (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Manchester, Gorton have received child tax credit. [167473]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Corporation Tax

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment his Department has made of the impact on revenue of the European Court of Justice ruling concerning corporation tax for *(a)* 2004–05, *(b)* 2005–06, *(c)* 2006–07 and *(d)* 2007–08. [166661]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 5 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 163W.

To date, a total of £212 million has now been paid as a consequence of the judgment of the European Court of Justice in the Hoechst case. Around £110 million of this may be recoverable depending on the outcome of a related court case. Current claims in which repayments have not yet been made are estimated to be in the region of £220 million, of which around £150 million depends on the court case. Any further repayments are subject to the other court decisions and a reliable estimate of the tax potentially repayable is not possible at the present time. But because ACT was abolished in 1999 these cases will not reduce corporation tax receipts for future years.

The Government will also continue the wider-ranging dialogue on international issues that was begun during the August 2003 consultation, with a view to maintaining the competitiveness and fairness of the UK corporation tax regime and ensuring that it remains robust.

Tax Credits (Overpayments)

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what account is taken of claimants' weekly entitlement before tax credit overpayments are recovered. [165411]

Dawn Primarolo: Tax credits awards are based on annual entitlement. The Inland Revenue's Code of Practice 26, "What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?", sets out the rules that the Inland Revenue follows when adjusting an award to recover an overpayment.

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what limits there are on the recovery of overpayments for tax credits. [165415]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave the hon. Member for South Down (Mr. McGrady) on 3 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 828W.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Child Maintenance

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what powers exist to retrieve child maintenance from British citizens who leave the country and go to live in another EU member state. [166727]

Mr. Lammy: A number of international conventions and agreements exist that either provide for an existing maintenance order to be registered and enforced in the country which a parent has moved, or for an order for child support to be made and enforced in that country. These are the United Nations Convention on the Recovery Abroad of Maintenance 20 June 1956, the Hague Convention on the Recognition and Enforcement of Decisions Relating to Maintenance Obligations 2 October 1973, the Brussels & Lugano Conventions 1968 and 1988 (now Council Regulation (EC) 1348/2000 of 29 May 2000—Service of Judicial and Extra-Judicial Documents in Civil and Commercial Matters) and the Republic of Ireland Agreement. These reciprocal arrangements apply where the EU country and the United Kingdom are signatories to the treaties. The primary legislation governing these international arrangements are the Maintenance Orders (Reciprocal Enforcement) Act 1972 Parts I & II, the Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders (Hague Convention Countries) Order 1993, the Civil jurisdiction and Judgements Act 1982 and the Reciprocal Enforcement of Maintenance Orders (Republic of Ireland) Order 1993.

Debt Recovery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs in how many county court judgments enforcement agents have been used to recover debts where the sum of money to be recovered is *(a)* £125 or less and *(b)* more than £125 in each year since 1997. [166806]

Mr. Leslie: My Department is responsible for county court bailiffs only.

Statistical data by value of the debt enforcement process that county court bailiffs have dealt with, is not collected. The number of county court warrants of execution issued since 1997 is as follows:

	Number
1998	543,848
1999	538,337
2000	470,270
2001	394,611
2002	372,505
2003	355,476

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the proceeds of sales of goods by enforcement agents employed by the county courts was for the payment of *(a)* council tax and *(b)* all other debts in each year since 1997. [166807]

Mr. Leslie: My Department is responsible for county court bailiffs only. Unpaid council tax is not recoverable through the county courts. It is pursued through the magistrates courts. Certificated Bailiffs are authorised under the Distress for Rent Rules 1988 to enforce non-payment of council tax on instruction from the relevant magistrates court.

In the county court the most common method of enforcement, where payment of the court order is in arrears, is a warrant of execution. County court bailiffs may remove a debtor's goods for sale to satisfy the amount of the warrant, if payment otherwise is not forthcoming.

Statistical data is not collected to show the amount recovered from the proceeds of sale of goods for debt.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs in how many county court judgments letters were prepared and sent advising clients that a warrant for the recovery of a debt was with a court-employed enforcement agent in each year since 1997. [166811]

Mr. Leslie: If the defendant in a debt case defaults under the terms of the court order, it will be for the creditor to instruct the court to enforce the judgment. The most common form of enforcement for debt is a warrant of execution.

As soon as the bailiff receives the warrant the defendant will be notified, in writing, that enforcement action has been instigated. The notice tells the defendant, among other things, when the amount of money should be paid to prevent any further action by the bailiff.

The number of warrants of execution issued since 1997 is as follows:

	Number
1998	543,848
1999	538,337
2000	470,270
2001	394,611
2002	372,505
2003	355,476

Land Registry

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what proportion of all house sales in England the Land Registry completes electronically; and what the target date is for 100 per cent. electronic conveyancing. [166889]

Mr. Lammy: Land Registry completes the registration of all house sales in England and Wales electronically. In addition, just over 50 per cent. of pre-contract I inquiries (mainly official copies of the register and official searches) received by the Registry are processed electronically.

Land Registry continues to extend its range of electronic services and is introducing progressively its electronic conveyancing programme. It aims to launch a pilot of a re-engineered conveyancing system in 2006. In consultation with stakeholders and other interested parties, the programme will be refined and developed and it is expected that by 2010 a large majority of house sales in England and Wales will be conducted electronically.

Legal Aid (NHS Cases)

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what assessment his Department has made of the

adequacy of current legal aid arrangements for *(a)* patients and *(b)* patients' families in dispute with NHS trusts; [166690]

(2) what assessment he has made of the case for extending the provision of free legal advice for *(a)* patients and *(b)* patients' families involved in formal complaints against NHS trusts. [166691]

Mr. Lammy: Legal aid is available for clinical negligence claims, provided that the means and merits tests are passed. We are currently reviewing the present arrangements, and we will be making an announcement on the way forward shortly.

NHS Negligence Claims

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect of the likely levels of compensation for deaths where the deceased has no dependants or access to conditional fee agreements by families pursuing negligence claims against NHS trusts. [166694]

Mr. Lammy: Where a person dies as a result of another's negligence the Fatal Accidents Act 1976 primarily provides for compensation for the pecuniary losses of persons who were dependent on the deceased. The Act also enables the recovery of two other heads of damages, namely bereavement damages and reasonable funeral expenses. Bereavement damages are currently set at £10,000, and are available to the deceased's spouse, or if the deceased was under 18 and had never been married, to his or her parents. Access to a conditional fee agreement would have no bearing on the level of compensation awarded.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Hamas

Mrs. Ellman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his assessment is of the activities of Hamas in the United Kingdom. [164889]

Mr. Blunkett *[holding answer 29 March 2004]:* I have been asked to reply.

The military wing of Hamas, Hamas-Izz al-Din al-Qassem Brigades (HIDQ) was proscribed in 2001 under the terms of the Terrorism Act 2000. However, Hamas also engages in social activities, providing welfare, medical and educational services in the Palestinian Occupied Territories. The group is not formally represented in the United Kingdom, but supporters are involved in fundraising and political activity on its behalf. Any allegations of illegal activity are and will be investigated by the appropriate authorities.

Immigration Appeals

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs on what date the High Commission in Islamabad and UK Visas sent to the Home Office all papers relating to the appeal of Mr. S. M., husband of Mrs. S. K. of Aylesbury (decision maker's reference 643686; Gerrys/Fedex case number 90083389; appeal reference 90063159; GV100/86120); and if he will make a statement. [167246]

Mr. Mullin: On 5 April UKvisas replied to the hon. Member's letter of 19 February advising when the appeal papers for this case were sent to the Home Office. However, I will shortly write to the hon. Member to advise further.

Nigeria

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Nigerian Government regarding the violence against Christians in the state of Plateau. [166918]

Mr. Mullin: We are concerned about the violence which has affected all communities in Plateau State. We remain in close touch with the Nigerian authorities. Officials from the British High Commission in Abuja recently visited Plateau State and met Christian and Muslim leaders and victims. We have emphasised to the parties and the State Government our conviction that dialogue between Christians and Muslims is the best way to create understanding and mutual tolerance. Coventry Cathedral's Centre for Peace and Reconciliation is active in Plateau State. We support and have helped fund their work.

Sudan

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with his EU counterparts regarding the EU-led peacekeeping force for Sudan; and if he will make a statement. [167183]

Mr. Mullin: The UN Department for Peacekeeping Operations is planning for a UN peace support operation once a comprehensive peace agreement is in place in Sudan. We are in close contact with the UN on this matter. There are no plans for this peace support operation to be EU-led.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Energy Costs

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on how he plans to implement his policy of using public expenditure to reduce the costs of electricity to business. [166016]

Mr. Gardiner: The proposed intervention is part of the continuing drive by Government to reduce the higher electricity costs paid by Northern Ireland businesses in order to improve their competitiveness. The objective is to bring about an average reduction in electricity prices across the business sector of 10 per cent. below the levels they would otherwise have been.

The proposal is designed to address an element of the legacy costs which followed the 1992 privatisation of the Northern Ireland electricity supply industry. In particular, the intention is to remove the ongoing financial obligation on Northern Ireland Electricity plc (NIE) arising from the restructuring of the original

Ballylumford power station generation contract. The cost of meeting this obligation is currently passed on to the electricity consumers as a Public Service Obligation (PSO) charge.

Subject to the necessary State aid clearance, the proposed Government intervention would be provided to NIE to offset the equivalent cost to the company of meeting this obligation. The full benefit of the intervention would, in turn, be passed on by suppliers to business customers through a reduction in their electricity bills.

Gas Prices

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will meet with the Centrica Company to discuss the effects that the proposed rise in retail gas prices will have on Northern Ireland's consumers; and if he will make a statement. [165165]

Mr. Gardiner: Following my meeting with Phoenix Natural Gas on 8 April 2004, the company agreed to suspend its proposed gas price increase. I also met with Centrica on 19 April 2004 when I emphasised the importance of the natural gas industry to Northern Ireland and asked that all parties work together to resolve the various issues and thus secure the long-term future of the industry.

Gas Supply Industry

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken by the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment to ensure that a long-term agreement is reached between the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation and the Phoenix gas company to ensure long-term stability in the gas market; and if he will make a statement. [165946]

Mr. Gardiner: Phoenix Natural Gas and the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation have been engaged in lengthy and detailed discussions about possible licence amendments aimed at achieving long-term stability in charges and rates of return on assets. While my Department has no formal role in this process, I have made clear to both parties the importance which I attach to an early resolution of these negotiations in the interests of consumers and the future of the NI gas industry.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to introduce competition into the natural gas industry in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [165947]

Mr. Gardiner: Under the terms of the regulated Phoenix Natural Gas licence, industrial and commercial gas consumers taking more than 75,000 therms a year already have the opportunity to seek alternative sources of supply. Such open competition arrangements will apply to all other consumers from 1 January 2005.

Listed Buildings

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether ecclesiastical exemption applies to listed buildings in Northern Ireland. [168011]

Angela Smith: Yes, an ecclesiastical building is exempt from the controls over the demolition, alteration or extension of listed buildings, unless it is used or available for use by a minister of religion wholly or mainly as a residence from which to perform the duties of his office.

DEFENCE

Aerospace Employment

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what steps he is taking to sustain employment in BAE Air Systems divisions. [167316]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence currently has two major programmes with BAE Systems Air Systems, for Typhoon and the Nimrod MRA4, which are supporting many thousands of jobs. Other jobs in the company are likely to be sustained by work for the Department on the Hawk Advanced Jet Trainer and the Joint Strike Fighter.

Boscombe Down

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of Boscombe Down; and what the cost of the establishment has been in each year since 1997. [162147]

Mr. Ingram: Boscombe Down is included in the Long Term Partnering Agreement that has been negotiated with QinetiQ for the delivery of a long-term test and evaluation capability to the Ministry of Defence. The financial information requested is commercially sensitive and I am therefore withholding this under Exemption 13 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Bradford University School of Peace Studies

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) whether other universities were invited to tender for the contract awarded to the Bradford University School of Peace Studies by the Ministry of Defence; [167314]

(2) if he will place in the Library the draft syllabus presented by the Bradford University School of Peace Studies to the Ministry of Defence before the training contract was signed; [167313]

(3) what inquiries were made into the practical military and peacekeeping experience of Bradford University School of Peace Studies staff before the awarding of a Ministry of Defence contract; and what the results were; [167312]

(4) what reason Bradford University's School of Peace Studies has been selected to teach UK soldiers about conflict resolution; whether this decision was taken at ministerial level; and what the overall cost will be. [167311]

Mr. Ingram: Bradford University is one of nine Universities recently awarded contracts todeliver the Armed Forces' University Short Course Programme to Service personnel. Contract advertisements were placed in major bulletins, such as the Ministry of Defence's

Contracts Bulletin and other appropriate media, and fourteen Universities tendered for elements of the programme, which delivers a range of 44 different courses.

Bradford University's Department of Peace Studies successfully tendered for four courses from the programme. All bids for courses were subjected to detailed technical evaluation against key criteria, including the academic experience of the relevant institution. Contracts were awarded on the basis of fair and open competition to the best overall bidder.

The contract award did not require a ministerial decision since these are replacement contracts for existing arrangements. The decision was taken by the three Service sponsors, Training Group Defence Agency for the RAF, Army Training and Recruitment Agency and Naval Recruitment and Training Agency.

The overall cost of the Conflict Resolution course will depend on the actual uptake of the course across the five year period, but will not exceed £125K.

The MOD's prospectus for the University Short Course Programme 2004–05 is currently being prepared and a copy will be placed in the Library of the House once it has been published. This is likely to be in the Summer.

Civilian Deaths

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the Government will pay compensation to the dependants of civilians killed by UK military action in *(a)* Afghanistan and *(b)* Iraq. [143596]

Mr. Ingram: In Iraq, payments are made in accordance with Section 6 of Coalition Provisional Authority Order Number 17. This requires claims to be dealt with by the Parent State of the person whose activities are alleged to have caused the loss, in accordance with the national laws of that Parent State. Hence, each claim is treated on its merit according to English Law.

In Afghanistan, no formal compensation payments have been made.

Correspondence

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he proposes to reply in full to the letters of 10 March and 6 April of the hon. Member for Woking concerning Warrant Officer 2 Grieves reference D/US of S/IC 0928/04/L. [167170]

Mr. Caplin: I replied to the hon. Gentleman on 20 April.

Defence Medical Centre (Birmingham)

Mr. Keith Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total planned cost of the Defence Medical Centre at Birmingham is; and what savings have been identified from its establishment. [166110]

Mr. Caplin: We are currently exploring, in consultation with industry, a number of options for the development of domestic accommodation and the move of all remaining medical training and other functions to Birmingham. Planned costs and potential savings remain subject to evaluation of, and final decisions on, the various options.

Equipment Purchases

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of table 2 from the National Audit Office report Operation Telic—United Kingdom Operations in Iraq, annotated to show the management group by which the equipment was acquired. [161119]

Mr. Hoon: A copy of table 2 from the National Audit Office report Operation Telic—United Kingdom Operations in Iraq, annotated with the relevant Integrated Project Teams, has been placed in the Library today.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which of his Department's management groups purchased equipment under the urgent operational requirements procedure in financial year 2002–03; and what the value was of *(a)* that equipment and *(b)* equipment subsequently disposed of. [161120]

Mr. Hoon: The Integrated Project Teams that procured equipment under urgent operational requirement (UOR) arrangements in financial year 2002–03 are shown in the following list. The costs of UORs in 2002–03 totalled some £290 million (of which the capital investment element amounted to around £220 million). Decisions on which UORs will be retained in service are being taken as part of this year's, and subsequent, planning rounds. Data on the value of disposals does not distinguish between equipment purchased routinely and equipment purchased under UOR arrangements.

Integrated Project Teams that procured UOR equipment in Financial Year 2002–03:

Air Launched Munitions
Airfield Operations Systems
Air Support
Avionics
Above Water Warfare Systems
Battlefield Infrastructure
C-17 Aircraft
Close Armour
Communication and Support Measures
Chinook
Communications Messaging
Combat Supply Equipment
Command Support Information Systems
Command Support Vehicles (Heavy)
Command Support Vehicles (Light)
Defence Clothing
Dismounted Close Combat
Defence Fixed Networks
Defence General Munitions
Defence Information Structures
Engineer System Support
Engineer Vehicles and Plants
Field Artillery System Support
Future Artillery Weapon Systems
Gazelle Helicopter

Harrier
Helicopter Engines
Hercules
Information and Communication Systems Support
Infra-Red Countermeasures
Logistic Applications
Land Electronic Warfare
Light Armoured Support Systems
Landing Platform Dock
Lynx
Military Airborne Communications and Homing System
Mine Countermeasures Equipment
Mine Countermeasures Vessels
Marine Electrical Systems
Mobility
Medical Supply Agency
Nuclear Biological Chemical
Naval Electronic Warfare
Nimrod
Royal Fleet Auxiliary support
Sensor Avionics and Navigation Systems
SATCOM Acquisition Team
Sea King Helicopter
Sentry
Successor Identification Friend or Foe
Strategic Terrestrial Radio Systems
Tactical Data Links
Theatre and Formation Communication Systems
Tank Systems Support
Tornado
Technical Services
Tactical Unmanned Air Vehicles
Workshop Support Services

Eurofighter Typhoon

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to conclude his discussions with BAE Systems about the price and quantity of Eurofighter Typhoons that will form Tranche II of the Project. [167315]

Mr. Ingram: Discussions with BAE Systems regarding the order for Tranche II Typhoons are ongoing. The quantity that will form Tranche II of the project remains 236, of which 89 will be for the Royal Air Force; this is not under discussion.

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what issues prevent him from ordering Tranche II of the Eurofighter Typhoon Contract. [167317]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 12 February 2004, (*Official Report*, column 1634W), to my hon. Friend the Member for Pendle (Mr. Prentice). The negotiations are still ongoing and must be concluded before Tranche II can be ordered.

Ferries

Mrs. Lawrence: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many roll-on roll-off ferries his Department has commissioned since 1997; and how many are in service. [166855]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 21 April 2004]:* The Ministry of Defence has commissioned six Roll-On/ Roll-Off vessels since 1997 and all these vessels are currently in service.

Harrier GR7

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for how much longer he expects to retain the Harrier GR7 in service. [167181]

Mr. Ingram: The GR7 Harrier is being upgraded to GR9 standard over the next five years. Current assumptions are that the Harrier GR9 will remain in operational service with the Royal Air Force until the middle of the next decade.

Jaguar

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the RAF Jaguar Aircraft. [167184]

Mr. Ingram: Based on current plans the Jaguar fleet will be withdrawn from Royal Air Force service by 2009.

Land Releases (Hampshire)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on his Department's current programme for land releases in Hampshire. [166916]

Mr. Caplin: Sites currently scheduled for release in Hampshire include:

DM Dean Hill Main Site and adjacent land
Site A Monxton Road, Andover
Daedalus Conservation Area in Broom Way
Property at frontage of DM Gosport in Fareham Road
Aldershot—Burger King Site
Aldershot—Ski slope site
Farnborough—Queensgate site
Farnborough—Former Officers Mess
Farnborough—Civil enclave
Farnborough—Garages at Lancaster Way
Farnborough—Woodland at Norris Bridge
Farham—Woodland at Old Park Lane

In addition, as I announced on 23 March 2004, the Ministry of Defence is undertaking further work to examine where estate rationalisation might be possible, with the aim of consolidating defence activity at a smaller number of more densely utilised locations in order to achieve the optimum use of land and facilities. This on-going work covers the whole of our estate in Great Britain, and takes into account existing relocation studies that have already been announced.

The Department is currently at an early stage of this wider review and each proposal that emerges from this work will be subject to full consultation in the normal way. No decisions have yet been reached on any further sites in Hampshire.

Qinetiq

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provisions were included in the transfer of Defence Evaluation and Research Agency assets to QinetiQ for clawback in respect of development land sales; and what sums are expected to be clawed back in respect of the sale by QinetiQ of the former MoD Longcross site at Chertsey. [165869]

Mr. Caplin: All of the freehold sites transferred to QinetiQ at Vesting of the Company were subject to a clawback agreement.

The total receipts from the disposal of the Chertsey site, of which the Longcross test track site forms a part, are unlikely to be fully realised for several years and it is therefore difficult to anticipate what sums, if any, will accrue to MOD from the clawback provisions.

Approximately the first £50 million of receipts from this site secures a loan made by MOD to QinetiQ, and this sum will therefore be paid back to MOD as QinetiQ receives the sums from the purchaser.

RAF Bases

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of *(a)* RAF Coltishall and *(b)* RAF Wittering. [167182]

Mr. Ingram: On current plans the Royal Air Force will have no continuing requirement for RAF Coltishall once the Jaguar aircraft goes out of service.

RAF Wittering is one of the stations under consideration as part of the review into the future basing of Air Combat Service Support Units and minor units. I will be making a written statement on this review shortly.

Suez Medal

Peter Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how long on average it has taken from a claim to an award of the Canal Zone Medal. [165484]

Mr. Caplin: It is not possible to calculate the average time taken from a claim to an award of a Canal Zone Medal. However, as at 16 April the four single Service medal offices had received 37,512 applications. Many arrived following the Prime Minister's announcement on 11 June 2003 that a medal would be instituted and a large backlog had built up by 23 October 2003 when I announced that medals would now be available. 6,700 medals and/or clasps have been despatched to veterans or their families. The medal offices are currently assessing applications received on the following dates.

Service Medal Office	*Applications received*
Royal Navy	8 July 2003
Royal Marines	6 February 2004
Army	31 August 2003
RAF	4 November 2003

Wind Farms

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many objections were made by his Department against pre-applications to build onshore wind farms in each of the last five years; and how many pre-applications for onshore wind farms were made in each of these years. [159735]

Mr. Caplin: In the period 1999 to 2003 the Ministry of Defence objected to a total of 796 pre-planning applications for onshore wind power projects.

	Proposals	*Objections*
1999[1]	65	39
2000[1]	158	51
2001	333	141
2000	985	398
2001	685	[2]167

[1] There was no formal wind farm safeguarding team within the Department prior to August 2000, and statistics for 1999 and part of 2000 are, therefore, based on the best data currently available.
[2] 260 awaiting resolution.

Many pre-applications are made by developers purely speculatively, and there is no data currently available to show how many pre-applications to which the Department does not state an objection are actually followed through. Where the Department does raise an objection MOD officials are always willing to work with the developer in order to determine whether a mutually acceptable solution can be found to enable a development to go ahead.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Disabled Workers

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Crosby over the last seven years. [160526]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Crosby, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, fire-fighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide

practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisors, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the Working Tax Credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the Working Tax Credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old Disabled Person's Tax Credit.

External Consultants

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library a list of the projects on which his Department employed external consultants in each of the last six years. [152844]

Maria Eagle: The information requested for each of the last six years for all projects is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. The following table provides a list of current modernisation projects that have employed external consultants. It should be noted that project details may alter as they pass through the project lifecycle.

Current DWP Modernisation Projects employing External Consultants

Project name	*Brief description of the project*
Child Support Reform	This project will implement the Child Support Reforms, involving the transformation of the existing CSA business processes and structures, through the introduction of a new IT system that supports new rules, legislation and operating model.
Customer Management System	This system is an information gathering business process for working age IS/JSA/IB benefit claims. It will allow information supplied by the customer to be gathered electronically by staff, improving efficiency and customer service. Staff will be able to check information supplied against that already held. The system will also support the arrangement of work-focused interviews.
Debt Management	The Debt Programme introduces a new organisational structure based on 10 Debt Centres and a Commercial Off The Shelf (COTS) package to provide new Management Information systems, combined with increased focus on the management and ultimately reduction of debt stock.
Digital Office Infrastructure (formally Early Office Infrastructure)	DOI aims to implement a modern IT infrastructure platform across the Department allowing access to the internet and intranet and modern business software.
New Tax Credits	This project supports the implementation of new tax credits by Inland Revenue by putting a tax credits service in place for DWP customers (principally through Jobcentre Plus) and ensuring that necessary amendments are made to DWP benefits.
Payment Modernisation Programme	The Payment Modernisation Programme aims to establish direct payment into a bank, building society or post office card account as the normal, convenient method of payment for all customers. This includes those who wish to collect their money from the Post Office. (The national banking infrastructure was successfully implemented in April 2003 through the Universal Bank project).
Pension Credit	This project successfully introduced pension credit in October 2003 and aims to increase the take-up of pension credit. It will deliver new IT functionality to existing DWP systems, and associated business products (e.g. training, staff guidance, customer notifications).
Pensions Transformation Programme	This Programme will transform the Pension Service bringing together business and IT change in ways that improve customer and staff satisfaction and deliver efficiencies.
Resource Management System	This programme will provide modernised HR, financial and procurement functions for DWP staff. These systems will introduce significant business process change, enabling Departmental resources to be managed more effectively.
Pensions Forecasting	We have introduced a modernised IT system to support the growing numbers of combined forecasts we are producing.
ISCS/JSAPS Modernisation	The key objectives are to improve interfaces with other DWP systems to reduce fraud and error; reduce costly clerical interventions by improving work management systems; improve customer service by enabling staff to view on-line system generated letters; provide a modern user interface for ISCS and JSAPS.
'Focus' Human Resources Modernisation Programme	The Human Resources Modernisation Programme includes: HR Service Centre Modernisation to restructure the existing HR Service Centres and consolidating Jobcentre Plus HR administration; design and delivery of a range of technologies required for the modernisation of learning and development over three-year period; a strategy to ensure delivery of effective leadership development and education to senior managers and those identified as potential leaders; review of the current payroll system to ensure it is capable of delivering changes to the DWP reward strategy.

Current DWP Modernisation Projects employing External Consultants

Project name	*Brief description of the project*
Customer Information System	The Project will deliver a database of key customer information to be shared across DWP. The database will complement information currently available in the Department's key customer information systems, i.e. Personal Details Computer System and Departmental Central Index, and become their replacement. The Project will use cost-effective modern technology with minimum impact on the existing systems.
Managing Core Systems Estate	The objective of this project is to undertake, and where appropriate plan the activities necessary to maximise the effectiveness of the legacy systems in future.
Working Age IS/IT Strategy Programme (formally IT Development Programme)	This programme made up of a series of individual projects, three of which are: Better Off Calculator—This project will support the Government's focus on getting people back into work by illustrating how they would be better off working. It will be available to Jobcentre Plus staff, other DWP users and to citizens as a self-service package. Assessment Engine—The Assessment Engine will automate (as fully as possible) the assessment of income support and other benefits. Entitlement Management—This will increase the level of automation of the entitlement management processes reducing or eliminating the need for clerical intervention.
Disability and Carers Service Change Programme	This is an over-arching change programme that brings together a range of infrastructure projects, covering process, IT and telephony changes, into a single coherent programme. The programme will design and deliver changes to business processes and Information Technology (IT) and support ongoing changes to the business organisation and telephony to reflect the emerging DCS Business Model.

Note:
This list is based on the best possible match between information from our systems to monitor DWP Modernisation projects and separate systems to monitor all use of consultancy across DWP. The list is not complete because a list of all projects is not available and differences in recording the names of projects in the different systems makes matching between them difficult.

Incapacity Benefit

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women receiving incapacity benefit payments made on mental health grounds in relation to (i) depression, (ii) stress, (iii) anxiety and (iv) behavioural problems received these payments for longer than five years in each year since 1997; and if he will break these payments down by region; [164718]

(2) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women receiving incapacity benefit payments made on mental health grounds in relation to (i) anxiety and (ii) behavioural problems received these payments for longer than (A) one month, (B) six months, (C) a year, (D) two years and (E) five years in each year since 1997; and if he will break these payments down by region. [164719]

Maria Eagle: The information has been placed in the Library.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women receiving incapacity benefit made on mental health grounds in each year since 1997 in relation to (i) stress, (ii) behavioural issues, (iii) anxiety and (iv) depression previously received (A) income-based and (B) contribution-based jobseeker's allowance. [164720]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance commencements each year since 1997 by diagnosis, and whether they previously received JSA

	Year to November						
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Men							
All IB/SDA commencements with a diagnosis of depression	56.2	51.7	55.3	58.6	59.7	59.7	61.9
of which the following were:							
Previously receiving JSA (income based)	23.1	18.7	20.5	20.9	21.8	22.3	22.6
Previously receiving JSA (contributory)	3.5	3.5	4.1	3.8	3.8	4.2	4.6
Previously receiving JSA (IB and C)[1]	1.0	0.8	1.2	1.0	0.9	1.4	1.3
All IB/SDA commencements with a diagnosis of stress/anxiety	39.1	35.0	35.4	36.3	36.5	35.5	33.9
of which the following were:							
Previously receiving JSA (income based)	15.2	12.1	12.8	13.7	13.2	11.6	11.8
Previously receiving JSA (contributory)	2.3	2.1	2.2	1.7	1.9	2.1	2.3
Previously receiving JSA (IB and C)[1]	0.6	0.6	0.6	[2]0.4	0.6	0.6	0.6
All IB/SDA commencements with a diagnosis of behavioural issues	[2]0.1	—	—	[2]0.1	—	—	—
of which the following were:							
Previously receiving JSA (income based)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Previously receiving JSA (contributory)	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Previously receiving JSA (IB and C)[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Incapacity benefit and severe disablement allowance commencements each year since 1997 by diagnosis, and whether they previously received JSA

	Year to November						
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Women							
All IB/SDA commencements with a diagnosis of depression	51.7	51.4	51.1	54.3	57.2	59.3	56.5
of which the following were:							
Previously receiving JSA (income based)	11.6	10.3	11.2	12.1	12.2	12.0	12.4
Previously receiving JSA (contributory)	2.7	2.3	2.2	2.4	2.4	2.9	2.9
Previously receiving JSA (IB and C)[1]	0.5	[2]0.3	[2]0.2	[2]0.3	[2]0.2	[2]0.2	[2]0.3
All IB/SDA commencements with a diagnosis of stress/anxiety	33.8	30.8	30.8	32.7	32.2	31.6	30.2
of which the following were:							
Previously receiving JSA (income based)	7.4	5.8	6.7	6.2	6.3	6.0	5.8
Previously receiving JSA (contributory)	2.0	1.8	1.5	1.8	1.4	1.6	1.7
Previously receiving JSA (IB and C)[1]	[2]0.2	[2]0.1	[2]0.2	[2]0.1	[2]0.2	[2]0.1	[2]0.1
All IB/SDA commencements with a diagnosis of behavioural issues	2.9	3.0	2.7	2.4	2.4	2.6	2.2
of which the following were:							
Previously receiving JSA (income based)	[2]0.3	[2]0.3	[2]0.3	[2]0.2	[2]0.2	[2]0.1	[2]0.3
Previously receiving JSA(contributory)	[2]0.2	[2]0.1	[2]0.2	[2]0.2	[2]0.2	[2]0.1	[2]0.1
Previously receiving JSA (IB and C)[1]	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

[1] Analysis considers whether or not an individual has received JSA in the year prior to commencement of their receipt of IB/SDA. Some individuals have received both JSA(IB) and JSA(C) in the year previous to their receipt of IB/SDA.
[2] Figures are subject to a high degree of sampling error and should only be used as a guide.
Notes:
1. Figures are shown in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred.
2. These figures have been updated to include late notified commencements. All figures back to 1995 have been revised, and may be subject to further change; figures prior to 2002 are subject to minor changes; figures for 2002 include fewer late notifications than previous quarters and will be subject to greater change in future; figures for the latest quarter do not include any late notifications and are subject to major changes in future quarters. For illustration purposes, total commencements for November 2002 increased by 15 per cent. in the year following their initial release.
3. Figures may not sum due to rounding.
4. It is not possible to separate out the stress and anxiety categories.
5. All diagnoses are coded using the International Classification of Diseases, 10th Edition, published by the World Health Organisation.
Source:
DWP—IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. samples.

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether the expansion of the specialist personal adviser service to support longer-term incapacity benefit recipients announced in the Budget will be available *(a)* for the Jobcentre Plus pathways to work pilots and *(b)* to all New Deal for Disabled People programmes. [167241]

Maria Eagle: In his recent Budget statement, my right hon. Friend, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, announced new measures to be piloted in the seven Jobcentre Plus Pathways to Work areas.

We will provide three additional mandatory work-focused interviews (WFIs) for those incapacity benefits claimants who started a claim in the two years before the pilots started, excluding the most severely incapacitated cases. These interviews will be designed to identify those who retain an interest in getting back to work and to provide effective support to enable them to do that. In addition, we will offer a new job preparation premium of £20 per week, payable for a maximum of 26 weeks to encourage participation in relevant activity that supports a return to work. These measures will be brought in from early next year and will be fully evaluated.

Existing IB recipients attending WFIs will be offered access to New Deal for Disabled People as part of the range of provision currently available in Pathways to Work areas.

Pension Credit

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the categories of pension credit recipient who are entitled to a level of guarantee credit in excess of the standard level. [167319]

Malcolm Wicks: The guarantee credit provides, or contributes towards, a guaranteed minimum level of income of £105.45 a week for single people aged 60 and over (£160.95 for couples). These standard amounts may be more for people who have caring responsibilities, are severely disabled or have certain housing costs.

For some people who were getting transitional protection in their income support or jobseeker's allowance before they started to get pension credit a transitional extra amount may be included.

State Second Pension

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions from what date entitlement to the State Second Pension will accrue on a flat-rate basis; and if he will make a statement. [167318]

Malcolm Wicks: No decision has been taken as yet regarding the date from which State Second Pension may begin to accrue on a flat-rate basis.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 23 April 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture (Environmental Damage)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on damage caused to the environment by animal agriculture. [164224]

Mr. Morley: The information is as follows.

(a) Defra has commissioned a wide range of studies on this topic. These programmes and their associated studies have been addressed by "pollutant" (eg greenhouse gas, ammonia, nitrate, phosphorus) rather than by farming sector (eg animal, arable). Full details of the numerous studies, both on-going and those completed in and after 1999, can be found on http://www2.defra.gov.uk/research/project_data/subject.asp?SCOPE=0. Most of this extensive research is listed under the policy areas "Environmental Protection (Agriculture)" and "Farmland Conservation". Some of the output of this research is summarised in National Inventories for Greenhouse Gases and Ammonia.

(b) Defra R&D programmes are subjected to periodic review (usually triennial). In addition, individual studies are subject to an expanding programme of peer review. An economic evaluation of the nitrate R&D programme was published in 2002 and can be found at http://statistics.defra.gov.uk/esg/evaluation/nitrate/default.asp.

Amazon Basin

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the impact of the globalised beef market on deforestation in the Amazon basin. [166834]

Mr. Morley: The international beef export market is expanding and Brazilian production is rising to meet demand. The vast majority of Brazil's export trade is currently with countries outside the European Community.

We have not undertaken our own assessment of the impact of the globalised beef market on deforestation in the Amazon Basin, but we are aware of work undertaken and published on 2 April 2004 by CIFOR (Centre for International Forestry Research), which suggests that Brazil's beef production contributes to the destruction of the Amazon rainforest.

The Government takes sustainable forest management seriously and is playing a leading role in international negotiations on forests in a number of fora, including the Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Forum on Forests (UNFF), Forest Law Enforcement and Governance processes and the G8.

The Government is committed to tackling illegal logging. Under EU law, a ban on the import of illegally logged timber can be imposed only at EU level. We are therefore showing leadership within the European Forest Law Enforcement, Governance and Trade (FLEGT) process. The FLEGT action plan includes the proposal to negotiate voluntary partnership agreements with timber producing countries. These agreements would be underpinned by a new EU import Regulation that would deny access to EU markets for illegally harvested timber from those countries.

BACS

Brian White: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress her Department has made to manage the changeover from the Bank Automated Clearing System to the new BACSTEL-IP system for electronic payments. [164328]

Alun Michael: Defra has been in discussion with our Bank Automated Clearing System (BACS) software provider and we have also been in communication with our sponsoring bank for BACS payments (The Bank of England). Defra will be migrating to BACSTEL-IP in accordance with the timetable issued by BACS Ltd. and guidance from The Office of the Paymaster General.

BSE/nvCJD

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish the latest evidence on the links between BSE and new variant CJD. [164072]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have been asked to reply.

The research referred to is published in international scientific literature, not by the Government.

The two latest published findings are Asante E. A. *et al* (2002)—the European Molecular Biology Organisation Journal, vol. 21, pp. 6358–6366 and proceedings of the National Academy of Science (USA) vol. 98, pp 4142–4147. Copies of both have been placed in the Library.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the factors accounting for the trend in UK carbon dioxide emissions since 1996. [165455]

Alun Michael: UK emissions of CO^2 in 2003 were some seven million tonnes of carbon (MtC) lower than in 1996. Broadly speaking this can be accounted for by warmer temperatures in 2003 (-4MtC), greater economic output (+29MtC), lower energy consumption per unit of economic output (-26 MtC), and lower average carbon content of fuels per unit of energy consumption (-6 MtC). The figures in brackets indicate approximately the contribution of each effect, positive and negative signs indicating respectively a contribution to higher or lower emissions.

Chardon LL Fodder Maize

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will

withdraw her request to the French competent authority for a variation in the conditions attached to the Part C consent for Chardon LL fodder maize. [166421]

Mr. Morley [*holding answer 21 April 2004*]: No. The consent issued by the French Authorities applies to all types of maize genetically modified with the event known as T25, not just to specific varieties, such as Chardon LL.

Climate Change

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent estimate the Government has made of the annual costs to the insurance industry resulting from climate change. [165815]

Mr. Morley: According to the Association of British Insurers storm and flood insurance losses in the UK over the past five years have totalled £5 billion, twice that of previous years. At present, it is not possible scientifically, to attribute such changes and the associated weather events to climate change absolutely. However, what is clear is that the extreme weather events experienced in the UK over recent years (for example, the floods in 2000 and the hot summer in 2003) are typical of what is likely to be experienced with even greater frequency as a result of man-made climate change.

Environment Agency

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to review the Environment Agency's pollution incident recording system. [166051]

Mr. Morley: I have no plans to review the Environment Agency's National Incident Recording System (NIRS).

The Agency carries out an ongoing review of the effectiveness of the system and liaises with the user community, making changes where appropriate.

Over the next five years, the Agency will be looking to move towards one fully integrated web-based tracking system to encompass incident reporting and enforcement.

Environmental Problems (Costs)

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Treasury on the cost to the economy of environmental problems. [166670]

Mr. Morley: Officials and Ministers from Defra and the Treasury frequently discuss the cost to the economy of environmental problems and how best this can be mitigated. To inform these discussions and policy development more generally Defra undertakes analysis of the economic costs and benefits of policies to protect the environment, including a continuous programme of impact assessments and an annual national survey of environmental expenditure by businesses.

Recent examples of such discussions include the development of proposals for returning the revenue from the new landfill tax escalator to business and consideration of the scope for cost savings through more sustainable patterns of consumption and production.

GM Crops

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 18 March, *Official Report*, column 435W, on GM crops, whether the investigations were conducted by the Robert Koch Institute on behalf of the Syngenta Corporation. [166109]

Mr. Morley: The German Government has appointed the Robert Koch Institute as its competent authority under Directive 2001/18. The Institute's investigation was undertaken as the competent authority with the full co-operation of Syngenta, who hold the consent for marketing of Bt176 maize.

Sustainable Development

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to deliver sustainable development within Government. [165657]

Mr. Morley: Sustainable development is the responsibility of all Government Departments, but one for which Defra takes the lead. Defra actively promotes sustainable development across Whitehall in many ways in line with the Department's primary Public Service Agreement. Current initiatives include:

Annual reporting on the Government's progress towards sustainable development in the UK since the launch of the 1999 strategy for sustainable development. The 2003 "Achieving a better quality of life" report updates progress on the UK Government's 15 headline indicators of sustainable development and gives an overview of the main strategic developments and actions.

Drawing up new UK sustainable development strategy, including a strategic framework covering both domestic and international dimensions, co-owned and agreed by the devolved Administrations and the UK Government. The consultation was launched on 21 April.

Development of the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate. This is the main vehicle for improving the way in which Government Departments manage their business operations.

Ensuring that domestic and international sustainable development is an important consideration in HM Treasury's Spending Review 2004.

Pursuing, along with other Government Departments, implementation of the commitments stemming from the World Summit on Sustainable Development.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress has been made on her Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [165658]

Mr. Morley: Progress towards meeting the targets listed in the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate is detailed in the Sustainable Development in Government report published in November 2003.

Sustainable development, as the Department's overarching aim, also underpins Defra's work, which is reported in the departmental annual reports.

A review of progress on Defra's SD strategy, "Foundations for our Future", will be published later in the year. We also published a five-year review of progress on the UK Government strategy, "Achieving a better quality of life", on 16 March 2004, together with updates on the headline indicators. Defra, together with the devolved Administrations and other Government Departments, will be launching a consultation on a future UK strategy, including both domestic and international dimensions, later this month.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1621W, on hazardous waste, if she will make a statement on the *(a)* detection and *(b)* prosecution rates she expects the Environment Agency to achieve. [165295]

Mr. Morley: It is not possible to predict detection and prosecution rates for hazardous waste. However, Environment Agency data for prosecutions brought relating to illegal waste activity as a whole is available for the years 1999–2003 as follows:

Year (financial)	*Number of prosecutions*
1999–2000	366
2000–01	446
2001–02	484
2002–03	511

The Environment Agency takes enforcement action against incidents and breaches of permit conditions in accordance with its enforcement and prosecution policies.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many press officers were employed in her Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if she will make a statement. [162852]

Alun Michael: Defra was not set up until June 2001. Figures relating to numbers of press officers employed by the organisations whose functions were subsumed into the new department would not correspond accurately to the distribution and scope of the present work areas.

The number of press officers employed at Defra has been as follows:

	Number
June 2001	22
June 2002	22
June 2003	22
As at 18 March 2004	19

Public Bodies

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the budget for administration was for each non-departmental public body for which she is responsible that are in the following categories *(a)* public corporation, *(b)* executive, *(c)* advisory and *(d)* tribunal non-departmental public bodies in financial year 2002–03. [164460]

Alun Michael: Details of the administration costs of executive, tribunal and advisory NDPBs and public corporations are as follows:

Executive NDPBs and Public Corporations

Both management accounting practices and the definition of administration costs differ from organisation to organisation. Therefore comparisons between NDPBs may not be appropriate.

Advisory and Tribunal NDPBs

Administration costs for advisory and tribunal NDPBs include the costs of board members (fees and expenses) and any associated direct costs of running the NDPB. It does not include the costs of the secretariats within Defra.

Administration costs of executive, advisory and tribunal NDPBs and public corporations

£

	Administration costs
Executive NDPBs	
Agricultural Wages Board	129,902
Agricultural Wages Committee	12,547
British Potato Council	1,758,718
Countryside Agency	17,500,000
Environment Agency	113,000,000
English Nature	10,581,000
Food From Britain	2,059,105
Horticultural Development Council	257,366
Home Grown Cereals Authority	[1]596,000
Horticultural Research International	1,667,000
Joint Nature Conservation Committee	1,344,000
Royal Botanical Gardens—Kew	2,281,000
Milk Development Council	1,035,939
Meat and Livestock Commission	2,200,000
National Forest Company	1,006,233
Seafish Industry Authority	1,820,000
Wine Standards Board	254,675
Public corporations	
British Waterways	28,500,000
Covent Garden Market Authority	1,648,467
Advisory NDPBs	
Advisory Committee on Business and the Environment	5,000
Advisory Committee on Consumer Products and the Environment	5,573
Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances	16,114
Advisory Committee on Packaging	[2]—
Advisory Committee on Pesticides	110,000
Advisory Committee on Releases to the Environment	35,000
Agricultural Dwelling House Advisory Committees	12,849
Air Quality Expert Group	46,500
Committee on Products and Processes for Use in Public Water Supply	21,637
Darwin Advisory Committee (The Darwin Initiative)	2,750
Expert Group on Cryptosporidium in Water Supplies	3,425
Expert Panel on Air Quality Standards	3,460
Farm Animal Welfare Council	109,000
Government Industry Forum on Non-Food Uses of Crops	14,040
Independent Scientific Group on TB in Cattle	155,424
Inland Waterways Amenity Advisory Council	190,000
Integrated Administration and Control System Appeals Panel	2,750
Pesticides Residues Committee	28,500
Radioactive Waste Management Advisory Committee	148,000
Royal Commission on Environmental Pollution	440,000
Spongiform Encephalopathy Advisory Council	157,072
Sustainable Development Commission	75,839
Veterinary Products Committee	174,092
Veterinary Residues Committee	17,575
Zoos Forum	3,997

Administration costs of executive, advisory and tribunal NDPBs and public corporations

£

	Administration costs
Tribunal NDPBs	
Agricultural Land Tribunals	48,835
Commons Commissioners	29,106
Dairy Produce Quote Tribunal	0
Plant Varieties and Seeds Tribunal	[3]0

[1] Estimated figure to reflect the costs of internal administration.
[2] No information.
[3] There was no call on the services of the tribunal in 2002–03.

Radioactive Waste

Mr. Simon: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if the Committee on Radioactive Waste Management will take evidence from the relevant bodies in *(a)* Sweden, *(b)* Finland and *(c)* the USA. [159024]

Mr. Morley: CoRWM is an independent Committee and will gather information from any organisations it considers relevant.

Rural Payments Agency

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many formal complaints were made against the Rural Payments Agency's Northallerton office in the last 12 months for which figures are available. [164597]

Alun Michael: Complaints against the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) are interpreted as complaints in respect of decisions made under the Common Agricultural Policy schemes which it administers. Such complaints are therefore recorded against scheme type and not on a site by site basis.

The RPA could not extrapolate the data required to break this figure down to site level without incurring disproportionate costs.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures are being implemented by the Environment Agency to ensure that all timber used on the construction sites of new offices will come from legal and sustainable sources, and if she will list those sites. [166717]

Mr. Morley: The procurement by the Environment Agency of sustainably managed timber is reported publicly at quarterly Board meetings and in the Agency's Annual Environmental Report. Preliminary indications are that in 2003–04, all of the timber used was from a sustainably managed source.

The Agency is currently having a new leasehold office built to its requirements at Wallingford, near Oxford.

Trees

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of trees *(a)* had full crowns, *(b)* had slight defoliation, *(c)* had moderate defoliation, *(d)* had severe defoliation and *(e)* were dead in the most recent survey of tree health in Europe under the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Convention on Long Range Transboundary Air Pollution, broken down by country. [165742]

Mr. Morley: The results of the 2002 Large-scale Survey of Forest Condition in Europe is published by the UNECE and European Commission are shown in the table. The report did not separate the 'severe defoliation' and 'dead' categories.

Defoliation of all species by classes and class aggregates (2002)

Participating Countries	*Area surveyed (1,000 ha)*	*No. of sample trees*	*0 none*	*1 slight*	*2 moderate*	*3 + 4 severe and dead*	*2 + 3 + 4*
Albania	1,028	—	—	—	—	—	—
Austria	3,481	7,029	60.2	29.6	8.5	1.7	10.2
Belarus	7,845	9,690	34.9	55.6	8.2	1.3	9.5
Belgium	691	3,079	38.7	43.5	16.1	1.7	17.8
Bulgaria	3,314	5,303	24.1	38.8	29.9	7.2	37.1
Croatia	1,175	1,910	38.4	41.0	18.6	2.0	20.6
Cyprus	138	360	30.8	66.4	2.8	0.0	2.8
Czech Republic	2,630	7,013	11.6	35.0	52.7	0.7	53.4
Denmark	468	480	61.5	29.8	7.3	1.4	8.7
Estonia	2,249	2,169	45.9	46.5	6.6	1.0	7.6
Finland	15,006	8,593	54.6	33.9	10.5	1.0	11.5
France	13,100	10,355	40.1	38.0	20.3	1.6	21.9
Germany	10,264	13,534	35.1	43.5	20.0	1.4	21.4
Greece[1]	2,512	1,768	42.1	37.0	16.6	4.3	20.9
Hungary	1,804	26,921	38.1	40.7	16.0	5.2	21.2
Ireland	399	424	43.9	35.4	16.0	4.7	20.7
Italy	7,699	7,165	20.3	42.4	33.4	3.9	37.3
Latvia	2,902	8,682	19.8	66.4	12.0	1.8	13.8
Liechtenstein	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Lithuania	1,858	5,162	16.4	70.8	9.6	3.2	12.8
Luxembourg	84	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Rep. Of Moldova	318	11,489	25.2	32.3	32.6	9.9	42.5
The Netherlands	210	231	57.1	21.2	20.4	1.3	21.7
Norway	12,000	7,421	35.0	39.5	22.0	3.5	25.5
Poland	6,868	24,580	8.8	58.5	30.7	2.0	32.7
Portugal	3,233	4,350	47.8	42.6	8.9	0.7	9.6
Romania	6,244	104,366	62.7	23.8	12.0	1.5	13.5
Russian Federation[3]	6,315	4,144	37.9	51.2	10.2	0.7	10.9
Serbia/Montenegro[4]	—	1,104	80.8	15.3	3.7	0.2	3.9

Defoliation of all species by classes and class aggregates (2002)

Participating Countries	*Area surveyed (1,000 ha)*	*No. of sample trees*	*0 none*	*1 slight*	*2 moderate*	*3+4 severe and dead*	*2+3+4*
Slovak Republic	1,961	4,207	17.3	57.9	23.3	1.5	24.8
Slovenia	1,099	936	32.3	39.6	24.2	3.9	28.1
Spain	11,588	14,880	24.2	59.4	13.2	3.2	16.4
Sweden	20,600	16,671	49.2	35.0	13.4	2.4	15.8
Switzerland	1,186	1,064	23.4	58.0	11.7	6.9	18.6
Turkey	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Ukraine	1,285	1,204	8.9	63.4	23.8	3.9	27.7
United Kingdom	2,156	8,532	27.3	45.4	25.7	1.6	27.3

[1] Excluding Maquis.
[2] No survey in 2002.
[3] Only regional surveys in north-western and central European parts of Russia.
[4] Montenegro only.

Waste

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on projects her Department supports which aim to produce road fuel from waste material. [162255]

Mr. Morley: The Department does not support financially any projects which aim to produce road fuel from waste material.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the effect of new legislation on current methods of disposing of farm waste plastics. [162256]

Mr. Morley: Plastic packaging waste from farms is already subject to the Producer Responsibility Obligations (Packaging Waste) Regulations 1997 (as amended) which encourage the reuse of packaging where possible and require businesses to recover and recycle packaging waste to target levels.

Waste from premises used for agriculture is currently excluded from national waste management controls by section 75(7)(c) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. Draft regulations and an associated consultation document are being drafted for publication later in the spring and the consultation will include proposals for a producer responsibility scheme for increasing the collection and recycling of non-packaging agricultural waste plastic.

Currently the majority of agricultural waste plastic is disposed of by burial in un-licensed "farm tips" or by unregulated open burning with consequential risks to the environment and human health. The proposed regulations will prohibit the on-farm disposal of agricultural waste without a waste management licence or a registered licence exemption. Waste agricultural plastic will have to be disposed of or recovered in appropriately licensed or registered sites in line with other sectors of industry.

TRANSPORT

Airport Capacity (South-East)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether comprehensive simulation of the airspace management implications of possible runway development options for the south east of England was undertaken prior to the publication of the Aviation White Paper on 16 December 2003; and what plans *(a)* National Air Traffic Services and *(b)* the Civil Aviation Authority have to undertake such a simulation. [166544]

Mr. Darling: Pursuant to my answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 307W, I referred to the level of airspace modelling work that the Department commissioned CAA-DAP and NATS to carry out as part of the SERAS Study in advance of the White Paper. The primary objective of this work was to simulate several airport development scenarios to assess whether the London airspace system could accommodate runway capacities of the order envisaged by the development options.

However, now that the White Paper has been published, it is necessary to move from simulations to develop a comprehensive redesign of London's airspace. Paragraph 12.26 of the White Paper confirms that the Government looks to CAA to make early progress in bringing forward a structured programme for this work. The White Paper also makes it clear that CAA will need to involve NATS in working up its detailed proposals.

Refuelling Depots

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how many liquefied petroleum gas refuelling depots there were in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement; [167233]

(2) how many compressed natural gas refuelling depots there were in the UK in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [167234]

Mr. Jamieson: The following table shows, for the UK, the number of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) refuelling sites in the last five years and the number of publicly accessible compressed natural gas refuelling sites in the last three years.

Year	*Liquefied petroleum gas refuelling sites*[1]	*Compressed antural gas refuelling sites*[2]
1999	285	N/a
2000	610	N/a
2001	1000	13
2002	1200	14
2003	1272	19

[1] Liquid Petroleum Gas Association
[2] Natural Gas Vehicle Association

The Government is committed to the uptake of alternatively fuelled vehicles. Government grants are provided for the purchase of both LPG and natural gas vehicles and the installation of refuelling infrastructure under the Powershift programme. Further Government support is provided for alternatively fuelled vehicles through reduced fuel duty for road fuel gases and reduced Vehicle Excise Duty. Alternatively fuelled vehicles may also be exempt from the London congestion charge.

Vehicle Use

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what changes there have been to the amount of vehicle kilometres travelled over the last five years within *(a)* the North Somerset local authority and *(b)* Weston-super-Mare. [167526]

Mr. Jamieson: Traffic estimates for counties and unitary authorities have been published on my Department's web site. These show that there was an estimated 14 per cent. increase in vehicle kilometres in North Somerset between 1997 and 2002, the latest year for which figures are available. The corresponding information for district authorities, including Weston-super-Mare, is not available.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Renewable Energy

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money her Department has invested in renewable energy in Liverpool from 1997 to 2003. [166954]

Mr. Timms: In 2003 the Department awarded a capital grant of £10 million to Seascape Energy towards the costs of developing the Burbo Bank offshore wind farm in Liverpool Bay.

In 1999, Mersey Docks and Harbour Company were awarded a contract under the Non Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO) arrangements for electricity to be generated from six 600 kW wind turbines in Seaforth Dock.

A grant of £94,647 was awarded under the DTI's PV Domestic Field Trial to CDS Housing for a project at Pinehurst Estate, Liverpool.

A grant of £11,759 was awarded to Cosmopolitan Housing Association under stream 1 of the DTI's Photovoltaic (PV) Major Demonstration Programme for a project in Liverpool.

A grant of £1,250 was awarded to Liverpool county council under the DTI's Clear Skies scheme for a community project in Liverpool.

Some initiatives relating to the North West region as a whole may result in benefits for Liverpool. In 2000–01, the DTI contributed £50,000 towards a study of the potential for renewable energy throughout the North West region. Between 2002–04, the DTI contributed £208,060 towards a regional renewable energy planning facilitation fund administered through the Government Office for the North West.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to differentiate between offshore and onshore wind farms in the subsidy system for selling renewable obligation certificates. [165518]

Mr. Timms: None.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effects of recent trends in investment in renewable energy upon residents of Burnley. [168305]

Mr. Timms: Recent trends in renewable energy investment have been highly encouraging. More new capacity has been constructed in the last few years than in the previous decade, and a significant amount is currently in the pipeline. This covers a wide range of technologies including onshore and offshore wind, solar and biomass.

Whilst this investment has not translated into capacity within Burnley itself, there are wind farm developments, both constructed and proposed, in the surrounding area. There is the 9.6 MW 24 turbine development at Coal Clough, built in 1992. The application for the Hameldon Hill wind farm, a 3 turbine 5 MW development has recently been approved on appeal.

Overseas Trade

John Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will break down the UK's trade figures with *(a)* China and *(b)* Taiwan in the past 12 months into (i) imports and (ii) exports. [165860]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Information on UK imports and exports of goods, from and to China and Taiwan, is given in the following table.

£ million[1]

	China		*Taiwan*	
	UK imports	*UK exports*	*UK imports*	*UK exports*
2003				
February	601	150	185	68
March	626	153	185	65
April	657	191	175	87
May	675	181	186	68
June	684	157	176	65
July	622	155	181	74
August	723	165	187	68
September	745	134	180	78
October	749	180	182	82
November	773	149	170	87
December	794	193	175	82
2004				
January	791	128	182	72

[1] Seasonally adjusted

Source:

Business Monitor MM24, Monthly Review of External Trade Statistics, ONS

Post Office (Closures)

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the post offices which have been closed since 1997 in the Carshalton and Wallington constituency; and when each closed. [167649]

Mr. Timms: Decisions on post office closures are an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Post Office Network

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when she expects to make an announcement on the future of the rural post office network subsidy. [168226]

Mr. Timms: The Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU) report on the future of the post office network recommended that the Postal Services Commission should advise the Government on the main options for the policy framework after 2006. The Government is currently considering the advice and will take decisions on the shape of the rural post office network after 2006 in good time to allow for a smooth transition from the current support arrangements.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* rural and *(b)* urban post offices have (i) closed and (ii) been opened since 1997. [168227]

Mr. Timms: I understand from Post Office Ltd. that details of net post office closures in the United Kingdom, recorded by urban/rural classification are only available from March 2000 and are as follows:

Post office closures

	Urban	*Rural*
2000–01	106	441
2001–02	68	194
2002–03	[1]230	115

[1] Includes 102 closures under the urban network reinvention programme.

Post Office Ltd. is yet to report a detailed breakdown of closures for the financial year 2003–04. The latest quarter for which information on post office closures is available (December 2003)—reveals that net closures were as follows:

2003–04—to end of December 2003

Urban	*Rural*
[1]642	132

[1] Includes 592 closures under the urban network reinvention programme.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the number of rural post offices protected from closure by the rural network subsidy. [168228]

Mr. Timms: No such estimate has been carried out. All rural sub-post offices benefit from the Government's package of support which is used to maintain the 'Assigned Office Payments' to sub-postmasters and to fund the front-line services necessary for each and every post office to operate—for example IT and cash. Without Government support, large parts of the rural network would have faced closure.

The funding ensures that, at least until 2006, Post Office Ltd. can maintain the rural network and prevent avoidable closures. Nevertheless, some closures are inevitable, for example where a sub-postmaster or sub-postmistress retires and no one can be found to take on the service. However, where a rural office closes permanently, alternative forms of providing the post office service in that area will be explored.

Royal Mail

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many claims for compensation were made and how much Royal Mail Group paid in compensation in each year since 1997 in respect of *(a)* first class, *(b)* second class, *(c)* special delivery next day, *(d)* special delivery 9.00 am, *(e)* recorded signed for and *(f)* standard parcels mail which was (i) delayed and (ii) severely delayed; and how many claims were made, and how much was paid in compensation, in each year since 1997 for (A) damage to valuable mail, (B) consequential loss and (C) delay to bulk mailings. [168671]

Mr. Timms: Compensation claims are an operational matter for Royal Mail Group and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Utility Companies

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints were received by Energywatch on switching energy suppliers in the last year for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [167772]

Mr. Timms: During 2003, 3.1 million domestic gas customers and 4.2 million domestic electricity customers changed their suppler. In that period, Energywatch received 22,437 complaints from domestic consumers about the transfer process, including complaints about both erroneous transfers and problems in switching supplier. The gas and electricity industry, with the involvement of the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (Ofgem) and Energywatch, and with the encouragement of DTI, is currently engaged in a three-stage programme to establish the causes of difficulties within the transfer process and identify and implement solutions.

Vessel Procurements

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which sea-going vessel procurements she is considering; when she plans to issue invitations to tender; and whether the procurement will be limited to the UK for strategic reasons. [166539]

Mr. Jamieson: I have been asked to reply.

The General Lighthouse Authorities (GLAs) are developing proposals for the procurement of two multi-function tenders and a rapid response vessel to replace three of the GLAs1 current tenders. It is too early to know when invitations to tender will be issued or how and when the build contract will be placed.

Wind Farms

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money has been provided in capital grants to *(a)* off-shore and *(b)* on-shore wind farms since 1997; and if she will make a statement. [168055]

Mr. Timms: Since 1997, the Government have committed £117 million in grant support to early off-shore wind farm development. No direct grant support has been provided for on-shore wind farm development.

DEFENCE

Airfield Support Services Project

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on ensuring that the Airfield Support Services Project solution is compatible with the modernisation agenda for fire services. [167251]

Mr. Ingram: There have been no formal discussions between the Ministry of Defence and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister on the compatibility of the Airfield Support Services Project (ASSP) with the modernisation agenda for the Fire and Rescue Service.

The ASSP will be sufficiently flexible to adapt to any changes that might be brought about as a result of the modernisation programme.

Funding

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what *(a)* resource and *(b)* capital expenditure was vired from RfR1 to RfR2 in the most recent financial year for which figures are available, in (i) cash and (ii) resource terms. [167047]

Mr. Ingram: Outturn for 2003–04 is not yet available. No funds were vired from RfR1 to RfR2 during 2002–03.

Iraq

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the amounts of reparations that have been paid to Iraqis. [166927]

Mr. Ingram: Reparations are the compensation extracted as an indemnity from a defeated nation by the victors. Neither Iraq nor the United Kingdom has sought or paid reparations to the other.

Land Mines (Cress)

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what research he has evaluated on genetically modified cress that changes colour when it comes into contact with landmine explosives. [166846]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence is not currently involved in any research into mine detection using genetically modified cress.

A Danish company, Aresa Biotechnology, has developed a genetically modified cress plant that changes colour in response to nitrogen dioxide, which is sometimes a by-product of degrading explosives, in soil. The colour change has the potential to indicate the presence of mines, although not in all cases.

The MOD continues to monitor the progress of this research as it develops.

TREASURY

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Pike: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Burnley have received child tax credit. [167906]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Gift Aid

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1350–51W, on Gift Aid, how many responses his Department received to the original consultation that followed the pre-Budget report; [166990]

(2) whether an assessment was made of the additional income that would be raised from the proposed changes to Gift Aid rules on day memberships, based on the responses received from charities in the original consultation that followed the pre-Budget report. [166991]

John Healey: Inland Revenue received 57 responses during the original consultation period. These came from charities, representative bodies and associations and other interested parties.

Tax reclaimed on so called "day memberships" using the Gift Aid scheme is not differentiated from tax reclaimed on other Gift Aid donations, so it is not possible to estimate the saving to the Exchequer of ending Gift Aid on admission charges. Information supplied during the original consultation would not enable an assessment to be made. However, the purpose of this measure is not revenue-raising, but is about maintaining the principles of Gift Aid as a scheme designed to encourage donations to charity.

Income Tax (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Manchester Gorton qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [167472]

Dawn Primarolo: Reliable information is not available. The sample size of pensioners living in the Manchester Gorton constituency is relatively small compared to other constituencies in the Survey of Personal Incomes.

IT Equipment (Tax Exemption)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Burnley have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [167907]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available.

Self-Assessment

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what guidance his Department issues to individuals who make a mistake when completing an on-line self

assessment tax return because of misunderstanding whether the form P60 refers to gross or net income. [160102]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue provides no specific guidance to individuals who make a mistake when completing an on-line self assessment tax return because of misunderstanding whether the form P60 refers to gross or net income but online help is available when completing the boxes relevant to information on P60.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints he has received over problems with the operation of the on-line self assessment tax return form. [160103]

Dawn Primarolo: The Chancellor of the Exchequer has received four complaints in connection with the operation of the on-line self assessment tax return form since 6 April 2003.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has carried out of the amount of tax due in respect of taxpayers who have failed to return self-assessment forms over the last five years. [166420]

Dawn Primarolo: It is not possible to calculate an accurate figure of the amount of tax due in respect of taxpayers who have failed to return self-assessment forms. The Inland Revenue have launched a three-year initiative to recover outstanding tax returns and any associated tax due from taxpayers who have failed to file, concentrating on cases where, on past history, there appears likely to be tax due.

Senior Citizens (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Burnley qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [167905]

Dawn Primarolo: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 4,000 and 5,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Burnley constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02 respectively. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Tax Exemptions (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Manchester Gorton have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [167474]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available.

Tax Returns

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many tax returns have been issued to trustees of pension schemes who carry no tax liability or refund in each tax year since 1997. [167584]

Dawn Primarolo: This information is not available.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Antisocial Behaviour

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many injunctions for antisocial behaviour from tenants have been requested by Merseyside's local authorities in the past 12 months. [165916]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not request that local authorities supply information on the number of injunctions they seek relating to the antisocial behaviour of tenants.

Asbestos

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the buildings occupied by his staff, including agencies, which require *(a)* remedial work on and *(b)* the removal of asbestos; what that work will cost; what budgets are available for this work for (i) 2004 and (ii) 2005; and what budget is available for future asbestos surveys. [159363]

Yvette Cooper: Asbestos surveys undertaken in accordance with the Control of Asbestos at Work Regulations 2002 have revealed that the following buildings occupied staff of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, including agencies, contain asbestos-based materials:

Ashdown House, Victoria Street, Westminster.

Fire Service College, Moreton-in-Marsh, Gloucestershire.

Government Office for London, Riverwalk House, Westminster.

Government Office for the North East—Wellbar House, Newcastle.

The Budget allocated for asbestos removal and remedial action is:

2004–05—£800,000

2005–06—£0

The budget figure of £800,000 in 2004–05 is for asbestos removal from Riverwalk House. Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for this building, the Government Offices carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not allocated specific funds for future asbestos surveys; these will be funded from existing maintenance budgets.

Computer Services

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166360]

Yvette Cooper: Plans to update computer hardware and software packages used by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are covered by our Corporate Information and Communications Technology Strategy and underpinned by Service level Agreements with our IT suppliers.

Over the next year we will be upgrading our corporate desktop software from Microsoft NT to Microsoft XP. Our computer hardware is upgraded as part of a rolling equipment upgrade and replacement programme for obsolete equipment.

Development Planning

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will set out a timetable for the revision of planning guidance notes into planning policy statements; what his policy is on reallocation of land zoned for employment, industrial and commercial development into residential land; and what action he is taking to ensure that each authority provides sufficient affordable housing. [166944]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister intends to make an announcement shortly on the timetable for the revision of Planning Policy Guidance Notes (PPG) into Planning Policy Statements (PPS).

In July 2003, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published the consultation document 'Supporting the delivery of new housing'. This proposed to add new policy to PPG3: Housing requiring local planning authorities to consider favourably applications for housing development on allocated unneeded industrial and employment sites unless it can be demonstrated that the site is still needed for that purpose or that it would undermine the planning for housing strategy. This would complement paragraph 42 of PPG3 which expects local authorities, when revising their plans, to review all their non-housing allocations, including those for employment, and consider whether some of this land might better be used for housing or mixed use developments.

The consultation closed on 31 October 2003. Our aim is to publish the final policy in the summer, alongside practice guidance to help local planning authorities in reviewing employment land allocations.

The "Sustainable Communities Plan" (published on 5 February 2003) set out a comprehensive programme of action to increase the provision of affordable housing, including a large increase in expenditure. £3.3 billion is being provided for the Housing Corporation's programme over the next two years (2004–06). This will provide funding for 67,000 new affordable homes for both rent and low cost home ownership.

Also in July 2003, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister published the consultation document 'Influencing the size, type and affordability of housing'. It proposed that local planning authorities should address the housing requirements of the whole community by ensuring a better match between a community's housing needs and supply, and that all local planning authorities must have policies on affordable housing to help deliver affordable housing where it is needed. We aim to publish the final update in the autumn, alongside practice guidance.

I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 16 December, 2003, *Official Report*, column 856W, on the mechanism for monitoring local planning authority performance and the actions that could be taken where their policies are not having the desired effect.

Homelessness

Ms Oona King: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the Answer of 9 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1440–1W, on homelessness, if he will introduce best value performance indicators on *(a)* homelessness prevention and *(b)* tenancy sustainment. [166128]

Yvette Cooper: A review of the Best Value Performance Indicators is currently being taken forward in order to ensure that they reflect the key national and local priorities, and accurately inform Comprehensive Performance Assessment ratings. As part of that review, we are considering whether there is a need for extra homelessness related performance indicators in addition to those which are already in place.

Housing Corporation

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the actual expenditure of the Housing Corporation was over the last 10 years; and what its budget is for the next three years. [166894]

Keith Hill: The expenditure by the Housing Corporation over each of the past 10 years is tabled as follows, together with the indicative budget for 2004–05 and 2005–06. The figures do not include spending on the Housing Corporation's administration.

Housing Corporation Expenditure

	Total (£ million)
1993–94	2,297.80
1994–95	2,038.40
1995–96	1,722.60
1996–97	1,608.20
1997–98	1,298.80
1998–99	1,217.00
1999–2000	1,300.00
2000–01	1,374.20
2001–02	1,387.40
2002–03	1,712.90
2003–04 (Provisional outturn)	2,059.95
2004–05 (Budget)	1,660.61
2005–06 (Budget)	1,680.74

Note:

Figures for 2001–02 to 2003–04 include expenditure on the Starter Home Initiative and the Safer Communities Supported Housing. Budgets for 2006–07 are subject to the outcome of the 2004 Spending Review. The Housing Corporation Final Accounts for 2003–04 are expected to be published in June.

Land Searches

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what proportion of local authorities are able to undertake land searches electronically; and when this is expected to be extended to all authorities. [166892]

Phil Hope: For land searches to be carried out electronically, local authorities must first have set up electronic Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPGs). All authorities in England have been encouraged to set these up as part of their individual programmes to electronically enable 100 per cent. of their priority services by 2005. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Local e-Government programme is helping local authorities to achieve this target, in particular by allocating a flat rate grant of £200,000 per annum in 2002 and 2003 to each authority submitting a satisfactory Implementing e-Government (IEG) statement. The IEGs submitted in 2003 indicated that on average every authority would have electronically enabled 66 per cent. of their priority services by March 2004; most authorities indicated that they would have electronic LLPGs by that date.

Local authorities have also been encouraged to have automated links with the National Land Information Service (NLIS), which is an electronic search engine intended to be a one-stop shop for information about land and property in England and Wales. It was developed in the 1990s by a group of public sector bodies, but was transferred in 2000 to the Local Government Information House (LGIH), a private, wholly-owned subsidiary of the Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA), to take forward. The IDeA has told us that by January 2004, two-thirds of authorities in England and Wales had enabled electronic responses to searches via NLIS. It is important to note, however, that authorities do not have to be linked to NLIS to offer searchers an electronic search option.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total amount of section 106 payments for the last year in which figures were available was; what his estimate is of the percentage of section 106 payments likely to be transferred to the new tariff system when it is introduced; what his estimate is of the compliance cost of the new tariff system; and when he expects to publish all of the regulations relating to the tariff system. [166888]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not currently collect statistics centrally for total amounts secured through section 106 payments, and could therefore provide this information only at disproportionate cost. It is not possible to say what percentage of planning obligations will be covered by the proposed optional planning charge, as it will be for individual applicants to choose whether or not they want to pursue this option. While we accept that setting up a charge system could lead to an increased burden on local planning authorities in the short term, this should be more than, offset by the longer term pay-off in being able to process individual planning obligations much more quickly and efficiently.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister aims to consult on its draft revised policy and draft regulations later this year.

Ministerial Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he last used a train in connection with his ministerial duties. [167422]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister travels by train regularly on official business. He last travelled by train on official business from London to York on Thursday 22 April 2004.

All travel by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister is undertaken in accordance with the rules set out in the "Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers", copies of which are available in the Libraries of the House.

New Deal for Communities

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the value of the contract given to the National Evaluation Team for the New Deal for Communities was; and if he will make a statement on its work. [166908]

Yvette Cooper: The value of the contract between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and a consortium led by Sheffield Hallam University for the interim phase of the national evaluation of the New Deal for Communities programme is £16.4 million. The contract covers work on the national evaluation to the end of September 2005.

The national NDC evaluation is supporting the work of the 39 individual NDC Partnerships, the nine respective Government Offices and the Neighbourhood Renewal Unit by providing evidence about how well the NDCs are delivering against their outcome targets.

For each of the 39 NDCs, the evaluation is providing an initial baseline household survey, a follow-up survey two years later and annual detailed reports on a wide range of process issues, such as community engagement and mainstreaming. In addition, the evaluation is providing NDC-area specific analysis of administrative data from DWP, DH, DfES and the Home Office, among others The annual NDC reports inform the Government Office reviews of the Partnerships and are collated into an annual NDC programme-wide report. The 2002–03 NDC evaluation report was published in October last year.

The report of the interim evaluation, due in mid-2005, will provide detailed evidence of how much progress each of the 39 NDCs has made in closing the gap between conditions in the partnership neighbourhood and the wider district and identify the critical success factors and barriers to performance.

Non-domestic Hereditaments

Brian Cotter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many non-domestic hereditaments with a rateable value of *(a)* less than £8,000, *(b)* between £8,001 and £25,000 and *(c)* over £25,001 there were in each billing authority in the last year for which figures are available. [167502]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested has been made available in the Library of the House.

Planning

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average amount of time taken by his Department to give permission for planning to go ahead was in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 1997. [168276]

Keith Hill: The average time taken to grant planning permission was 24 weeks in 2003 and 25 weeks in 1997.

Public Lavatories

Mr. Gummer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether the valuation of public lavatories is affected by *(a)* usage and *(b)* takings. [165936]

Mr. Raynsford: The valuation for rating of public conveniences is normally reached taking account of the cost of construction and making allowance for obsolescence, expense of upkeep and location.

(a) The number of persons using a public lavatory will depend on its location. A town centre convenience is likely to have greater usage than one in a remote location. In some coastal resorts, public lavatories may be used relatively intensively during the summer but closed altogether in the winter. The valuation of a public convenience is unaffected by usage. It is valued by reference to the cost which the occupier would otherwise incur if it had to construct an alternative facility. The cost of providing a facility which is intensively used is no greater than that of providing a facility which is less used, or used only seasonally. Exceptionally, instances have arisen where conveniences have been permanently closed at or before the relevant valuation date, and are thus not used at all; in such cases the Valuation Office Agency's Rating Manual recommends that no value is assessed.

The VOA recognises that in some instances local authorities may be operating public conveniences where, in present circumstances, the cost of provision would not be justified. In such cases, current capital cost may be a doubtful indication of value. The VOA has addressed this by applying an age-related scale of obsolescence allowance, which is more generous than applied to other classes of property valued by reference to cost.

(b) Since public conveniences are not operated for commercial profit, takings are irrelevant to valuation, and rateable value is unaffected by the absence, or presence/amount of revenue.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Curry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the *(a)* dates and *(b)* venues of all meetings open to members of the public or by special invitation held in the (i) North East, (ii) North West and (iii) Yorkshire and the Humber organised by the relevant Government regional offices to discuss the Government's proposals to establish regional assemblies at which a Government Minister spoke; what the cost was of holding each meeting; how many (A) members of the public and

(B) invitees attended; what the schedule is for future meetings; and what the budget is for each meeting in each of the relevant regions. [165977]

Mr. Raynsford: The dates, venues, audience size and cost of the Hearings in the regions attended by Ministers so far are tabled:

Date	*Venue*	*Region*	*Public*	*Invitees*	*Cost (£)*
4 March 2004	Ewood Park, Blackburn	North West	210	40	5,400
4 March 2004	Berwick Community High School, Berwick	North East	55	65	6,600
18 March 2004	Pennine Theatre, Sheffield Hallam University	Yorkshire and the Humber	68	67	10,300
25 March 2004	University of Newcastle	North East	132	88	9,700
1 April 2004	Windsor Suite, Quality Royal Hotel, Hull	Yorkshire and the Humber	180	170	6,900
5 April 2004	Liverpool Marriott City Centre Hotel	North West	126	42	12,400
15 April 2004	Stonecross Manor Hotel, Kendal	North West	179	31	5,100

Ministers have attended public meetings in Middlesbrough and Halifax on 22 April at estimated costs of £11,400 and £7,700 respectively.

Future meetings are being scheduled, but details of these meetings have yet to be finalised.

In addition, the dates, venues, audience size and cost of previous meetings with an invited audience attended by Ministers, as indicated in the written statement on 3 November 2003 are tabled as follows:

Date	*Venue*	*Region*	*Public*	*Invitees*	*Cost (£)*
3 November 2003	Durham Castle	North East	—	100	Total of 25,000
3 November 2003	St. William's College, York	Yorkshire and the Humber	—	57	
4 November 2003	The Village Hotel, Warrington	North West	—	80	
1 December 2003	The Door, Hanover St, Liverpool	North West	—	15	—
4 December 2003	Town Hall, Barnsley	Yorkshire and the Humber	—	31	—
22 January 2004	Midland Hotel, Manchester	North West	—	400	3,200
23 January 2004	West Yorkshire Playhouse, Leeds	Yorkshire and the Humber	—	240	6,000
23 January 2004	Vermont Hotel, Newcastle	North East	—	120	6,200
29 January 2004	Speke, Parklands Youth Centre, King George V College, Sefton	North West	—	25–30	44
		North West	—	20	
25 February 2004	North Manchester Chambers of Commerce, Bolton	North West	—	30	—

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the total spending relating to the proposed elected regional assemblies by regional chambers has been in the *(a)* North West, *(b)* North East and *(c)* Yorkshire and the Humber; and, for each of these regions, what the total anticipated spending is for the period up to the regional referendums. [166561]

Mr. Raynsford: The Regional Chambers have not spent, and will not spend, any Government grant money campaigning for, publicising or promoting the case for an elected regional assembly. They are prohibited from doing so under the terms of their funding agreements, by which they receive Government grant.

Social Housing

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* council houses and *(b)* registered social landlord houses he anticipates will be built in each of the next three years. [166890]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister set out in the Sustainable Communities action plan proposals to tackle the issues including the supply of affordable housing.

£5 billion is being invested in housing over the next two years (2004–06) and the role of the regions is being strengthened to ensure this investment is targeted more effectively on local and regional investment priorities.

Registered Social Landlords are the main providers of affordable housing and £3.3 billion funding was recently agreed for the Housing Corporation's Approved Development Programme for 2004–05 and 2005–06 to provide homes for both rent and low cost home ownership. This funding will provide around 67,000 new affordable homes in England. The number of homes to be provided in 2006–07 will be the subject of the outcome of the Spending Review 2004.

The number of council houses built has fallen with only a small number of dwellings being provided in recent years. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not have estimates of the number of homes that will be provided by councils over the next three years. It is estimated from local authority housing investment returns that some 260 were planned to be built in 2003–04.

Thames Gateway

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations he has received from English Heritage on development in the Thames Gateway; and if he will make a statement. [167221]

Keith Hill: Officials at the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have met with representatives from English Heritage to discuss the Historic Landscape Characterisation assessment of the Thames Gateway that English Heritage has commissioned. The aim of this work is to help planners, developers and regeneration agencies to understand the rich historic environment that exists in the Thames Gateway, to identify the capacity that specific places have to accommodate change, and to ensure that the historic environment can be integrated into the design of new development.

Our heritage is an essential part of creating sustainable communities that are attractive places to live and work, with a positive sense of place. Officials will continue to work closely with English Heritage on historic environment issues in the Thames Gateway.

SCOTLAND

Fisheries

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he last met representatives of the Scottish fishing industry. [165968]

Mrs. McGuire: I regularly meet representatives of a wide range of organisations in Scotland, and I keep in close touch with developments affecting the Scottish fishing industry.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what assessment he has made of the benefits to Scottish fishermen of continued membership of the EU Common Fisheries Policy. [165969]

Mrs. McGuire: The effects of the Common Fisheries Policy are regularly monitored by the Fisheries Departments.

Project Funding

Mr. Colman: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland (1) how many *(a)* solely state-financed and *(b)* public-private partnership and private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible have been launched in each region in each of the last 10 years; [160967]

(2) how much was spent by *(a)* the Government on solely state-financed projects and *(b)* the (i) Government and (ii) private sector on public-private and private finance initiative projects for which his Department is responsible, in each of the last 10 years, broken down by region. [160968]

Mrs. McGuire: Since its inception in 1999 the Scotland Office has been responsible for no such projects. Responsibility for solely state-funded major projects in Scotland was previously dispersed across the various Departments and agencies of the former Scottish Office and a number of Non-Departmental Public Bodies sponsored by the former Scottish Office, and subsequently transferred to the Scottish Executive. No central record of these conventionally procured projects has been kept. Information on signed private finance initiative projects is available from the HM Treasury website at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/public_private_partnerships/ppp_pfi_stats.cfm

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Arts Funding

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what plans she has to make bodies which distribute arts *(a)* capital and *(b)* revenue funding more democratically accountable to the regional community in which they operate. [167288]

Estelle Morris: Arts Council England is the national development agency for the arts in England, distributing public money from the Exchequer and the National Lottery. The arts funding system in England has already reorganised along the lines of the Government's regional plans. On April 1 2002 the Arts Council and the 10 independent regional arts boards joined together to create a single organisation for the arts in England. Six to eight members of the 15–20 membership of the Regional Arts Councils are local authority nominees and the Chairs of the nine Regional Arts Councils are members of the National Council and form the majority of its membership of 15. This restructuring has given the regions real empowerment in decision-making and the delivery of the arts.

Departmental Policies (Newcastle)

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Newcastle, East and Wallsend constituency, the effects on Newcastle, East and Wallsend of her Department's policies and actions since 1997. [166878]

Mr. Caborn: The Department for Culture, Media and Sport seeks to improve the quality of life for everyone through improved access to the best in cultural and sporting activities. The Department also champions the tourism, creative and leisure industries. The Department's policies and actions have had a significant impact on the constituency of Newcastle, East and Wallsend since 1997. For example, Arts Council England funds a diverse range of arts organisations and projects in the constituency, such as Tyneside Disability Arts, Monster Productions and the Foolsyard Theatre. The constituency has received the following grants from Arts Council England since 1997[1]:

£

Financial year	*Number of grants*	*Total amount*
1997–98	18	38,849
1998–99	3	4,710
1999–2000	17	63,124
2000–01	21	71,029
2001–02	13	31,282
2002–03	11	50,267
2003–04	2	110,000
Total	85	369,261

Since 1997, English Heritage has offered the following grants to the Newcastle East and Wallsend constituency[1]:

£

Date	*Grant*	*Details*
31 March 2004	160,000	Contribution of 19,000 towards Stage 1 project development costs for St. Michael's church, Byker, with agreement to a further £141,000 towards repairs following successful completion of Stage [1].
Total	160,000	

The Newcastle, East and Wallsend constituency has received the following awards from the National Lottery (granted by the following distributing bodies: Arts

Council England, Community Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, Millennium Commission, New Opportunities Fund, Sport England and the Film Council) since 1997[2]:

£

Financial year	Total amount
1997–98	279,481
1998–99	4,248,686
1999–2000	6,348,190
2000–01	3,448,016
2001–02	1,553,619
2002–03	1,781,574
2003–04	1,655,538
Total	19,314,904

Since 1997, the constituency of Newcastle, East and Wallsend has received the following amount of European Regional Development Funds[3] for cultural/sport/tourism projects:

Financial year	Total amount
1997–98	—
1998–99	1,987,498
1999–2000	42,100
2000–01	1,070,000
2001–02	—
2002–03	550,000
2003–04	—
Total	3,649,598

The Department has allocated £27 million Private Finance Initiative (PFI) credits to Newcastle City Council in order to procure a new city library and three refurbished community libraries. One of these community libraries, High Heaton Library, is based in the constituency of Newcastle, East and Wallsend. The community libraries will be made fully accessible and, as well as being upgraded in terms of layout, decoration and furniture, fittings and equipment, will also enjoy re-engineered display and information facilities.

Sport England has granted exchequer awards of £103,000 to fund Sports Development Workers promoting Active Schools Infrastructure and Equity in Sport across the City of Newcastle since 1997. The constituency of Newcastle, East and Wallsend has benefited from this funding. However, it is not possible to determine how much of this funding has gone directly to the constituency.

Since 1997, the constituency of Newcastle, East and Wallsend has benefited from various grants made by the North East Museums Libraries and Archives Council (NEMLAC) within its area. However, it is not possible to determine how much of this funding has gone directly to the constituency. Examples of this funding include:

£10,000 to Newcastle, Gateshead, Sunderland, North and South Tyneside libraries and Tyne and Wear Archives for a joint campaign to promote heritage, local and family history services and lifelong learning opportunities in a poster campaign on the Tyne and Wear Metro;

Under the auspices of the British Library's Reaching the Regions initiative, British Library staff worked with teachers from the North East to produce Lindisfarne Gospels school packs and resource boxes for distribution throughout the schools and libraries of the North East. Three of these resource boxes are located in Wallsend Library. Reaching the Regions has invested £100,000 in the North East and NEMLAC is a key partner in this venture.

Between 1996–97 and 2002–03, the British Tourism Authority—and from 2003–04, VisitBritain—have been responsible for marketing Britain, overseas as an attractive tourist destination. Grant-in-aid is not allocated in respect of individual areas of Britain, but Britain is promoted as a whole in a way that benefits Newcastle, East and Wallsend as it does the rest of the country.

The residents of Newcastle, East and Wallsend also have ready access to a wealth of cultural institutions in Newcastle and Gateshead, including the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art, the Sage Gateshead (due to open in winter 2004) and the Discovery Museum.

[1] Excluding Lottery grants.

[2] The data has been derived from the Department's Awards Database and is based on information supplied by the distributing bodies.

[3] One of the EU Structural Funds administered by the Government Offices.

Museums, Libraries and Public Archives

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money the Government has allocated for libraries in Liverpool, Walton in each year since 1997. [166976]

Estelle Morris: Core funding for public libraries is paid to the 149 Library Authorities in England as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement administered by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. It is not ring-fenced.

The figures show the amounts allocated to Liverpool city council, or to library consortiums of which Liverpool city were partners, from the DCMS-Wolfson Foundation Reader Development Fund. These awards cannot be broken down to district level.

1997–98: £99,887 to Liverpool city council for library refurbishment and additional facilities including adaptation for people with disabilities.

1998–99: £98,008 for better links between Liverpool's libraries and, ultimately, schools.

2000–01: £215,992 to the North West Libraries Book Promotion Partnership, which included all the local authorities in the NW, towards assisting socially excluded 16 to 25-year-olds with reading skills.

2001–02: £247,435 to the North West Libraries Book Promotion Partnership towards encouraging socially excluded and other young people in reading activities.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money the Government has given to *(a)* museums, *(b)* libraries and *(c)* public archives in each of the last 10 years. [166725]

Estelle Morris: The funding given by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport to museums, libraries and archives is set out in the table.

DCMS expenditure

£ million

Year	*Museums*	*Libraries*	*Public archives*
1994–95	225.0	85.3	1
1995–96	227.6	85.5	1
1996–97	220.9	89.7	1
1997–98	214.2	94.0	1.1
1998–99	212.4	89.2	1
1999–2000	236.5	88.7	1.1
2000–01	235.5	91.7	1.5
2001–02	251.8	95.8	1.4
2002–03	274.0	92.1	1.5
2003–04	294.5	97.1	[1]0.2

[1] Reflects transfer of Historic Manuscripts Commission to the National Archives.

In addition, DCMS provides Grant in Aid to the museums, libraries and archives council, which was £13.3 million in 2003–04.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what action her Department is taking to support *(a)* museums, *(b)* libraries and *(c)* public archives; and if she will make a statement. [166726]

Estelle Morris: DCMS provides both core funding for a number of key institutions, including the national museums and galleries and the British Library, and strategic support for the three sectors via the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) and its regional delivery network.

Museums

We are increasing our support for the DCMS-sponsored museums and galleries. Starting from the 2002 baseline, we have delivered a real-terms increase in resource grant-in-aid funding, for the larger institutions, of 1.5 per cent. in 2004–05 and 2.5 per cent. in 2005–06, and 7 per cent. in each of these two years for the smaller ones. We have also provided additional funding to help our sponsored museums carry out programmes of modernisation and reform.

We have allocated £60 million during the 2003–06 period to a major new programme to revitalise our great regional museums, Renaissance in the Regions. This investment is already helping the participating museums provide better services to many more users, in particular enhanced educational services for children and improved links with community groups. Part of the Renaissance programme is the Designation Challenge Fund, which supports the care and interpretation of collections of national or international importance held in non-national museums.

The Department has also doubled its contribution to the DCMS/Wolfson Museums and Galleries Improvement Fund, to provide a total fund of £4 million in this financial year, and extended the fund's coverage to museums in the regions with designated collections and museums participating in Renaissance in the Regions.

We plan to publish a museums vision statement this summer, which will look at ways in which the Government can work more effectively in partnership with museums. We will consult the sector on how best to take this vision forward.

Libraries

In February 2003, DCMS published "Framework for the Future" the first-ever national strategy for public libraries. It identified three areas where libraries have great potential to go beyond their traditional roles: the promotion of reading and informal learning; access to digital skills and services including e-government; and measures to tackle social exclusion, build community identity and develop citizenship. "Framework" is intended to encourage public library services fit for the needs of 21st century users. This strategy is being delivered through MLA and its partners.

Public Archives

In 2002 DCMS commissioned MLA to set up an Archives Task Force which would carry out an in-depth analysis of the sector and propose a strategy for making archives better understood, better looked after and better used. The report of the Archives Task Force, "Listening to the Past, Speaking to the Future", was published by MLA in March 2004. The report makes a number of proposals, including a major new initiative to help more people access archives more easily, a greater role for archives in education, and a programme to modernise public sector archives and develop skills and expertise. DCMS will work with MLA and other partners to take forward the Task Force's proposals.

DCMS is also active in taking steps to preserve and protect archives at risk and works to secure collections of archival importance through the Acceptance in Lieu scheme.

Sport Funding (Liverpool, Walton)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much public funding has been spent on sport in Liverpool, Walton in each year since 1997. [166977]

Mr. Caborn: The amount of exchequer and lottery funding spent on sport in Liverpool, Walton in each year since 1997 is set out in this table:

£

Year	*Exchequer*[1]	*Lottery*
1997–98	10,625	
1998–99	31,625	1,797,913
1999–2000		2,527
2000–01		276,990
2001–02	10,000	4,125
2002–03		486,499
2003–04		28,826
2004–05[2]		4,600

[1] Figures provided for exchequer funding are not broken down by constituency (e.g. grants given to Liverpool city council).
[2] Figures for 2004–05 correct as of 21 April.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Higher Education (Specialist Courses)

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the provision of specialist courses in universities and colleges. [167589]

Alan Johnson: The provision of courses of higher education, specialist or otherwise, is a matter for individual institutions to decide.

Higher education today is a much larger and more diverse business than in the past. Institutions now compete in a global marketplace where the needs and demands of customers and stakeholders are growing in both range and complexity.

Institutions now have to be ever more flexible in their response to meeting these diverse needs and demands and this is reflected in the content and style of courses offered. A good example of this is the increasing number of specialist foundation degrees being developed with the help of employers and which are often delivered in FE colleges.

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make it his policy to ensure the maintenance of textile teaching and research at the University of Manchester; and if he will make a statement. [167592]

Alan Johnson: As independent organisations, higher education institutions themselves determine what programmes and courses they offer. Similarly, they have the academic freedom to choose in which subjects they wish to focus their research.

Learning and Skills Councils

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many local learning and skills councils there are in *(a)* the North West Region, *(b)* the North East Region and *(c)* Yorkshire and the Humber Region; and how many board members there are on each council. [167339]

Alan Johnson: Each local Learning and Skills Council must have a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 16 members, including the Chair and Executive Director, who understand the needs of their communities. The information requested is provided in the following table:

Region/Local LSC	*Membership (at 20 April 2004)*
North West	
Cheshire and Warrington	14
Cumbria	16
Greater Manchester	13
Greater Merseyside	16
Lancashire	14
North East	
County Durham	14
Northumberland	14
Tees Valley	12
Tyne and Wear	14
Yorkshire and The Humber	
Humberside	13
North Yorkshire	16
South Yorkshire	14
West Yorkshire	14

School Buildings (Liverpool, Walton)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been invested in school buildings in Liverpool, Walton in each year from 1993 to 2003. [166959]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of capital funding is now allocated to local authorities and schools by needs-related formulae. Authorities invest according to priorities agreed in their asset management plans. The following table shows total capital allocations to Liverpool local education authority (LEA) since 1996–97, the earliest year for which reliable information is readily available.

Capital allocations to Liverpool LEA

£000

Year	*Allocation*
1996–97	5,791
1997–98	15,306
1998–99	19,230
1999–00	13,714
2000–01	[1]111,566
2001–02	21,997
2002–03	15,365
2003–04	22,706

[1] Includes £86,800 PFI funding

Note:

The above allocations include the voluntary aided sector.

Sixth-form Colleges

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many free-standing sixth form colleges have opened since 1997. [167583]

Alan Johnson: Two Sixth Form Colleges have been incorporated since 1997, Brooke House Sixth Form College in Hackney and Longley Park Sixth Form College in Sheffield. Brooke House Sixth Form College was incorporated in October 2001 and took its first students in September 2002. Longley Park Sixth Form College was incorporated in November 2002 and expects to take its first students in September 2004.

HEALTH

Smoking

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the safety benefits of cigarettes that go out faster than normal cigarettes when not puffed. [166838]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has not made an estimation of the safety benefits of cigarettes that go out faster than normal cigarettes when not puffed.

United Kingdom legislation on cigarette production and presentation follows European Directive 2001/37/EC on the approximation of the laws, regulations and administrative provisions of the member states concerning the manufacture, presentation and sale of tobacco products. The European Commission is due to submit a report on this Directive no later than 31 December 2004. The question of fire safe cigarettes is one issue under discussion in relation to this report, and we await its publication.

Officials are aware of the development of regulations on the ignition propensity of cigarettes in New York and Canada.

MRSA

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 12 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1822–23W, on MRSA, what the assurance scores on infection control are for NHS trusts in England. [167533]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The infection control self-assessment scores are collected annually and will not be available until June 2004. National average scores for the past three years for national health service trusts and primary care trusts are shown in the table.

	Score (percentage)
2001	63.2
2002	63.6
2003	64.3

Obesity

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the potential for angiogenesis inhibitors to control obesity. [166847]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Research into angiogenesis inhibitors to reduce the growth of fat in humans is at an early stage. Therefore it would be premature to make any decisions on their potential to control obesity.

Third-party Products

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent representations he has received regarding endorsement and distribution of third-party products by NHS trusts; and if he will make a statement. [166344]

Mr. Hutton: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health, has received recent representations regarding the distribution of packs containing products for expectant and new mothers. It is a decision for individual national health service trusts whether to allow the distribution of such packs.

CABINET OFFICE

Financial Ombudsman Service

Sue Doughty: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) whether the Better Regulation Task Force accepts submissions from members of the public who have made use of the services of the Financial Ombudsman Service on whether its powers should be curbed; [166903]

(2) whether the Better Regulation Task Force is conducting investigations into the powers of the Financial Ombudsman Service; and if he will make a statement; [166904]

(3) what concerns regarding the powers of the Financial Ombudsman Service have been brought to the attention of the Better Regulation Task Force; and how these concerns were raised with the Better Regulation Task Force. [166905]

Mr. Alexander: The Better Regulation Task Force is considering the Ombudsman Service's rulings as part of a wider study into "regulatory creep". It has defined "regulatory creep" as "regulation or compliance with regulation that goes beyond the original source of authority or intention". Further details of this study are set out on the task force's website, http://www.brtf.gov.uk/taskforce/pressreleases/creepreg.htm. As with all its studies, the task force invites submissions from members of the public. During the course of each study the task force seeks the views of a wide range of stakeholders. It will publish its findings in the summer.

Ministerial Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what guidance is issued to Government Ministers regarding the use of public transport for travel in connection with their ministerial duties. [168066]

Mr. Alexander: Guidance for Ministers on official travel is set out in the Ministerial Code and Travel by Ministers, copies of which are available in the Library.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asbestos

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the projections for asbestos-related illness and death over the next two decades *(a)* in the UK and *(b)* in Wales. [166748]

Jane Kennedy: There are three diseases commonly associated with asbestos exposure; mesothelioma, lung cancer and asbestosis.

Statistical modelling has been used to produce an estimate of the future peak in the number of deaths due to mesothelioma in Great Britain. The annual total number of mesothelioma deaths in Great Britain is expected to peak at around 1,950 to 2,450 deaths some time between 2011 and 2015.

It is estimated that there are one or two cases of lung cancers caused by exposure to asbestos for every case of mesothelioma, and this ratio is expected to decrease over time. Mortality from asbestosis is between 100 and 200 cases per year. However no estimates have been made of the likely deaths in future years due to asbestosis.

No separate mesothelioma prediction has been carried out for Wales. In the period 1999–2001 there were 188 deaths from mesothelioma in Wales. Great Britain as a whole had 5,090 mesothelioma deaths in the same period. This represents a lower rate of mesothelioma in Wales (annual rate of 19 per million) than for the rest of Great Britain (28 per million).

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of disability living allowance have not been paid money due to them in *(a)* January, *(b)* February, *(c)* March and *(d)* April;

what the total sum is of such payments owed to claimants of his Department; and if he will make a statement. [167248]

Maria Eagle: We are not aware of any backlog of cases where entitlement has been determined and payments to customers are outstanding.

However the Department was aware of a technical problem with Direct Payments that affected some DLA customers on 6 and 7 April, which resulted in payments being delayed to the 8 April. This problem was related to the adjustments made to accommodate the need to advance payments over the Easter Bank Holiday. We are currently scanning the database to establish exactly the number of payments that were delayed. It is estimated that approximately 74,000 payments were affected.

Ethnic Minority Employment

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many ethnic minorities are employed in Jobcentres in each region in the UK, broken down by grade. [156124]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the following table. The figures are based on the number of staff who have responded to ethnic surveys. Participation in such surveys is on a voluntary basis.

Jobcentre Plus ethnic minority staff by grade (as at 26 March 2004)

Region/Grade	*Staff*
East Midlands	
Administrative Assistant	52
Administrative Officer	295
Executive Officer	112
Higher Executive Officer	10
Senior Executive Officer	[1]—
Total	471
Eastern	
Administrative Assistant	*31*
Administrative Officer	235
Executive Officer	117
Higher Executive Officer	9
Senior Executive Officer	[1]—
Total	393
Head Office	
Administrative Assistant	14
Administrative Officer	91
Executive Officer	79
Higher Executive Office	34
SCS Pay Band 1 2002	[1]—
Senior Executive Officer	12
Support Grade Band 1	[1]—
Support Grade Band 2	12
Typist	[1]—
Grade 7	5
Total	251
London	
Administrative Assistant	348
Senior Accountant Fully Qualified	[1]—
Administrative Officer	2,369
Executive Officer	1,308
Higher Executive Office	97
Senior Executive Officer	16
Graphics Technical Officer	[1]—
Total	4,140
North East	
Administrative Assistant	5
Administrative Officer	50
Executive Officer	27
Higher Executive Office	[1]—
Total	86
North West	
Administrative Assistant	62
Administrative Officer	336
Executive Officer	108
Higher Executive Office	9
Senior Executive Officer	[1]—
Total	517
Scotland	
Administrative Assistant	11
Administrative Officer	86
Executive Officer	45
Higher Executive Office	[1]—
Personal secretary	[1]—
Higher Psychologist	[1]—
Total	148
Wales	
Administrative Assistant	7
Administrative Officer	37
Executive Officer	26
Higher Executive Officer	9
Senior Executive Officer	[1]—
Total	80
South East	
Administrative Assistant	48
Administrative Officer	277
Executive Officer	93
Higher Executive Officer	60
Senior Executive Officer	6
Grade 7	[1]—
Total	485
South West	
Administrative Assistant	20
Administrative Officer	83
Executive Officer	33
Higher Executive Officer	[1]—
Total	150
West Midlands	
Administrative Assistant	105
Administrative Officer	635
Executive Officer	219
Higher Executive Officer	7
Senior Executive Officer	[1]—
UNIFGD6	[1]—
Total	969
Yorkshire and Humberside	
Administrative Assistant	70
Administrative Officer	321
Executive Officer	99
Higher Executive Officer	8
Senior Executive Officer	[1]—
Grade 7	[1]—
Total	500

[1] Denotes that the figure is less than 5.

Source:

Financial and Management Information System (FAMIS) Payroll and Rebus Payroll.

Pension Forecasts

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will set out his plans for combined pension forecasts; in what sequence different groups will be issued with forecasts and over what timescale; how many forecasts he expects to issue for each group; and if he will make a statement. [166248]

Malcolm Wicks: The combined pension forecast service gives people a projection of retirement income that brings state pension together with their current private pension. The service is delivered through employers and pension providers.

By the end of March, a total of 1.12 million Combined Pension Forecasts had been issued. To date over 700 employers and pension providers have expressed an interest in participating in the service. By the end of 2005–06 we aim to have reached 6.3 million people.

We are not targeting particular groups with the combined pension forecast service. Rather we are encouraging all employers and pension providers to participate, currently on a voluntary basis. Additionally we are seeking reserve powers in the Pensions Bill so that, should the need arise, the provision of combined pension forecasts can be made a statutory requirement of pension schemes.

Rent Service

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what date has been set for The Rent Service to begin publishing information about local reference rents. [166816]

Mr. Pond: No date has been set for The Rent Service to begin publishing details of Local Reference Rents. The Local Housing Allowance for Pathfinder Local Authorities is published on a monthly basis by the participating local authorities, and is available on their websites.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Bali

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will revise his Department's advice against travel to Bali. [166993]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Travel advice for Indonesia is kept under close scrutiny and is based on objective assessments of the risks to British nationals. It reflects the current level of risk.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled in each case. [166389]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: As at 1 October 2003 Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) staff numbers were:

Grade	Percentage female	Percentage declared minority ethnic	Percentage declared disabled	Total
SMS 4	0.00	0.00	0.00	12
SMS 3	6.25	0.00	0.00	16
SMS 2	8.08	0.73	1.47	136
SMS 1	16.56	0.97	1.95	308
SMS total	13.35	0.85	1.69	472
D7	20.73	1.55	0.52	193
D6	27.05	1.29	0.72	695
C5	22.34	1.95	2.13	564
C4	35.98	2.88	1.68	1,248
B3	49.08	6.48	2.21	1,312
A2	61.51	12.24	2.91	1,169
A1	46.29	14.24	3.26	337
Total	39.82	5.66	2.02	5,990

Count of PFNO

	Grade						
Age group	A1	A2	B3	C4	C5	D6	D7
16–20	43	43	3	—	—	—	—
21–25	114	190	86	53	—	—	1
26–30	42	180	187	152	16	65	4
31–35	23	185	404	279	44	124	17
36–40	19	180	226	280	102	145	32
41–45	19	132	142	156	102	96	40
46–50	21	86	87	108	109	96	29
51–55	26	87	87	105	113	91	29
56–60	21	66	74	100	76	73	40
61–65	9	20	16	15	2	5	1
Grand total	337	1,169	1,312	1,248	564	695	193

	Grade				
Age group	SMS1	SMS2	SMS3	SMS4	Grand total
16–20	—	—	—	—	89
21–25	—	—	—	—	444
26–30	—	—	—	—	646
31–35	8	1	—	—	1,085
36–40	50	2	—	—	1,036
41–45	81	13	—	—	780
46–50	76	30	3	1	646
51–55	53	43	7	7	648
56–60	40	45	6	4	545
61–65	—	2	—	—	70
Grand total	308	136	16	12	5,990

The FCO's only agency. Wilton Park reported the following figures at 1 April, 2004.

Grade	Number
A1	13
A2	23
B3	9
C4	14
C5	2
D6	7
D7	1
SMS	2
Total employed	71
Total male	23
Total female	48

Grade	Number
Ethnic origin	
White	68
Chinese	1
Anglo Indian	1
Anglo Caribbean	1
Disabled	0

Age by grade

Age	A1	A2	B3	C4	C5	D6	D7	SMS	Total
16–20	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
21–25	2	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	6
26–30	1	1	1	—	—	—	—	—	3
31–35	—	4	1	4	—	—	—	—	9
36–40	—	1	—	5	—	2	—	—	8
41–45	1	2	1	—	—	1	—	—	5
46–50	1	3	—	1	1	2	1	—	9
51–55	1	6	3	3	1	1	—	2	17
56–60	1	2	2	1	—	1	—	—	7
61–65	2	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	3
Total	13	23	9	14	2	7	1	2	71

EU-Africa Meeting

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the EU-Africa meeting on 1 April in Dublin; what issues were raised; what was agreed; and whether follow-up meetings are scheduled. [167186]

Mr. Straw: The EU-Africa meeting on 1 April was part of the EU-Africa dialogue process. The discussion was focussed on peace and security, governance, regional integration, trade and key development issues. The two sides agreed a joint declaration on effective multilateralism and endorsed a joint report on the scale, nature and impact of Africa's debt burden. A communiqué was issued after the meeting, copies of which have been placed in the Library of the House. The Irish Presidency of the European Union will report on this meeting at the next General Affairs and External Relations Council on 26 April. The next meeting of the EU-Africa troika at ministerial level is expected to be organised by the Netherlands in the second half of this year.

Official Residences

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs which members of the *(a)* Government and *(b)* civil service are permitted to use accommodation at ambassadors' and high commissioners' official residencies when visiting overseas on (i) official and (ii) private business; and what rules and protocols govern use by (A) *(a)* and *(b)* and (B) their families. [167242]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* For ministerial visits, a Head of Mission is normally expected to offer accommodation to a Minister and his or her Private Secretary. But local and individual circumstances will inevitably vary.

Officials and visitors on private business may be accommodated at the residence at the discretion of the Head of Mission.

Turkey

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has had with EU counterparts regarding the potential accession to the EU by Turkey. [163144]

Mr. MacShane: Both my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I frequently raise the issue of Turkey's potential accession with EU counterparts, in bilateral and EU fora. We repeatedly affirm the UK's strong support for Turkey's EU aspirations.

The last major EU discussion of Turkish accession was at the Brussels European Council in December when the Council welcomed the considerable efforts of Turkey's political reforms and identified five areas where further sustained efforts are needed.

PRIME MINISTER

EU Constitution

Bob Spink: To ask the Prime Minister what representations he has *(a)* made to and *(b)* received from the European Commission on a referendum on the EU Constitution. [167655]

The Prime Minister: As far as I am aware, none.

Speeches

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the occasions since June 2001 when he last made a speech containing a significant section on *(a)* the environment and *(b)* terrorism-related matters. [167788]

The Prime Minister: I regularly give speeches on a wide range of domestic and international issues that cover environmental and terrorism issues. Copies of my speeches are available on the No 10 website.

HOME DEPARTMENT

CCTV (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167469]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £3,515,685 to Manchester city council (which includes the Manchester, Gorton constituency) for CCTV schemes.

Allocation of that funding locally, is a matter for Manchester city council and the Greater Manchester police. The information is not held centrally.

Departmental Policies (Newcastle)

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will set out, with statistical information relating as directly as possible to the Newcastle East and Wallsend constituency, the effects on Newcastle East and Wallsend of his Department's policies and actions since 1997. [166877]

Ms Blears: Most of the policies initiated by the Home Office since 1997 have had an impact on the Newcastle East and Wallsend constituency as on other parts of the country. However, it is not possible to gauge the impact of every policy and action the Home Office has initiated since 1997 on a constituency basis and statistical information relating to the constituency is not available for all Home Office policy areas. This answer sets out the information that is available for the constituency itself, or the relevant local authority and police areas for Newcastle East and Wallsend, it is not always possible to provide details back to 1997. The following are examples of initiatives or policies that have had an impact on the constituency, or an area of which the constituency is a part, together with the relevant statistics.

Community Safety

Newcastle upon Tyne East and Wallsend forms part of the Northumbria police force area. On 31 March 1997 the Northumbria police force had 3,677 police officers this figure had risen to 4,048 by 31 December 2003, an increase of 371. In addition the Northumbria police force area has been allocated £330,398 to deliver 45 Community Support Officers in 2003–04.

£78,413 Basic Command Unit (BCU) funding was available to Newcastle East command in 2003–04 and used to fund police operations, publicity material and technical equipment targeting burglary to homes, vehicle crime and violent crime. Events were held on personal safety, asylum seekers and community crime awareness, and youth diversionary work was also undertaken.

In 1993, the total number of recorded crimes in the Northumbria police force area was 192,773. In 2002–03, the total number of recorded crimes was 165,496. This represents a reduction of 27,277 (a percentage decrease of 14 per cent.).

Recent change in levels of crime at BCU level are difficult to interpret because of the introduction of the National Crime Recording Standard (NCRS) in April 2002 which increased the consistency of crime recording across the country but also inflated the number of crimes recorded by police. Northumbria police estimated that the NCRS had an impact of approximately 25 per cent. on total recorded crime from April 2002.

Home Office policy and actions since 1997 that contributed to these figures include setting up the Community Safety Partnerships, which are responsible for improving community safety, including quality of life issues such as anti-social behaviour, graffiti and the fear of crime.

The Home Office provided £352,073 Building Safer Communities funding in 2003–04 rising to £360,875 in 2004–05 to Newcastle Community Safety Partnership and £204,876 to North Tyneside Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP). Although the majority of this funding is used to benefit the area as a whole, some of the funding was targeted at specific areas, including the East End, for example Byker Street Wardens received £50,000 to create eight warden posts, one supervisor and a manager. Over 1,000 patrols have been completed and 3,629 incidents have been reported. Running costs of £5,000 have been provided for a CCTV van operating in Newcastle East. Funding of £10,000 has resulted in increased monitoring of the Nexus CCTV system which serves Byker, Heaton and Wallsend.

In addition, £35,000 Small Retailers in Deprived Areas funding was used to improve the security and safety of 18 retail premises in the 10 per cent. most deprived wards in Newcastle during 2003–04, and similar funding of £20,000 was made available to North Tyneside.

Community Development

The Home Office has funded the Byker Advice and Information project to assist community development. This project covers the wards of Byker, Dene, Heaton, Monkchester, Sandyford, Walker and Walkergate and is entering its third (and final) year of funding. £25,009 was awarded in year 1, £26,486 in year 2 and £30,998 will be awarded this year. The project aims to assimilate a sustainable recruitment, training and development policy for local volunteers, which should increase their skill base, improve their career prospects and benefit the local community.

Drugs Strategy

Drugs information relates to the areas of the Newcastle and North Tyneside Drugs Action Teams (DAT) which between them serve the constituency of Newcastle upon Tyne and Wallsend. The DATs are responsible for local delivery of the National Drug Strategy to a combined population of over 450,000 and until 1999 they operated as a single partnership. They continue to work together closely, with many users North Tyneside being treated at services based in Newcastle, e.g. Plummer Court.

Central Government funding for drug strategy delivery has increased steadily in recent years. In 2004–05 Newcastle's and North Tyneside's combined budgets for adult treatment will increase by over 7 per cent. to over £3.2 million and expenditure on young people will exceed £400,000. This investment and other Home Office funded programmes, e.g. Communities Against Drugs has resulted in:

A 64 per cent. increase in drug users having structured treatment in Newcastle between 2002–03 and 2003–04 (1,180 users). In 1999–2000 562 Newcastle based clients presented to drug services.

Approximately 460 drug users resident in North Tyneside were in treatment as at November 2003. In 1999–2000 175 North Tyneside based clients presented to drug services.

Average waiting times in Newcastle and North Tyneside reduced sharply to two weeks between 2002–03 and 2003–04 (compared to 2.3 weeks across the region). In the same period the waiting time for specialist prescribing in North Tyneside reduced from over three months to two weeks. In 1999–2000, the average waiting time in Newcastle and North Tyneside was about five weeks including 20 weeks for community prescribing in Newcastle.

A planned 15 per cent. increase to over 2,500 in available drug treatment places in Newcastle and North Tyneside in 2004–05.

Almost 1,400 drug possession offences were committed in Newcastle and North Tyneside in 2002–03. Of these, almost 820 related to Class A drugs.

A number of high profiie police operations in 2003–04 including Operation Trinity which resulted in 34 arrests in East Newcastle and Wallsend and Operation Bobbin in which 1.4 million of drugs was seized in Walker.

Both DATs will also receive considerable funding from April 2004 to March 2006 to deliver the Criminal Justice Interventions Programme (CJIP, a range of schemes aimed at moving drug misusing offenders into treatment and away from drug use and crime). Newcastle will receive additional CJIP funding, having been selected a site for "intensive" delivery. Implementation of this programme will place considerable pressure on criminal justice and treatment agencies in the City but the GO Drugs Team is encouraged by the DAT's planning for delivery. The forthcoming intensive CJIP activity in Newcastle is expected to impact upon crime in neighbouring wards in North Tyneside.

Asylum Seekers

Since 3 April 2000 the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) has been responsible for administering the support provided to asylum seekers. Asylum seekers requiring accommodation will normally be housed in dispersal areas across the UK; Newcastle upon Tyne is a dispersal area. The total number of asylum seekers being supported by NASS in Newcastle East and Wallsend as at the end of December 2003 was 595, of these 585 were supported in NASS accommodation and 10 were in receipt of subsistence only support from NASS. These figures include dependants and are rounded to the nearest five. Corresponding data for earlier years is not available. Similar data for Newcastle upon Tyne local authority for earlier periods has been published in successive editions of the quarterly and annual asylum statistics published at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Written Answers to Questions

Monday 26 April 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department. [166085]

Alun Michael: The information on the nature of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms Deloitte and Touche; Ernst and Young (now part of Cap Gemini Ernst and Young); KPMG and PricewaterhouseCoopers cannot be provided as it is not held centrally.

The Department is in the process of compiling a central list for the future but this would take some time to complete. The expenditure for core Defra excluding its agencies and NDPBs with each of the firms since 2000–01 is as follows:

£

Supplier Name	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*Total*
Deloitte and Touche	0.00	303,941.96	814,339.69	495,575.67	1,613,857.32
Cap Gemini UK	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Ernst and Young	0.00	0.00	0.00	47,000.00	47,000.00
KPMG	140,341.47	26,711.66	0.00	48,675.67	215,728.80
PricewaterhouseCoopers	255,907.97	308,935.56	30,207.79	55,113.63	650,164.95
Total	396,249.44	639,589.18	844,547.48	646,364.97	2,526,751.07

Central Lobby Consultants

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the work she has commissioned from Central Lobby Consultants since 1 June 2001. [163975]

Alun Michael: No work has been commissioned from the company named by or on behalf of my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State.

Common Agricultural Policy

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with representatives of the fruit growing industry in respect of Common Agricultural Policy reform. [166446]

Alun Michael: Defra officials met a delegation from the National Farmers' Union on 31 March.

Over-30 Month Scheme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress in bringing the Over Thirty Month Scheme to an end. [164071]

Alun Michael: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) review of the Over Thirty Month rule was completed in July 2003 and recommended that it would be acceptable on public health grounds to replace the Over Thirty Month rule with BSE testing of cattle in two stages. Cattle born after August 1996 could be allowed into the food chain, after being tested for BSE, with the possibility of complete replacement of the rule from July 2005. Health Ministers are still considering the FSA advice, but it has already been decided that, for practical reasons, cattle born before August 1996 will be permanently excluded from the food chain. We are now unlikely to see any changes to the OTMS before January 2005, due to the legislative process that must take place once a decision has been reached by Ministers.

Pesticides

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what peer-reviewed and published UK studies she has received that have measured actual exposures to pesticides for people living in agricultural areas, including high and lower levels of exposure over both the short and long-term, and including all oral, dermal and inhalation routes of contamination. [166695]

Alun Michael: The data that industry is obliged to submit to support applications for approvals of pesticides are not usually published. Such studies follow internationally agreed protocols and are subject to the requirements of Good Laboratory Practice. These data are subject to scientific review by the Pesticide Safety Directorate and the independent Advisory Committee on Pesticides and/or other European Union regulatory authorities. Evaluation documents are publicly available.

Data submitted generally refer to operators, who represent the highest risk category for exposure to plant protection products. Several studies on worker exposure have been published in peer review journals.

Mr. Tyrie: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what peer-reviewed and published UK studies she has received that have provided direct measurements of pesticide levels in *(a)* people, *(b)* wild animals, *(c)* domestic animals and *(d)* livestock situated in or near sprayed fields. [166696]

Alun Michael: The data that industry is obliged to submit to support applications for approvals of pesticides are not usually published. Such studies follow internationally agreed protocols and are subject to the

requirements of Good Laboratory Practice. These data are subject to scientific review by the Pesticide Safety Directorate (PSD) and the independent Advisory Committee on Pesticides (ACP) and/or other European Union regulatory authorities. Evaluation documents are publicly available.

(a) Regarding measurements in people, studies have focused on spray operators and farm workers as the highest risk category.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has a large study where the exposures of operators applying chlorpyrifos to orchards was monitored. ("Technical Development Survey, Exposure to Chlopyrifos in Orchard Spraying, Health and Safety Executive, Directorate of Science and Technology, Health and Safety Laboratory, and Field Operations Division, 1998".)

The Pesticides Incidents Appraisal Panel studies, and publishes an annual report on, reported incidents and complaints, including alleged ill-health incidents, involving pesticides investigated by the HSE. The report and details of individual incidents are presented to the ACP to inform the pesticide approvals process.

The Secretary of State is aware of further work undertaken in the US, which has been published recently.

(b) Wild animals and *(c)* domestic animals

In the UK the Wildlife Incident Investigation Scheme (WHS) investigates deaths of terrestrial wildlife and domestic animals, where there is strong evidence that pesticide poisoning may be involved. Annual reports of these investigations are published by the Department and are also available on the Pesticides Safety Directorate website.

The Wildlife Conservation Research Unit of the Department of Zoology, University of Oxford, has recently published a report (funded by the RSPCA) entitled "A Review of the Effects of Pesticides on Wild Terrestrial Mammals in Britain" (Harrington & MacDonald 2002, ISBN 0 9529371 8 2).

The Centre for Ecology and Hydrology (CEH) operates the Predatory Bird Monitoring Scheme in which levels of contaminants in livers and eggs of selected species have been monitored. Further information available from the CEH website: www.ceh.ac.uk.

(d) Livestock in or near sprayed fields

Monitoring of pesticide residues in meat and meat products is carried out by the independent Pesticide Residues Committee (PRC). The results are published quarterly, via the PRC's website, at: www.prc-uk.org.

The results are also summarised in an annual report. The most recent report, for 2002, is available free of charge from PSD and is also available on the above website.

Single Farm Payment

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the impact of the introduction of the Single Farm Payment on fruit growers; and if she will make a statement; [166024]

(2) what recent assessment she has made of the impact of her proposed Single Farm Payment proposals on the future viability of orchards and fruit growers. [166448]

Alun Michael: Fruit growers were generally not eligible for the subsidies which are to be replaced by the single payment. Our proposals extend eligibility for the single payment to land which is used to grow soft fruit. Single payments cannot be made anywhere in the European Union in respect of land under permanent crops, which includes orchards.

Voluntary Initiative on Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to make an evaluation of the success or outcome of the Voluntary Initiative on Pesticides. [166458]

Alun Michael: The Government regularly reviews progress with the Voluntary Initiative on pesticides and reports its broad conclusions in the Budget and Pre-Budget Report. In Budget 2004 the Government confirmed its view that, provided the Initiative is fully implemented, it should be the most effective way of reducing the environmental impacts of pesticide use. However, to cover the potential case that the Initiative might fail to deliver the required environmental benefits within a reasonable timescale, the Government continues to keep the options for a tax or economic instrument under review.

Waste Management

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress is being made on the introduction of Regulations to deliver the *(a)* Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment and *(b)* End of Life Vehicles directives. [167889]

Mr. Timms: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Government have completed a consultation on their policy proposals for the implementation of the Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment Directive and recently published on the DTI website an assessment of stakeholders' responses to this. They are currently drafting implementing Regulations and guidance for a final consultation in late spring.

(b) The End of Life Vehicle Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/2635), which came into effect on 3 November 2003, transposed a number of the provisions of the End of Life Vehicles Directive. Some related legislation was introduced shortly afterwards in Scotland and Northern Ireland.

Further draft Regulations, to transpose the remaining provisions of the Directive, were the subject of a public consultation, which closed on 30 March 2004. 65 responses were received and these are now being assessed, with a view to finalising the Regulations before presentation to Parliament.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

J. M. W. Turner

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received about the use of the insurance money received by the Tate Gallery following the theft of Turner works on loan to Germany in 1994; and if she will make a statement. [168087]

Estelle Morris: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State received a proposal from Dr. Selby Whittingham, Editor of the journal J. M. W. Turner, RA, about the use of the insurance money received by Tate following the theft in 1994 of two works from the Turner Bequest in its collections. These works have since been recovered. Dr. Whittingham proposed that the insurance moneys be used primarily to establish a dedicated Turner Gallery. The use of these insurance moneys is a matter for the Trustees of Tate, in discussion with the Charities Commission.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what representations she has received about the establishment of a dedicated Turner gallery; which organisations and individuals have made representations; and if she will make a statement. [168088]

Estelle Morris: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has received representations from Dr. Selby Whittingham, Editor of the journal J. M. W. Turner R. A. about the establishment of a dedicated Turner Gallery.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will take steps to ensure that the works of Turner currently at the Tate and National galleries are *(a)* placed under the same body of trustees and *(b)* housed together. [168089]

Estelle Morris: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no plans to require the National Gallery or Tate to house the works of Turner together. The housing of the collections of the National Gallery and Tate is a matter for their Trustees under their governing legislation, the Museums and Galleries Act 1992. Under the Act, the two Galleries each appoint one of their Trustees to the Board of the other.

Mr. Hunter: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will introduce legislation to amend the Museums and Galleries Act 1992 so that it is consistent with the requirement of Turner's will that his finished pictures should be kept together. [168090]

Estelle Morris: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has no plans to introduce legislation to amend the Museums and Galleries Act 1992 in this respect. After Turner's death in 1851, the dispute over the terms of his will went to Court. In 1856, the Court decreed that 100 finished pictures, 182 unfinished pictures and 19,049 drawings and sketches were to be held in trust by the National Gallery, a decision which took precedence over the provisions in Turner's wills and codicils. The National Gallery and Tate Gallery Act 1954 effected the legal separation of the Tate Gallery from the National Gallery and the trusteeship of the Turner Bequest was transferred to the Trustees of the Tate Gallery. The Museums and Galleries Act 1992 established the Tate Gallery as a corporate body and it became Trustee of the Turner Bequest, subject to the conditions of that trust and subject to the powers, duties and responsibilities of the Trustees as established by the 1992 Act.

Recycling

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165952]

Mr. Caborn: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 243–44W. DCMS procures 100 per cent. recycled paper for in excess of 60 per cent. of paper for printed publications, but it has not been possible to ascertain the percentage of post consumer waste content.

Visual Arts Facilities

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many proposed new visual arts facilities her Department has been advised of since 1 January 1998; in which cities and towns they are located; and how much public funding was given in each case. [167286]

Estelle Morris: Arts Council England has awarded over £175 million of lottery capital funds to new and existing visual arts projects since 1 January 1998. Details of individual awards are set out in the tables.

Table 1: Completed visual arts projects

Organisation name	*Location*	*Approved amount (£)*
ACAVA	London, Kensington	972,785
ACME Housing Association Ltd.	London, E3	1,200,857
Artsway	Lymington, Hampshire	398,966
Bournemouth and Poole College Services Ltd.	Poole, Dorset	1,835,756
Castlefield Gallery/Manchester Artists Studio	Manchester	708,235
Baltic, Sage Gateshead and Live Theatre	Gateshead	41,385,000
Ikon Gallery	Birmingham	4,614,047
Knowsley Arts Centre	Merseyside	367,790
One Church Square	Scunthorpe, Lincolnshire	1,024,000
The Foundation for Art and Creative Technology	Liverpool	4,599,990
Walsall Museum and Art Gallery	Walsall	15,750,000

Table 1: Completed visual arts projects

Organisation name	*Location*	*Approved amount (£)*
Yorkshire ArtSpace Society Ltd.	Sheffield	3,776,310
Lowry	Salford	51,000,000
Spike Island Artspace Ltd.	Bristol	935,000
Tate Gallery Projects Ltd.	London	6,200,000

Table 2: Visual arts projects under construction

Organisation name	*Location*	*Approved amount (£)*
Combined Art Gallery and Craft Centre for Middlesbrough	Middlesbrough	4,500,000
Hampshire Arts Centre	Basingstoke and Havant	500,000
Colchester Arts Centre	Colchester	5,000,000
Creative Art House	Doncaster	1,000,000
Derby Playhouse	Derby	2,500,000
Spike Island	Bristol	750,000
Eastbourne Regional Cultural Quarter	Eastbourne	2,000,000
INIVA/Association of Black Photographers	London	5,000,000
Stroud Valley Artspace	Gloucestershire	580,000
Wysing Arts	Cambridge	780,000

Table 3: Visual arts projects not yet to be started

Organisation name	*Location*	*Approved amount (£)*
Turner Centre	Margate	4,100,000
Future Factory and Angel Row	Nottingham	5,000,000
ACME Studios	London	2,000,000
Whitechapel Art Gallery	London	500,000
Waygood Gallery	Newcastle	750,000
Storey Gallery	Lancaster	693,600
Newlyn Art Gallery	Penzance	1,200,000
Sherborne House	Sherborne	288,860
Centre for Creative Arts	Wakefield	4,000,000

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what measures she has taken to check projections of visitor number attendances at the new visual arts facilities against the actual figures; and if she will make a statement. [167287]

Estelle Morris: Arts Council England rigorously assesses projections of visitor numbers contained in all applications made to it for capital grants. The Arts Council also monitors all regularly funded organisations, including those receiving capital funding, through an annual, covering attendances in the previous financial year and the projected attendances in the current year.

DEFENCE

Armed Forces Pensions

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the reasons are for the abatement of pensions under Armed Forces Pension Scheme rules; on what grounds those rules are applied for those in full-time reserve when contributions have been paid; and if he will make a statement. [168060]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* Successive Governments have maintained the policy that the pensions of public servants who are re-employed in public service should be abated in certain circumstances: these include where an individual is re-employed by the same employer and where an appointment is made under closed competition. The broad terms of this policy apply to all public service pension schemes, including the Armed Forces Pension Scheme (AFPS). Abatement avoids the position where a re-employed member could receive a higher income from public funds, taking account of pay and pension, than a colleague of the same rank, seniority and trade with whom he or she might work. It also provides a safeguard against the potential abuse of re-employment.

Members of the AFPS make no direct contribution towards the cost of their standard pension benefits. However, as part of its overall review of remuneration, the independent Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) compares the value of benefits provided under the AFPS with those provided by comparator pension schemes in the civilian sector and makes an adjustment to pay to reflect any difference. At present the AFPRB makes a 7 per cent. abatement of comparator pay, and in particular take account of the fact that AFPS benefits accrue faster and are paid earlier than those of civilian comparators. This adjustment takes account of the overall terms of the AFPS which include arrangements for the abatement of pension on re-employment in public service.

Army (Self-harm)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 7 April, to question reference 165755, what the reasons are for the delay in collecting and analysing information with regard to incidents of self-harm in the army. [166929]

Mr. Caplin: It is notoriously difficult to obtain reliable and consistent data about incidents of self-harm, because of problems of definition and identification, uncertainty about intention, patient confidentiality and the variety and inconsistency of reporting. As I indicated previously, more work is continuing to try to improve the collection of information.

Defence Bills Agency

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much was paid by the Defence Bills Agency to contractors in 2003–04. [167070]

Mr. Ingram: The value of the bills processed by Defence Bills Agency in 2003–04 is £19,104 million.

Defence Medical Services

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many consultants were employed in the Defence Medical Services in each of the last five years. [167232]

Mr. Caplin: The numbers of consultants employed in the Defence Medical Services in each of the last five years were as follows:

	Number of consultants
2004	202
2003	185
2002	195
2001	201
2000	199

First Gulf War

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will instruct the Medical Assessment Programme to test for *(a)* squalene anti-bodies and *(b)* mycroplasmal infection in servicemen who served in the first Gulf War; [167548]

(2) whether he has discussed testing for *(a)* squalene anti-bodies and *(b)* mycroplasmal infection with the combined medical services; [167549]

(3) for what reasons UK servicemen who served in the first Gulf War have not been tested for *(a)* squalene anti-bodies and *(b)* mycroplasmal infection; [167550]

(4) what assessment he has made of the work of Dr. Garth Nicolson of the Institute of Molecular Medicine on the use of a six to12-month course of antibiotics in treating those with mycroplasmal organisms following service in the first Gulf War. [167554]

Mr. Caplin: The work of Dr. Nicholson has been monitored as part of the Ministry of Defence's consideration of research into Gulf veterans' illnesses. In line with its normal approach to issues relating to the health of Gulf veterans, the MOD takes medical and scientific advice from a range of internal and external sources. In this instance, there was no requirement to consult formally with the Defence Medical Services although they are aware of the matter. In the light of trials funded by the US Government based on Dr. Nicolson's work, we have concluded that there is no evidence to support a connection between illness among veterans and mycoplasma infections or that aggressive antibiotic treatment would benefit veterans. Assessments undertaken by the US Armed Forces Epidemiological Board similarly support the view that there is no evidence that ill health is linked to the presence of squalene anti-bodies. It would be inappropriate to subject veterans to tests for which there is no clinical indication.

Iraq

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what checks are carried out on private military companies supplying guards to British interests in Iraq. [166134]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) employs two private security companies to provide armed protection for its staff and assets in Iraq. These companies were subject to normal checking procedures for contact with private military and security companies in line with FCO guidelines.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what security checks are carried out on *(a)* Iraqi nationals, *(b)* Third Country nationals and *(c)* international employees of private military companies protecting British interests in Iraq. [166136]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

The Foreign and Commonwealth Office employs two private security companies in Iraq. One provides armed escorts for its staff when travelling outside secure areas, the other provides static guards at the former embassy and at the British Office in Baghdad. Personnel under these contracts are subject to security vetting prior to deployment, depending on the job they will be doing.

Journalists (Conflict Areas)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence by what rules journalists working with British forces abroad in conflict areas must abide; and if he will make a statement. [167072]

Mr. Ingram: The Green Book—"Working Arrangements with the Media in times of Emergency, Tension, Conflict or War"—sets out the arrangements for dealings between the media and the Ministry of Defence in times of emergency, tension, conflict or war. This book is currently being reviewed and updated.

A copy of the current version of the Green Book can be found on the MOD website at: www.mod.uk/news/green_book/index.htm

Memorial Cemetery (Korea)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make representations to the UN to replace on the Memorial Wall in the UN Memorial Cemetery, Pusan, Korea, and in official documents, the words No Known Grave with the words Buried at Sea at Latitude 36 Degrees, 2 Minutes North, Longitude 129 Degrees, 42 Minutes East, in respect of the Servicemen who were killed on HMS Jamaica on 8 July 1950 and buried at sea; and if he will reply to the hon. Member for Castle Point's constituent Mr. Anthony Legg's letter of 4 March 2004 on this matter. [167274]

Mr. Caplin: There are no plans to make representations to the United Nations to change either official documents or the inscription of the central commemorative plaque on the Memorial Wall in the United Nations Memorial Cemetery, Pusan, South Korea. The Memorial is dedicated to all Servicemen who died during the Korean War and are buried at sea. It would be invidious to make changes to cover just those who died on HMS Jamaica.

Officials replied to the hon. Member's constituent, Mr. Anthony Legg, on 20 April.

Missile Defence

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to make an announcement concerning the use by the US Administration of RAF Menwith Hill in the US missile defence system. [167746]

Mr. Hoon: There are no current plans for any of the facilities at RAF Menwith Hill to be used for United States ballistic missile defence purposes. The position remains that United Kingdom approval would be needed should the US wish to use RAF Menwith Hill for missile defence purposes. No such request has been received.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the purpose is of the latest planning application for another radome at RAF Menwith Hill. [167747]

Mr. Hoon: The proposed new radome at RAF Menwith Hill will house an additional antenna that will be used in support of the current mission of the base.

Radiation Exposure

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent assessments have been made of the dangers of exposure to radiation for MOD personnel. [167999]

Mr. Caplin: Heads of Establishments and Commanding Officers have a statutory duty under the Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999 to carry out prior risk assessments, and to keep the assessments up to date, to ensure that exposures of the Ministry of Defence personnel are restricted to as low a level as is reasonably practical. In doing this they seek advice from their Radiation Protection Advisers. Due to numerous and varied situations where this duty applies, it is not possible to list each and every recent occasion where such risk assessments have been undertaken.

The MOD contributes to the National Registry of Radiation Workers database managed by the National Radiological Protection Board. The data are used to undertake epidemiological studies. In their second analysis of the data, published in July 1999, the National Radiological Protection Board concluded that overall death rates among radiation workers are below those in the general population. This is known as the healthy worker effect. This analysis contained 124,743 workers of which about one-third were MOD radiation workers or former radiation workers. The National Radiological Protection Board is intending to undertake the next analysis in 2005–06.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provisions for medical check-ups are provided for *(a)* current radiation workers and *(b)* retired and former radiation workers in his Department. [168000]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence carries out medical surveillance of radiation workers as required by Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999, Regulation 24. These regulations lay down monitoring and medical surveillance requirements for personnel while occupationally exposed to ionising radiation. The main purpose of medical surveillance is to determine an individual's fitness or continuing fitness for the intended work with ionising radiation.

There is no mandatory requirement for a monitoring programme for retired personnel and no optional health screening is offered to retired personnel. However, the MOD does provide an independent counselling service for radiation workers, former radiation workers and their families who have concerns about their health consequent of their work with radiation. Individuals may request counselling by telephoning the Counselling Telephone line (02392 768098) and leaving their names and addresses or by writing to the MOD Counselling Registry at DSTL Radiological Protection Services, Crescent Road, Alverstoke, Gosport, Hants, PO12 2DL. Further details are available on the World Wide Web at: http://www.mod.uk/dsef/hp/rwc.htm

Suez Medal

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects the Army Medal Office to complete distribution of the General Service Medal for those who served in the Suez Canal Zone between 1951 and 1954 who have applied for the medal. [167479]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* As at 16 April, the Army Medal Office has received 27,371 applications and distributed 4,113 medals. Work continues to confirm eligibility and distribute medals as soon as practical.

Territorial Army

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the current strength of the Territorial Army is; and what its projected strength is for the next 12 months. [166939]

Mr. Caplin: The total strength of the Territorial Army as at 1 March 2004 is 36,900. This includes 2,760 mobilised reservists.

Forecasts of projected strengths are not available.

US Bases

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the US bases for each year from 1997 to date where the Ministry of Defence Police Agency operates. [167745]

Mr. Ingram: Ministry of Defence Police Officers have continuously staffed RAF Hythe, RAF Welford, RAF Fairford, RAF Menwith Hill, RAF Alconbury, RAF Lakenheath and US Navy (London) during the years 1997 to date.

ELECTORAL COMMISSION COMMITTEE

Office Premises (Improper Use)

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the hon. Member for Gosport, representing the Speaker's Committee on the Electoral Commission what representations the Commission has received on improper use of office premises for party purposes since August 2003. [168452]

Mr. Viggers: The Electoral Commission has informed me that since August 2003 it has received no representations on the improper use of office premises for party purposes.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Manchester, Gorton

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of recent trends in investment in renewable energy upon residents of Manchester, Gorton. [167537]

Mr. Timms: Recent trends in renewable energy investment have been encouraging. More new capacity has been constructed in the last few years than in the previous decade, and a significant amount is currently in the pipeline. This covers a wide range of technologies including onshore and offshore wind, solar and biomass.

While this investment has not translated into capacity within Manchester, Gorton itself, Renewables Northwest, a joint venture between the Regional Development Agency and United Utilities, is actively working with local authorities on the development of urban renewables in the area. This is looking to promote the installation of renewable energy systems in new build and urban regeneration projects in the Greater Manchester area. An example of this is the CIS Tower, Manchester, which has been awarded a sizeable grant from the DTI's Major Photovoltaic Demonstration Programme, towards the costs of a large PV cladding installation.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Manchester, Gorton have taken 26 weeks maternity leave since 1997. [167354]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). However, figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effects of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Manchester, Gorton. [167355]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Manchester, Gorton have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to Parental Leave, which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them; and

in addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effects on residents of Manchester, Gorton of new rights for night-shift workers. [167356]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The Regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working night and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the Regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There are no specific data available for night shift workers in Gorton, Manchester.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Manchester, Gorton qualify for paid leave entitlements. [167357]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Gorton qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Gorton who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Manchester, Gorton have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [167358]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Manchester, Gorton are not available. However, it has been estimated that around 100,000 workers resident in Greater Manchester stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

State Aid

Ann Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1363W, on state aid, what definition she uses of the term block exemption; and how many applications from each region were turned down by the Department of Trade and Industry and not passed on to the European Commission. [167402]

Mr. Sutcliffe: For state aid purposes a block exemption is a Commission Regulation which allows member states to implement state aid schemes complying with stipulated conditions without obtaining advance approval from the Commission. However, member states are obliged to inform the Commission of such schemes within 20 working days of their coming into force. Block Exemption Regulations exist covering aid to SMEs (recently extended to include research and development), aid for training and aid for employment.

DTI's role is to advise those contemplating introducing state aid schemes and to help them with the notification process. It forwards all notifications to the European Commission via the United Kingdom Permanent Representation to the European Communities, sometimes after amendment in consultation with the aid scheme administrators. The Department does not turn down notifications, although on some occasions an aid scheme administrator may withdraw a notification on advice from DTI that the proposed aid scheme would not comply with the terms of the relevant state aid rules and would not therefore be approved by the Commission.

Burnley

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the effects of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Burnley. [167897]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Burnley have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to parental leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

in addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Burnley have taken 26 weeks maternity leave since 1997. [167896]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). However, figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits to residents of Burnley of new rights for night-shift workers. [167898]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working nights and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Burnley.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Burnley qualify for paid leave entitlements. [167899]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Burnley qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set but in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Burnley who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Burnley have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [167900]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Burnley are not available, however it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the north west stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many new businesses have started up in Burnley since 1997; [167892]

(2) how many new businesses have been established in Burnley since 1997. [167894]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 2,600 in Lancashire county (which contains the constituency of Burnley), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 10,200 business start-ups in Lancashire county in 2003. Data for counties are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Burnley local authority (which covers the same area as the constituency of Burnley) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT Registrations: 1997–2002

	Burnley
1997	170
1998	180
1999	180
2000	205
2001	205
2002	205

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service.

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Cammell Laird

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action she intends to take against directors of Cammell Laird at the point when the company was moved into administration. [167503]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* There are a number of Cammell Laird companies which have gone into insolvency proceedings during 2001 and 2003. These are:

	Insolvency proceedings	*Date*
Cammell Laird (Merseyside) Ltd.	Administrative receivership	11 April 2001
Cammell Laird (North East) Ltd.	Administrative receivership	11 April 2001
Cammell Laird (North East) Ltd.	Voluntary liquidation	16 July 2003
Cammell Laird (Shiprepairers) Ltd.	Voluntary liquidation	3 February 2003
Cammell Laird (Teesside) Ltd.	Administrative receivership	12 April 2001
Cammell Laird (Tyneside) Ltd.	Administrative receivership	12 April 2001
Cammell Laird (Wearside) Ltd.	Administrative receivership	20 April 2001
Cammell Laird Holdings plc	Administration	19 April 2001
Cammell Laird plc	Administrative receivership	11 April 2001
Cammell Laird Properties Ltd.	Voluntary liquidation	21 May 2001
Cammell Laird Technical Services Ltd.	Administrative receivership	12 April 2001

The Company Directors Disqualification Act 1986 imposes a statutory time limit of two years from the date of the first insolvency proceedings, for making an application for a disqualification order. Therefore the companies which failed in 2001 are outside of this time limit.

The insolvency practitioners appointed as liquidators of the two companies which failed in 2003 have reported to the Secretary of State as they are required to do. On the basis of the information currently provided, no disqualification proceedings are being considered. Should additional information become available this decision will be reviewed to determine whether such proceedings are in the public interest.

Car Advertisements

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will take steps to prevent car advertisements from referring to maximum speed levels achievable where these are in excess of the national speed limit. [167766]

Mr. Timms: The rules under Section 48 of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) Committee of Advertising Practice (CAP) Code already provide such safeguards for motoring advertising.

Section 48.3 states:

"Marketers should not portray speed in a way that might encourage motorists to drive irresponsibly or to break the law and should not condone irresponsible driving."

Section 48.2 states:

"Marketers should not make speed or acceleration claims the predominant message of their marketing communications. However it is legitimate to give general information about a vehicle's performance such as acceleration and mid-range statistics, braking power, road-holding and top speed."

Debt

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will publish research carried out or commissioned by her Department which compares the level of *(a)* secured and *(b)* unsecured debt in the UK with other countries. [167267]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI has not carried out or commissioned research which compares the level of secured and unsecured debt in the UK with other countries.

Comparisons of amounts spent on unsecured debt by the bottom two income deciles in UK, France, Germany and the USA are included in research commissioned by the DTI to look at the way interest rate controls have worked in other countries. This work was announced in the Consumer Credit White Paper (December 2003), and will be published later this spring.

The DTI commissioned and published research into levels of household debt in the UK from the Personal Finance Research Centre (Kempson, Elaine, "Over-indebtedness in Britain", September 2002, available at http://www.dti.gov.uk/ccp/topicsl/pdfl/moricontents.pdf). In the Consumer Credit White Paper, we committed to monitoring the extent and profile of over-indebtedness in the UK, and will be reporting on our approach in the forthcoming Strategy on Over-indebtedness.

DTI draws on research carried out by others in its assessment of the level of debt in the UK compared with other countries. For example:

The Treasury published a comparison of outstanding residential mortgage debt across EU countries in the EMU study 'Housing, consumption and EMU' with the five tests assessment (available at http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/documents/the_euro/assessment/studies/euro_assess03_studdorset.cfm).

Sir Andrew Large, Deputy Governor of the BoE, recently gave a speech entitled 'Major puzzles in today's economy: the build-up in household debt' in which he placed the UK experience in the international context and compared household debt levels in the UK with other major industrial countries (March 2004, available at http://www.bankofengland.co.uk/speeches/speech217.pdf).

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the Libyan Arab Jamahiriya's debts to the Export Credits Guarantee Department, broken down by sector, are; if she will list the top five contracts, by value, on which these debts are based; and if she will make a statement on the Government's intention to recover this debt. [167829]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Libya made a payment of £20 million to ECGD on 29 December 2003 in negotiated settlement of its outstanding debt obligations towards ECGD-insured debt.

To avoid prejudicing ongoing negotiations with other similar debtors, it is not ECGD's policy to reveal details of the amounts outstanding in respect of which this settlement was made. However, the settlement reached represented a good outcome to negotiations between HMG and the Libyan Government.

The debt related to business dating back to the early/mid-1980s. The majority of the business was covered under short-term guarantees, with the balance mainly construction projects and services. We do not have a comprehensive breakdown of the debt on the basis requested.

Export Credits Guarantee Department

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) if she will make a statement on the timetable for the Export Credits Guarantee Department becoming a capitalised trading fund; [167265]

(2) what estimate has been made of the cost of the Export Credits Guarantee Department becoming a capitalised trading fund, broken down by *(a)* the source of the funding and *(b)* how the money is to be allocated; and if she will make a statement. [167266]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Ministers are considering the arrangements for ECGD's Trading Fund, and an announcement will be made in due course.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether an assessment of the effects of fully privatising the Export Credits Guarantee Department was made before the decision that it should become a trading fund was taken. [168650]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Privatisation of ECGD was considered in the Mission and Status Review of ECGD in 1999–2000 (a copy is available on ECGD's website www.ecgd.gov.uk). The Review concluded that privatisation should not be pursued, and that ECGD's risk management systems should be strengthened by the establishment of a Trading Fund.

Gasified Coal

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to encourage the gasification of coal. [167750]

Mr. Timms: We are supporting six R&D projects under the Cleaner Coal Technology Programme. We are also investigating the feasibility of Underground Coal Gasification and plan to produce a report on this in about a month's time.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of power was derived from gasified coal in 2003. [167751]

Mr. Timms: Currently in the UK there is no power produced through coal gasification.

Low Pay Commission

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the terms of reference for the Low Pay Commission's Report of 2004; why the monitoring of enforcement and compliance with regard to the National Minimum Wage was not included as in previous years; and whether such matters will be included in the Low Pay Commission remit in the future. [167301]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Low Pay Commission monitored and evaluated issues connected with minimum wage—including enforcement—in their last full report in 2003.

The remit for the Commission's 2004 Report was specifically drawn to cover two issues raised in the 2003 Report: to consider whether any fine-tuning was needed to the proposed October 2004 increases; and to consider the possible advantages and disadvantages of a minimum wage rate for 16–17 year olds.

Further remits for the Low Pay Commission will be announced to Parliament in the usual way.

National Minimum Wage

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many inspections have been undertaken where no complaint has been made about an employer to ensure that they are complying with the National Minimum Wage provisions in each year since the introduction of the National Minimum Wage; and what level of underpayment was identified as a result of each of these inspections. [165826]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The number of cases completed and arrears identified since the introduction of the minimum wage, where a complaint had not been received, are provided in the following table:

	Number of cases	*Arrears identified (£)*
1999–2000	2,532	158,839
2000–01	4,742	1,025,333
2001–02	3,655	1,206,898
2002–03	4,284	1,043,706
2003–04	3,655	1,205,674

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what targets have been set for the national minimum wage compliance teams with regard to the investigation of complaints; and whether these have been met for each year since the introduction of the minimum wage. [166739]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Our Service Level Agreement with the Inland Revenue requires them to investigate every complaint made to the National Minimum Wage helpline each year and they do so.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reason there has been no systematic evaluation of the use and efficacy of the formal powers available to national minimum wage compliance officers in response to the recommendations of the fourth report of the Low Pay Commission. [166740]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The assumption underlying this question is incorrect. The Government are currently reviewing the enforcement powers available to them and will cover this point in future evidence to the Low Pay Commission.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the progress being made by, and conclusions drawn from, the local enforcement pilot projects for the national minimum wage. [166741]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Following recommendations made in the Low Pay Commission's second report seven local enforcement projects were launched between March and September 2001. Three of these met with limited success and it was decided with our partners that they should close.

Four of the projects are still running; we will be evaluating their effectiveness over the coming months and will cover this issue in future evidence to the Low Pay Commission.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will break down those employees affected by cases of underpayment of the national minimum wage brought to the attention of the Inland Revenue by *(a)* sex, *(b)* age group, *(c)* ethnicity and *(d)* region for each year since the introduction of the minimum wage. [166742]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table provides details of the number of workers that were found to be paid below the minimum wage following an Inland Revenue investigation.

	Number of workers
2001–02	10,378
2002–03	7,373
2003–04	9,431

No information on the number of workers in this category was held prior to 2001–02. The Inland Revenue only holds information relating to workers being underpaid by sex, age group and region in connection with cases that originated with a workers' complaint. This information is set out in the joint DTI/Revenue Annual Reports on the minimum wage; copies of recent reports can be found on www.dti.gov.uk/er/nmw. No information is held in relation to ethnicity of the workers concerned.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will break down by industry the employers found to be not complying with the national minimum wage provisions by industry for each year since the introduction of the minimum wage. [166743]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The following table provides details of the number of employers investigated by the Inland Revenue where non-compliance with the minimum wage was found.

	Number of employers
1999–2000	1,280
2000–01	2,119
2001–02	1,937
2002–03	1,996
2003–04	2,211

Further information on the breakdown by industry in connection with cases that originated with a worker's complaint is set out in the joint DTI/Revenue Annual Reports.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the prevalence of re-offending in relation to employer non-compliance with the National Minimum Wage Act 1998. [166744]

Mr. Sutcliffe: As part of the post evaluation assurance programme, officers re-visit a number of employers to ensure continued compliance with the national minimum wage.

As part of the first evaluation undertaken in August 2002, 87 cases were selected for revisiting. Of these 71 employers were found to be complying (82 per cent.). As part of a second evaluation undertaken in March 2003, 95 per cent. Where appropriate the Revenue take formal enforcement action at an early stage where an employer has re-offended.

DTI and Inland Revenue are presently working on a strategy to use the prosecution powers, contained in the National Minimum Wage Act 1998 to tackle, among others, any employers that are found to repeatedly re-offend.

Newspaper Distribution

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the newspaper distribution network. [167512]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The arrangements for the distribution of newspapers are a commercial matter for the industry, operating within the relevant legal and regulatory framework.

Night Shift Workers

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits to residents of Birkenhead of new rights for night-shift workers. [166502]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than 6 hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working nights and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night-shift workers in Birkenhead.

Post Office

Mr. Patrick Hall: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the outcome and lessons learned review of the Post Office Urban Reinvention programme following its conclusion will include an examination of the extension of the flexibility currently covering the rural network to urban areas. [166819]

Mr. Timms: Government policy for the post office network is guided by the recommendations of the Performance and Innovation Unit report on "Modernising the Post Office Network", published in June 2000. The report identified the different nature of the challenges facing the network in urban and rural areas, and there does not appear to be a case at present for adopting the approach being applied in rural areas to the urban network.

Rationalisation is necessary in urban areas where there are too many post offices for all of them to survive on the current levels of business available.

Recognition Ballots

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many allegations of intimidation by *(a)* trade unions and *(b)* employers during recognition ballots were made in the last 12 months. [166989]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government are aware of concerns on the part of unions and employers of intimidation during recognition ballots, and sought further evidence in order to gain a better idea of the scale of the problem. Over a dozen allegations have been directly brought to my attention in the last 12 months as a result of this process, the majority of which have alleged intimidation by employers.

Wind Farms

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many planning applications for wind farms in coastal waters of the United Kingdom have been made in *(a)* the first round and *(b)* the second round; and if she will list the (i) persons and (ii) organisations who have been consulted on each application. [168093]

Mr. Timms: The Department has received 12 planning applications in relation to English and Welsh waters under the first round of offshore wind farms but none in relation to the second round. Of these six consents have been granted under the Electricity Act for the Scroby Sands, North Hoyle, Rhyl Flats, Barrow, Kentish Flats and Burbo Bank offshore wind farms and a further four have been granted Orders under the Transport and Works Act for the Lynn, Inner Dowsing, Cromer and Gunfleet Sands offshore wind farms. Consent applications for the Teesside and Shell Flats offshore wind farms are currently under consideration.

Depending whether or not the development was in English or Welsh waters either English Nature, the Countryside Agency and English Heritage or the National Assembly for Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales and Cadw Welsh Historic Monuments were consulted. Additional consultees included the Civil Aviation Authority, Crown Estate, Environment Agency, Health and Safety Executive, Ministry of Defence, Radiocommunications Agency, Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Chamber of Shipping (but not in the case of Scroby Sands and North Hoyle), Royal Yachting Association (but not in the case of Scroby

Sands or North Hoyle), Trinity House Lighthouse Services, National Federation of Fisherman's Organisations, the relevant local authority and sea fisheries committee and the local port or harbour authority where appropriate. Both the Chamber of Shipping and the Royal Yachting Association were added to the consultee list following representations to the Department for Transport and the DTI. In addition to those listed any organisation including members of the public can comment on planning applications as each application is subject to a formal public consultation period and must be advertised in local newspapers. All comments received will be taken into account before any decision is made on a specific proposal.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the risk of obstruction to the Port of London from the London Array wind farm; and what representations she has received on the issue from the maritime industry. [168356]

Mr. Timms: The developer of the London Array wind farm in seeking consent for the project must make a thorough assessment of the potential impact of the proposed installation on navigation and ports. The developer must demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Secretary of State in the case of an Order under the Transport and Works Act or the Secretary of State for Transport in the case of a Coast Protection Act 1949 consent that their development, in combination with others in the vicinity, does not present a danger or significant obstruction to navigation. In reaching that decision either Secretary of State will take advice from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and the Port of London Authority. Any other organisation or person who has an interest in the matter may make representations to the relevant Minister which will be taken into account in the decision-making process.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the extent of interference with maritime navigational instruments from wind farms placed in UK territorial waters. [168357]

Mr. Timms: It is important that wind farms do not compromise safety by interfering with ship or search and rescue communications systems. The Government have given an assurance in the House of Lords that it will carry out a study on this subject.

The study will draw on international experience, for instance in Denmark, and we will learn as much as possible from our own installations. The offshore wind farm at North Hoyle can be used as a test facility to provide an input into the study. The study is a priority and work will begin as soon as possible.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will require that the costs of any navigational aids required to prevent collision with windmills positioned in UK territorial waters are met by the operators of wind farms. [168358]

Mr. Timms: The costs of providing navigational aids to prevent vessels colliding with offshore installations is to be met by the developers. The General Lighthouse Authorities set the standard for such marking and will monitor its provisions. Developers may also expect to meet the reasonable costs of altering existing aids to navigation if required as a result of their installations.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consultations she has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* planned with maritime groups concerned about the impact of offshore wind farms on maritime navigation. [168359]

Mr. Timms: I had a useful and productive meeting with representatives of the shipping, port and marine aggregates industries on 16 March this year about the second round of offshore wind farms planned for the Greater Wash, Thames Estuary and North West.

These industries have had an opportunity to make their views known on the Department's plans for offshore wind farming. In November 2002, the Department issued a consultation paper, Future Offshore: A Strategic framework for the offshore wind industry. As a result, the Department decided that the future allocation of leases for sites for offshore wind farms would take place in a structured series of bidding rounds, following a strategic environmental assessment of the defined areas of the sea selected for potential development.

In May 2003 the Department consulted on an environmental report which assessed the impact of wind farm development in three strategic areas—the Greater Wash, outer Thames Estuary and the North West (from North Wales to the Solway Firth)—on a range of matters including maritime navigation. Following this consultation the Department asked The Crown Estate to arrange a bidding round for site leases in these three strategic areas, with the exception of a coastal strip of 8 to 13 kms wide, which was excluded because of the particular sensitivity to development of shallow coastal waters. The Crown Estate announced before Christmas last year that it had offered site leases for 15 wind farms.

The developers of these proposed wind farms must obtain statutory planning consents from Government before they can be built. The Department has already organised one workshop and is planning a series of further meetings to bring together the developers with the main stakeholders, including representatives of the maritime community, who should be consulted in preparing an environmental impact assessment of the project. When a formal planning application for the project is received the Department will consult a range of organisations including those representing shipping and port interests.

TREASURY

Annuities

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has recently received about the reform of annuities. [167684]

Ruth Kelly: Out of the 209 responses only 14 directly addressed the reform of annuities. And about half of these wanted the annuity rules finessed rather than abolished.

Birth Statistics

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total number of live births was in *(a)* Scotland, *(b)* England, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each year since 1992. [168159]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to David Willetts, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your request for the number of live births in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland in each year since 1992. (168159)

The latest year for which figures are available for all four countries is 2002. The information requested is shown in the attached table for the years 1992–2002.

Provisional 2003 figures are available for Scotland and Northern Ireland. These are also shown in the table. The 2003 figures for England and Wales will be published on 13 May 2004.

The figures for Scotland and Northern Ireland are the responsibility of the appropriate national office. They have been extracted from publications produced by the General Register Office for Scotland and the Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.

Number of live births in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland 1992–2003

	Scotland[1]	England[2,3]	Wales[3,4]	Northern Ireland[5]
1992	65,789	651,784	37,523	25,354
1993	63,337	636,473	36,578	24,722
1994	61,656	628,956	35,366	24,098
1995	60,051	613,257	34,477	23,693
1996	59,296	614,184	34,894	24,382
1997	59,440	608,202	34,520	24,087
1998	57,319	602,111	33,438	23,668
1999	55,147	589,468	32,111	22,957
2000	53,076	572,826	31,304	21,512
2001	52,527	563,744	30,616	21,962
2002	51,270	565,709	30,205	21,385
2003[6]	52,408	n/a	n/a	21,648

[1] Numbers of live births occurring in Scotland, registered in the year stated.
[2] Numbers of live births occurring anywhere in England and Wales to mothers usually resident in England, in the year stated. A small number of births from the previous year, which were late in being registered are also included.
[3] There are around 200–400 births each year that occur in England and Wales that are to non- residents of England and Wales. These births are excluded from these figures.
[4] Numbers of live births occurring anywhere in England and Wales to mothers usually resident in Wales, in the year stated. A small number of births from the previous year which were late in being registered are also included.
[5] Numbers of live births occurring in N Ireland to resident mothers, registered in the year stated.
[6] Provisional.
Sources:
Office for National Statistics
General Register Office for Scotland
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency

Child Carers

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether nannies count as registered child carers for the purposes of the Budget proposal whereby companies' contributions of up to £50 per week to the cost of a registered child carer are exempt from taxation as a benefit in kind. [168148]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Eddisbury (Mr. O'Brien) on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 381W, about nannies employed by parents with disabled children. That answer applies to nannies generally.

Children (Statistics)

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the total number of children in *(a)* England, *(b)* Scotland, *(c)* Wales and *(d)* Northern Ireland aged under five years was in each year since 1992; and what forecasts he has made for future years. [168163]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to David Willetts, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your question concerning the total number of children in England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland aged under five years for each year since 1992, and what forecasts have been made for the future. (168163)

Attached is a table showing mid-year population estimates for 1992–2002 and mid-year population projections for 2003–2012 of children aged 0–4 inclusive for each constituent country of the UK.

Estimated and projected population of children aged under 5 years 1992–2002 (estimated), 2003–2012 (projected), constituent countries of the UK[1]

Thousand

Year[2,3]	England[4]	Wales[4]	Scotland	Northern Ireland
1992	3,244.9	191.1	325.1	130.8
1993	3,227.8	188.6	323.0	128.8
1994	3,218.1	187.4	322.2	126.8
1995	3,185.0	183.8	318.3	124.6
1996	3,126.7	179.5	310.1	122.9
1997	3,086.2	177.1	302.7	121.6
1998	3,050.2	174.7	296.4	120.4
1999	3,018.4	172.1	290.3	119.2
2000	2,978.1	169.6	283.2	117.3
2001	2,920.6	167.2	276.3	114.7
2002	2,864.0	162.8	268.5	112.5
2003	2,843.2	159.9	263.4	110.3
2004	2,834.3	158.0	258.4	108.4
2005	2,840.2	157.1	255.2	107.3
2006	2,860.6	156.6	252.3	106.8
2007	2,880.2	157.6	249.9	106.4
2008	2,883.4	158.2	246.6	106.0
2009	2,885.5	158.8	244.1	105.9
2010	2,890.4	159.3	242.4	105.9
2011	2,898.2	159.9	241.3	106.1
2012	2,908.4	160.4	240.9	106.3

[1] Individual country estimates shown in the table cannot be added to give a UK total, since rounding errors would occur.
[2] Mid-year population estimates from 1992–2002.
[3] 2002-based national population projections from 2003–12.
[4] Interim revised population estimates from 1992–2000 for England and Wales only.
Sources:
Office for National Statistics.
General Register Office for Scotland.
Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency.
Government Actuary's Department.

Civil Servants

Bob Russell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the towns and cities which have been assessed by Sir Michael Lyons for possible relocation of civil servants from London which have been short-listed; how many locations will be selected; when he will make an announcement; and if he will make a statement. [167282]

Mr. Boateng: In taking forward the Government's relocation programme, choice of locations will be for each department to determine based on a sound business case which aims to secure greater efficiency, improved public service delivery and better value for money for the taxpayer.

The independent King Sturge research commissioned by Sir Michael Lyons in his review provides an assessment of the attributes and qualities of different locations outside London and the South East. The assessment, details of which may be found in Chapter 8 of his report, is an illustrative guide for departments and public bodies relocating functions or considering dispersal out of the capital and by no means intended to be prescriptive or exhaustive.

In submitting relocation proposals to Sir Michael Lyons' Review, some departments have indicated an initial preference for certain locations. There are show in Chart 6.1 of Sir Michael's report.

The Government will come forward with detailed proposals for monitoring and implementing dispersal plans as part of the 2004 Spending Review.

Council Tax

Peter Bottomley: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate for *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* the latest date for which figures are available the number of householders paying more in council tax than income tax. [166525]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from John Pullinger to Mr. Peter Bottomley, dated 26 April 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent question asking for the number of householders paying more in council tax than income tax in 1997 and currently. I am replying in his absence. (166525)

Estimates have been produced from the Office for National Statistics' analysis "The effects of taxes and benefits on household income" published on the National Statistics website on October 21st 2003 at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/taxesbenefits.

Based on information provided by respondents to the survey the number of households in Great Britain paying more in net council tax than in income tax was approximately 4.8 million in 1997/98 and 5.5 million in 2001/02. More recent information is not yet available. Net council tax is defined as gross council tax less reported council tax benefits and discounts. Please note that these figures refer to the total tax paid by households (which may contain more than one person paying income tax) rather than by householders.

The analysis includes measures of income inequality for the United Kingdom as a whole based on data from the Expenditure and Food Survey. This is a sample survey covering about 7,500 households in the UK and, as with any statistical sample survey, estimates are subject to sampling error.

Sea Bass

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make it his policy to ensure that sea bass *(a)* served at functions at which he is the host and *(b)* used in Treasury catering outlets is sourced from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167545]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury's catering contractor sources foodstuffs with the aim of obtaining best value for the customer.

Economic Inactivity

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* men aged 50 to 64 years and *(b)* women aged 50 to 59 years were not in employment in each year since 1997. [168155]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment among men and women aged over 50. (168155)

The attached table gives estimates of the number of men aged 50 to 64 years and women aged 50 to 59 years not in employment for three month periods ending February each year from 1998 to 2004, the most recent periods for which this information is available.

Estimates are taken from the Office for National Statistics' Labour Force Survey (LFS). As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Number of people who are not in employment in the United Kingdom (not seasonally adjusted)—Men aged 50–64 and women aged 50–59, three month periods ending February, 1998–2004

Thousand

	Not in employment[1]	*Unemployed*	*Economically inactive*
Men aged 50–64 and Women aged 50–59			
1998	2,855	273	2,582
1999	2,833	269	2,564
2000	2,896	261	2,635
2001	2,842	226	2,615
2002	2,849	209	2,640
2003	2,777	227	2,550
2004	2,715	198	2,517
Men aged 50–64			
1998	1,532	200	1,332
1999	1,520	191	1,329
2000	1,578	190	1,388
2001	1,526	166	1,360
2002	1,533	145	1,389
2003	1,491	163	1,327
2004	1,448	135	1,313
Women aged 50–59			
1998	1,323	73	1,251
1999	1,313	78	1,235
2000	1,318	70	1,247
2001	1,316	61	1,255
2002	1,316	65	1,251
2003	1,286	64	1,222
2004	1,268	63	1,204

[1] Not in employment includes unemployed and economically inactive

Source:
ONS-Labour Force Survey

Employment Statistics

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the figures for *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth long-term unemployment in Liverpool, Walton were in each year between 1997 and 2003. [166973]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Kilfoyle, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (166973)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Liverpool, Walton Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The attached table gives the annual average number of people claiming ISA for over 12 months, and the annual average number of these claimants aged 18 to 24 years, in the Liverpool, Walton constituency, for each year since 1997. The data are not seasonally adjusted.

Annual average numbers of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for at least 12 months[1]—Liverpool, Walton parliamentary constituency, 1997–2003

	All claimants	*Claimants aged 18–24*
1997	2,229	472
1998	1,814	323
1999	1,398	114
2000	1,060	32
2001	866	21
2002	774	38
2003	660	38

[1] Computerised claims only.

Source:

Office for National Statistics.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Liverpool, Walton in each year from 1997 to 2003. [166965]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Kilfoyle, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Liverpool, Walton parliamentary constituency. [166965]

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the numbers of unfilled vacancies in the Liverpool travel-to-work area on average for the years 1997 to 2000 and for the latest available 12-month period, to April 2001, were as follows. These figures represent only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Average number of unfilled vacancies recorded at Jobcentres in Liverpool travel-to-work area 1997–2000, and 12 month period ending April 2001

	Number of vacancies
1997	4,330
1998	5,472
1999	5,795
2000	5,926
May 2000 to April 2001	3,328

Source:

Jobcentre Plus administrative records.

Figures are not available for the Liverpool, Walton constituency alone because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally, with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics for May 2001 onwards were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies for later years are therefore unavailable. Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people in Liverpool, Walton were registered unemployed in each year between 1997 and 2003. [166966]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Kilfoyle, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (166966)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Liverpool, Walton Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Liverpool, Walton constituency for each year since 1997 to 2003.

Number of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance in the Liverpool, Walton parliamentary constituency, 1997–2003

	Number of claimants
1997	5,260
1998	4,745
1999	4,242
2000	3,858
2001	3,538
2002	3,328
2003	3,077

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Heywood and Middleton in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [168515]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jim Dobbin, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Heywood and Middleton. (168515)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the number of unfilled vacancies notified to Jobcentres in Heywood and Middleton was 378 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in Heywood and Middleton. [168519]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jim Dobbin, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (168519)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Heywood and Middleton Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of ISA claimants for the Heywood and Middleton constituency for each year since 1997.

	Number of claimants
1997	2,772
1998	2,393
1999	2,077
2000	1,804
2001	1,680
2002	1,640
2003	1,462

Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Heywood and Middleton from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [168520]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in Heywood and Middleton since 1997. [168521]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jim Dobbin, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Heywood and Middleton. (168520, 168521)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The following table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs, in Heywood and Middleton, for 1997 and the latest year available, 2002. No information is available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] in Heywood and Middleton parliamentary constituency: 1997 and 2002

	Full-Time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	22,600	31,300
2002	23,800	32,300
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	1,200	1,000
Percentage	5.4%	3.1%

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.
Source:
1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Heywood and Middleton on the latest date for which figures are available. [168522]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jim Dobbin, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Heywood and Middleton. (168522)

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of jobs in tourism related industries in Heywood and Middleton was 2,700. This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels
restaurants
bars
activities of travel agencies
library, archives, museums etc.
sporting activities
other recreational activities.

James Purnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Stalybridge and Hyde in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [168767]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. James Purnell, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Stalybridge and Hyde. (168767)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the number of unfilled vacancies notified to Jobcentres in Stalybridge and Hyde was 316 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Full-time Jobs (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Manchester, Gorton from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [167476]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167477]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Gerald Kaufman, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Manchester, Gorton.

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The following table shows the annual average numbers of jobs, and full-time jobs, in Manchester, Gorton for 1997 and 2002, the latest year for which information is available. No information is available about whether these jobs were permanent.

Annual average number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] in Manchester, Gorton Parliamentary Constituency 1997 and 2002

	Full-time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	9,800	15,100
2002	11,300	17,800
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	1,500	2,600
Percentage	14.7	17.5

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.
Source:
1997: Annual Employment Survey, rescaled.
2002: Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Gershon Report

Mr. Dawson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when the Gershon Report will be published. [168399]

Mr. Boateng: All Departments continue to work closely with Sir Peter Gershon to prepare detailed efficiency proposals for consideration in the 2004 Spending Review. Departments' agreed efficiency programmes will be published in parallel with the Spending Review settlement.

Gilts

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the value of gilts maturing in each year from now on. [167337]

Ruth Kelly: The UK Debt Management Office publishes the gilt redemptions profile each quarter in its Quarterly Review. The next issue, for first quarter of 2004, will be available in the week beginning 26 April 2004.

Job Vacancies

Mr. Pike: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Burnley in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [167904]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Pike, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Burnley. (167904)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records, the number of unfilled vacancies in the Burnley travel-to-work area was 817 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Manchester, Gorton in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [167471]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Gerald Kaufman, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Manchester Gorton. [167471]

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the number of unfilled vacancies in the Manchester travel-to-work area was 9,767 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Figures are not available for Manchester Gorton alone because the vacancies are allocated to local Jobcentres, not according to constituency boundaries, and because of the practice of notifying some vacancies centrally with one Jobcentre taking vacancies for others in the same district.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Life Expectancy

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the life expectancy at age 65 of *(a)* a man and *(b)* a woman (i) 30 years ago, (ii) now and (iii) in 30 years' time. [167279]

Ruth Kelly: The following table gives actual and projected expectations of life at age 65 for men and women in the United Kingdom for the calendar years 1974, 2002, 2004 and 2034. 2002 is the latest year for which the data required to calculate actual expectations of life are available. Figures for 2004 and 2034 are calculated using projected mortality rates taken from the latest, 2002-based, population projections for the United Kingdom.

The expectation of life figures shown are based on the mortality rates experienced (or projected) by age and gender in the years stated and are the number of years people would be expected to live from age 65 if they experienced those mortality rates throughout their remaining lifetimes.

Expectation of life for men and women at age 65 in the year shown United Kingdom

Based on data for year	*Men*	*Women*
1974 (Actual)	12.3	16.2
2002 (Actual)	16.1	19.1
2004 (Projected)	16.6	19.4
2034 (Projected)	20.3	23.0

Source:
Government Actuary's Department.

London Marathon (Sponsorship)

Bob Russell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether charitable and voluntary organisations in receipt of sponsorship money raised by participants in the London Marathon on 18 April 2004 will be required to pay value added tax; and if he will make a statement. [167283]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Southwark, North and Bermondsey (Simon Hughes) on 19 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 25W.

Donations to a charity, for which nothing is received in return, are VAT-free, even if a charity asks individuals to 'pledge' or 'commit' to raise a certain amount of sponsorship.

Some charities insist that their runners in the London Marathon pay a registration fee or a minimum amount of sponsorship, before they take part in the race. These charities are, in effect, selling places in the race, so VAT is due, but only on any registration fee or the minimum amount runners have to pay. Any money raised above the minimum amount or registration fee will be free from VAT.

So, as they have always been able to do, charities can choose whether to organise their activities in this manner, enabling them to recover some of the VAT on the costs associated with the race, or in such a way that no VAT is due on the amount paid to them by runners.

National Minimum Wage

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many workers in Heywood and Middleton have benefited from the national minimum wage. [168528]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jim Dobbin, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question about the number of workers in Heywood and Middleton who have benefited from the national minimum wage (NMW). [168528]

Estimates for Parliamentary Constituencies are not available.

However, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) calculates estimates of the number of jobs paid less than NMW rates for the United Kingdom and Government Office Regions. A guide to measuring low pay and associated articles and data can be found on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk=5837&Pos=1&ColRank=1&Rank=272

Offshore Jobs

Mr. Prisk: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions his Department had with the Department of Trade and Industry concerning off-shoring of UK jobs. [166856]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 21 April 2004]*: Discussions have been held at Cabinet level and between DTI and Treasury officials. DTI will publish a White Paper on Trade and Investment in summer 2004, which will cover the issue of offshoring. The Treasury, along with others, has provided input into the current consultation.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many press officers were employed in his Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [162850]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Truro and St. Austell (Matthew Taylor) on 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1682W.

It is not possible to provide a total cost for staff employed as press officers on a consistent basis since 1990–91.

The number of press officers has remained broadly constant since 1992 at eight posts increasing to nine posts from 1 April 2003.

Stamp Duty Land Tax

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what discussions he has had with the Law Society and other solicitors' representative organisations on the introduction of stamp duty land tax with specific reference to the time taken to fill in individual conveyancing forms needed to meet the duties of stamp duty land tax. [168003]

Ruth Kelly: The Inland Revenue have been in discussions with the law societies about all aspects of stamp duty land tax since 2002 and have held meetings to discuss the processes. The time taken to complete the forms has been discussed.

Tax Coding

Mr. Flook: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many *(a)* correct and *(b)* incorrect notices of

coding for those on PAYE were issued for the 2004–05 tax year in (i) January, (ii) February and (iii) March. [167588]

Dawn Primarolo: The only known error relating to the 2004–05 notices of coding was in respect of car and fuel benefits. The total numbers of coding notices issued were in the region of: (i) 4.3 million (ii) 7.9 million (iii) 1.3 million; and incorrect: (i) 468 thousand (ii) none (iii) none.

Tourism-related Jobs (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Manchester, Gorton on the latest date for which figures are available. [167478]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Gerald Kaufman, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Manchester, Gorton.

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the average number of jobs in tourism-related industries in Manchester, Gorton was 2,200 during that year.

This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels

restaurants

bars

activities of travel agencies

library, archives, museums etc

sporting activities

other recreational activities.

Unclaimed Assets (Charitable Use)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of the amount of unclaimed assets he will be able to apply to charitable purposes; and if he will make a statement. [167601]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* There is currently no official estimate of the number of unclaimed assets or their total value.

Unemployment

Chris Ruane: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the *(a)* percentage and *(b)* actual change in unemployment was since 1997 in each constituency listed in descending order according to percentage drop and grouped by region. [166678]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Chris Ruane, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (166678)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment by Parliamentary Constituency.

However, ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

A table showing the change in the number of JSA claimants in each Parliamentary Constituency from 1997 to 2003 has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the level of unemployment was in Burnley in each year since 1997; [167908]

(2) what the level of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Burnley was in each of the last seven years. [168320]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Pike, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about unemployment. (168320,167908)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Burnley Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The attached table gives the annual average number of people claiming JSA for over 12 months, and the annual average number of these claimants aged 18 to 24 years, in the Burnley constituency, for each year since 1997. The table also shows the annual average total number of JSA claimants in the constituency for these years.

Annual average number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), and number claiming for at least twelve months: Burnley parliamentary constituency, 1997–2003

		Claimants for at least 12 months[1]	
	All claimants	All ages	Aged 18–24
1997	1,531	220	23
1998	1,413	153	12
1999	1,538	163	6
2000	1,301	122	[2] ..
2001	1,187	87	[2] ..
2002	1,168	84	[2] ..
2003	1,091	74	[2] ..

[1] Computerised claims only.
[2] Value between 1 and 5, withheld to prevent disclosure.
Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in Manchester Gorton. [167475]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Gerald Kaufman, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment in Manchester, Gorton.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Manchester, Gorton Parliamentary Constituency.

However, ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies. The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Manchester, Gorton constituency for each year since 1997.

Number of claimants of Jobseeker's Allowance in the Manchester, Gorton parliamentary constituency, 1997–2003

	Number
1997	4,688
1998	3,963
1999	3,602
2000	3,224
2001	3,017
2002	3,099
2003	3,137

The Shadow Economy

Brian Cotter: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what estimate he has made of how much revenue has been lost by the Exchequer as a result of the shadow economy in each year since 1997. [167511]

Dawn Primarolo: There is no reliable overall estimate of the revenue lost as a result of the shadow economy. Lord Grabiner in his review of the hidden economy and the OECD's Centre for Tax Policy and Administration have both concluded that it is a concept difficult if not impossible to measure. The Revenue continues to monitor new developments in this area.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Adventure Capital Fund

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the Adventure Capital Fund. [165884]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Adventure Capital Fund was launched in December 2002 to pioneer a new form of long-term investment in community enterprises. The Fund represents a unique partnership between the Government Departments (the Home Office, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department of Trade and Industry), and several Regional Development Agencies, as funders, and four leading voluntary organisations in the field of social and economic regeneration, as delivery partners. The delivery partners are the Development Trusts Association, the Scarman Trust, the New Economics Foundation and the Local Investment Fund which is the accountable body for the fund.

The aim of the fund is to demonstrate an effective way of providing 'patient capital' to fill the investment gap faced by community organisations wishing to move from grant dependency to sustainability through developing enterprise. This gap was clearly identified in the Social Investment Task Force report (October 2001) and the more recent Bank of England Report on Finance for Social Enterprise (May 2003).

In 2003, Home Office Funding totalling £2 million was invested in 10 community enterprises, with a further £375,000 being awarded to 25 organisations in pre-investment business development grants with funding from four Regional Development Agencies (Yorkshire and Humber), East Midlands, East of England and London). In 2004, a total of £4.5 million is available from Home Office assets recovery and the DTI Phoenix Fund, plus some further allocations from RDAs for business development grants. All grant and investment recipients receive one-to-one organisational development support. The cost of this support, of management of the Fund and evaluation of the programme has been met by ODPM's Neighbourhood Renewal Unit.

Asylum Appeals

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether a delay to the date for an appeal hearing with the Immigration Service can be granted if a claimant has not received a decision letter on time from the Immigration and Nationality Directorate; and if he will make a statement. [164214]

Mr. Browne: Timeous receipt of the decision letter by the applicant is of no relevance to whether a delay to the date for an appeal hearing may be granted. No appeal hearing can be fixed until an appeal has been lodged. Receipt of a decision determines the start of the time limits that apply to lodging an appeal as set out in my answer to the hon. Member on 13 April 2004, *Official Report*, 420 column 86W.

The date of appeal hearings are not the responsibility of the Immigration Service or any other part of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. They are the responsibility of the independent Immigration Appellate Authority. The appeal would not be listed for hearing until it has been received by the Immigration Appellate Authority. A party to the appeal can request an adjournment of the hearing to a later date, but only if they can show good reason why an adjournment is necessary, and have satisfied the adjudicator or Tribunal that the appeal cannot otherwise be justly determined.

Capacity Building

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how he defines the term, capacity building. [165883]

Fiona Mactaggart: When dealing with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS), Capacity Building is about ensuring that Voluntary and Community Organisations (VCOs) have the skills, knowledge, structures and resources to realise their full potential. Capacity building supports and develops VCS infrastructure through the provision of developmental assistance and advice, enabling VCOs to achieve their objectives. It is as much about releasing existing capacity as about developing new capacity.

The Government's recent review of community capacity building examined the support needed, particularly at neighbourhood or community level, to increase active citizenship and build strong communities, as key contributors to our broader goal of civil renewal. The resulting consultation paper defined community capacity building as "the activities, resources and support that strengthen the skills and abilities of people and community groups to take effective action and leading roles in the development of their communities". The review findings also recognised the importance of organisational development and culture change within public bodies, to ensure public servants are equipped to engage effectively with communities and the voluntary and community sector.

Child Sex Offences

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions for *(a)* sexual offences involving minors, *(b)* prostitution and trafficking involving children and *(c)* possession of child pornography there were in each of the last three years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [152236]

Paul Goggins: The available information is contained in the table. Offences connected with prostitution and trafficking involving children cannot be separately identified in the statistics collected centrally.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Persons proceeded against at magistrates' courts for sexual offences[1] etc. against minors where the age of the victim is identified by the offence, 2000–02—England and Wales

	Number of persons		
Offences	*[2]2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Sexual offences involving minors	3,442	4,095	4,422
Child pornography offences	413	486	621

[1] Principal offence basis.
[2] Excluding Staffordshire.

Closure Orders

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions Merseyside Courts issued a closure order in the past four months. [165915]

Paul Goggins: Merseyside police records show that no closure orders have been issued in Merseyside, although a case is pending under Part 1 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003.

Crime (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Wirral, South has been since 1997. [166634]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Wirral, South is part of the Wirral Basic Command Unit (BCU). Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Wirral BCU decreased by 0.9 per cent. (from 515 to 510). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable and within the Wirral BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Futurebuilders Programme

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the timescale for the implementation of the proposed Futurebuilders investment programme; what the mechanism is by which voluntary sector organisations may bid for allocations from this fund; who else will be eligible to bid; and if he will make a statement. [166848]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Futurebuilders Fund is an innovative undertaking, designed to enable voluntary and community organisations to modernise and enhance their capacity to deliver first class public services, particularly to individuals who are not well served by current state or market provision.

The implementation of the £125 million investment fund will be managed by Futurebuilders England Ltd., a consortium of organisations with experience of funding voluntary and community organisations. The Fund will provide finance to assist voluntary and community organisations, and social enterprises, in their public service work to acquire capital assets through a range of funding solutions, including grants and various forms of loans.

Futurebuilders England aim to begin their first round of investments this summer. Information about designing the process, the mechanism for bids to the Fund, including investment priorities, the eligibility criteria and application process, is to be made available by Futurebuilders England at an information event they are holding for mainly voluntary and community organisations on Wednesday 5 May.

Offenders (Supervision)

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of whether multi-agency public protection panels have sufficient resources to ensure that those offenders deemed in the high or very high risk categories are properly supervised or under appropriate surveillance. [165184]

Paul Goggins: The multi-agency public protection panels are funded as part of the core business of the police and probation services. The two sets of annual reports published so far indicate that arrangements are working well.

Two pieces of research are currently being conducted into the multi-agency public protection arrangements. We expect to have the findings of both in the autumn. They will help to indicate, among other things, whether existing resources are being best used.

Paedophilia

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding has been made available for the *(a)* monitoring and *(b)* treatment of paedophiles leaving jail. [164046]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 26 March 2004]:* The protection of the public from the risks posed by sexual offenders has been strengthened by a number of legislative measures and funding decisions the government has taken. The monitoring and treatment of sexual offenders comprise a range of activities, which the police and probation services co-ordinate through the multi-agency public protection arrangements (the MAPPA). It is not possible to breakdown the costs of each MAPPA activity because they will vary according to the level of risk posed by each offender and their circumstances.

The multi-agency public protection panels are funded as part of the core business of the police and probation services. The two sets of annual reports published so far indicate that arrangements are working well.

Pardons

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes in policy have taken place since 1997 on the use of free pardons. [166988]

Paul Goggins: The Criminal Appeal Act 1995 (which resulted in the establishment of the Criminal Cases Review Commission in 1997) provided those wrongfully convicted who had previously only been able to seek a free pardon with an alternative route of redress. In consequence no free pardons have been issued since 1997 and no changes in policy have been necessary.

Parole Board

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the reasons were for the increase of £6.5 million in the grant to the Parole Board in the Spring Supplementary Estimates. [165874]

Paul Goggins: The Parole Board's grant in aid for 2004–05 is currently £4.215 million and there are no proposals to increase it.

The higher figure referred to in the Question, includes a notional additional provision shown against the Parole Board. This provision was agreed by the Treasury and is in line with Parliamentary Rules.

Police

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Birkenhead has been since 1997. [166484]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Birkenhead is part of the Wirral. Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Wirral BCU decreased by 0.9 per cent. (from 515 to 510). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable and within the Wirral BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Prisons

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the work of the Sentencing Guidelines Council will contribute to the stabilisation of the prison population. [167365]

Paul Goggins: The work of the Sentencing Guidelines will lead to a greater consistency in sentencing. It will in due course consider guidelines in respect of all criminal offences, which will apply to all courts. The Government have made it clear that prison should only be used for the most serious, dangerous and persistent offenders, and that others are better punished in the community.

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were released on 10 March. [161629]

Paul Goggins *[holding answer 15 March 2004]:* Information on the number of prisoners who were released on 10 March 2004 is not yet available.

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the prisoner rehabilitation programmes; and at whom each is aimed. [157377]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service provide the following offending behaviour programmes which have been accredited by the Correctional Services Accreditation Panel and are aimed at assisting in the rehabilitation process:

Enhanced Thinking Skills—A Cognitive Behavioural Programme for male and female, and can be sequenced with another programme.

Reasoning and Rehabilitation—A Cognitive Behavioural Programme for male and female medium to medium-high risk offenders.

Controlling Anger and Learning to Manage it—This programme is for medium-risk male offenders convicted of assault, public order or criminal damage.

Cognitive Self-Change Programme—It is for adult men aged between 24 and 50. They will be high-risk offenders convicted of at least two violent offences.

Cognitive Skills Booster Programme—A programme for male and female offenders who have already completed a general offending programme.

Healthy Relationships—A programme for prisoners convicted of domestic violence offences or who have a pattern of relationship problems.

Sex Offender Treatment Programmes

Core—The programme is for male medium and high-risk sex offenders.

Extended—It is for male high and very high-risk sex offenders.

Adapted—Designed to suit learning-disabled sex offenders across all risk levels.

Rolling—Programme for male low and medium risk sex offenders, and sex offenders who have completed primary treatment programmes and who are serving long sentences can attend to reinforce learning.

Booster—Programme for male sex offenders to reinforce learning.

Drug Treatment Programmes

Prison Addressing Substance Related Offending (P-ASRO)—Cognitive Behavioural Programme for adult men and young male offenders with low/medium drug dependence and risk of re-offending.

RAPt—Abstinence based 12 Step programme for adult men, women and young offenders with medium to high drug dependence and risk of re-offending.

Prison 12 Step programme—For adult men, women and young offenders with medium to high drug dependence and risk of re-offending.

Substance Treatment Offender Programme (STOP)—Cognitive Behavioural Programme for adult male offenders with medium/high drug dependence and risk of re-offending.

Action on Drugs—Cognitive Behavioural Programme for adult men and young male offenders with medium/high drug dependence and risk of re-offending.

FOCUS—Cognitive Behavioural Programme for adult male offenders with medium/high drug dependence and risk of re-offending.

Ley Prison Programme—Cognitive Behavioural Programme set in a therapeutic milieu for adult male offenders with medium/high drug dependence and risk of re-offending.

North West Therapeutic Community—Therapeutic community for adult male offenders with medium/high drug dependence and risk of re-offending.

In addition the Prison Service provides a range of education programmes and other activities aimed at rehabilitation and increasing the opportunity for prisoners to find employment and accommodation on release.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 1 March, *Official Report*, column 721W, on prison education, if he will make a statement on increased partnership working to improve opportunities for learning and skills across the range of prison activities. [162355]

Paul Goggins: The Government is investigating the scope for a delivery partnership between the Learning and Skills Council and the Prison Service (and in time the National Offender Management Service)—together with other key players such as Jobcentre Plus-to provide a more flexible, individually focused learning and skills service. The Government is planning to try out new models of partnership and delivery, beginning in the autumn with a small number of pathfinders. Meanwhile, the Government is looking to newly appointed Heads of Learning and Skills to maintain a focus on learning at senior level within each establishment, to help overcome obstacles to communication and joint working across regimes, and to develop imaginative partnerships with organisations, including voluntary organisations, beyond the prison walls which can enhance prisoners' resettlement prospects.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on local strategies and initiatives developed by prisons for older prisoners. [164429]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service does not have a separate national Strategy for older prisoners but seeks to meet the needs of older prisoners through individual circumstances.

Some local initiatives have been developed, including remedial fitness programmes for older prisoners, at a number of establishments. One establishment has set up an occupational therapy group, which provides prisoners of retirement age with the opportunity to work, do gardening, clean windows or tidy the prison grounds. At least one establishment has installed an activities day room for older prisoners and have developed links with the Salvation Army who run a club for the over 60's. An elderly life sentence prisoner unit designed to accommodate 15 elderly prisoners is scheduled to open in late June 2004 at HMP/YOI Norwich.

Following concerns expressed about the care of elderly prisoners, I have commissioned the Chief Inspector of Prisons to undertake an independent thematic inspection of older prisoners. The report of this inspection is expected to be published in the Summer.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the capital reductions costs for the private finance initiative prison contract became overstated; and what measures will be implemented to prevent a recurrence of overstated capital reduction costs for the contract. [165875]

Paul Goggins: There are no capital reductions costs for Private Finance Initiative prisons.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of prisoners were sharing cells designed for single occupancy in each of the last 10 years. [166796]

Paul Goggins: The number of prisoners sharing cells designed for one person and the percentage, expressed as a proportion of the average prisoner population, is given in the table. Validated figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

	Percentage doubling	*Number doubled*
2002–03	20.4	14,586
2001–02	17.0	11,440
2000–01	17.2	11,292
1999–2000	18.9	12,222
1998–99	18.4	12,024
1997–98	18.2	11,548
1996–97	16.8	9,498
1995–96	16.5	8,506
1994–95	17.1	8,426

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to transfer the Foundation Training Company resettlement programme following the re-rolling of Edmunds Hill Prison. [166867]

Paul Goggins: An appraisal of Edmunds Hill is currently taking place following the decision to re-role this establishment. The future of the Foundation Training Company (FTC) resettlement programme at Edmunds Hill is one of the issues under consideration; it is envisaged that the FTC will remain at Edmunds Hill, subject to appropriate funding.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the annual average population of *(a)* HMP Liverpool and *(b)* HMP Altcourse was in each of the last six years; and what the present population is of each. [166987]

Paul Goggins: The population on 31 March 2004 and annual average population in each of the last six years of *(a)* HMP Liverpool and *(b)* HMP Altcourse is given in the table.

Current and annual average population of Liverpool and Altcourse

	Liverpool	*Altcourse*
31 March 2004	1,449	988
2003	1,434	995
2002	1,448	955
2001	1,297	800
2000	1,274	818
1999	1,432	751
1998	1,451	630

Suicide (Websites)

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) if he will proscribe websites which promote suicide; [161078]

(2) what discussions he has had with internet service providers concerning suicide websites and chatrooms. [161079]

Paul Goggins: We understand the concern that has been expressed about such websites.

Where they are hosted in the UK, those producing them may be committing an offence under section 2(1) of the Suicide Act 1961, which makes it an offence to aid, abet, counsel or procure another to commit suicide, or attempt to do so and be liable to prosecution. However the courts have held that simply providing information about committing suicide does not necessarily constitute such an offence.

More generally, we are in the process of opening up discussion internationally on wider issues of illegal content on the internet. In addition, as part of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England, the Department of Health is working to promote the responsible representation of suicidal behaviour in the media. More generally, we are in the process of opening up discussion internationally on wider issues of illegal content on the internet. In addition, as part of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy for England, the Department of Health is working to promote the responsible representation of suicidal behaviour in the media.

Vehicle Data Recorders

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many road traffic prosecutions used evidence based on black box vehicle data recorders to indicate the speed of the vehicles involved in *(a)* 2002 and *(b)* 2003. [164532]

Caroline Flint: The information is not collected centrally.

Women in Jail

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women were in jail on the latest date for which figures are available. [147363]

Paul Goggins: On Friday 16 April 2004 there were 4,625 females in Prison in England and Wales.

Wormwood Scrubs

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what expenditure has been incurred to date by the Home Office as a result of *(a)* injuries, *(b)* legal costs and *(c)* damages arising from claims made by prisoners in Wormwood Scrubs during the period November 1992 to October 2001; to how many prisoners damages have been paid; and how many cases remain unresolved. [162632]

Paul Goggins: Payments to prisoners and former prisoners arising from claims made between November 1992 and October 2001 at Wormwood Scrubs total £1,275,810. These payments have been made to 56 prisoners, one remains unresolved. The payments are global settlements for injuries and damages. For the same period, the Home Office has paid £289,533 for its legal costs in relation to these claims

Youth Offending Teams

Mr. Keith Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the statistical base is for the allocation of resources to youth offending teams for *(a)* drug and *(b)* alcohol programmes. [162613]

Paul Goggins *holding answer 22 March 2004]:* The Youth Justice Board provide grant funding to Youth Offending Teams for substance misuse work which includes drugs and alcohol. They use a national formula which takes into account each Youth Offending Team area's 10 to 17-year-old population, levels of deprivation based on indices supplied by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and geographical size.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Contraception (Africa)

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps his Department is taking through *(a)* bilateral programmes, *(b)* EU development assistance programmes and *(c)* other programmes to increase the percentage of women of reproductive age in Africa who use contraceptives. [167209]

Hilary Benn: Over one third of maternal deaths could be avoided if effective family planning services to avoid unwanted pregnancies were available and accessible. The Department for International Development therefore attaches particular importance to increasing women's access to reproductive health (RH) services including family planning. DFID champions reproductive health through our bilateral country programmes either through direct support to the health sector or through general budget support. Under DFID's bilateral programmes, contraceptives are normally provided as an integral part of broader programmes to promote sexual and reproductive health and prevent HIV/AIDS. DFID also supports the strengthening of national systems and capacity to plan, use and monitor supplies of medicines and commodities including for reproductive health. Since 1997 DFID has committed over £1.5 billion to health systems globally.

DFID spent over £270 million globally on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS programmes in 2002–03, (about two thirds of this support was targeted at sub-Saharan Africa), and is one of the leading bilateral providers of condoms (for men and women) and other forms of contraception to developing countries. Many

of DFID's HIV/AIDS programmes include large components for social marketing of condoms. In Nigeria we have committed £52.8 million for a condom social marketing programme that combines procurement and distribution with encouraging behaviour change, communication and capacity building.

The UK's significant contributions to the European Commission Development Budget and the European Development Fund cannot be tracked back specifically for use on Reproductive Healthcare in Africa. Most EC resources are allocated by region or country in response to country government's own priorities, and details of the proportion of UK support for reproductive health are not available centrally. However, the UK has been working hard within the EU to protect the principles agreed at the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in Cairo in 1994. The Cairo Agenda redefined sexual and reproductive health and rights. DFID and our EU partners are pushing to generate more political commitment for reproductive health and reproduction health rights, in for as such as the World Health Assembly and the UN Commission for Population, and Development to protect the gains made in Cairo which are now under pressure. The Netherlands are planning to highlight reproductive health and the need to have contraception readily available in their forthcoming EU Presidency. The UK has been in discussions with the Netherlands about how to maintain the momentum around this subject during the UK's Presidency of the EU in 2005.

DFID is a major donor to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and supports the Fund's work to provide the widest achievable range of safe and effective family planning and contraceptive methods. DFID also provides support to the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF), which is the world's largest voluntary reproductive health organisation.

EU Development Assistance

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will list the non-governmental organisations involved in the delivery of 2002 EU Development Assistance projects in *(a)* Benin, *(b)* Burkina Faso, *(c)* Cape Verde, *(d)* Cote d'Ivoire, *(e)* Guinea, *(f)* Guinea Bissau, *(g)* Liberia, *(h)* Mali, *(i)* Mauritania, *(j)* Niger, *(k)* Nigeria, *(l)* Senegal, *(m)* Sierra Leone, *(n)* the Gambia and *(o)* Togo; [167192]

(2) if he will list the non-governmental organisations involved in the delivery of the 2002 EU development assistance projects to *(a)* Cameroon, *(b)* the Central African Republic, *(c)* Chad and *(d)* Sao Tomé and Principe. [167215]

Hilary Benn: The participation of NGOs in the implementation of the European Union's (EU) efforts to eradicate poverty is vital. A substantial proportion of EU development expenditure goes to NGO's whether through co-financing arrangements, thematic and geographic budget lines or the European Development Fund.

I have listed the European NGOs, which received a grant from the EU budgetary line for NGO co-financing for operations in the countries you requested to. This does not include information about NGOs who received funding from other budget lines, such as EDF and Food Security. The EU does not collate this information centrally and it would be available only at disproportionate cost.

European NGOs involved in co-financing operations

Agir-Association Generale Des Intervenants Retraites
Aide Odontologique Internationale—AOI
Amitie Embrun Tiers Monde (Ex Amitie Embrunais Bilbalogo)
Assoc. Amici Stato Brasiliano Espirito Santo—Centro Dl Collabora—Zione Comunitaria
Auteuil International
Centro De Informacao E Documentacao Amilcar Cabral
Centro Regionale D'Intervento Per La Cooperazione
Chretiens Pour Le Sahel
Comite Catholique Contre La Faim Et Pour Le Developpement
Comunita' Impegno Servizio Volontariato
Cooperazione Internazionale
Deutsche Stiftung Weltbevoelkerung
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe Ev
Ente Nazionale Giuseppini Del Murialdo (Engim)
Espoir Sans Frontieres Espoir Lutte Contre Uinfanticide (Elib)
Essor
Gruppo Laici Terzo Mondo
Handicap International (Fr)
Handicap International (Be)
Institut Europeen De Cooperation Et De Developpement
Intermon Oxfam
Movimento Laici America Latina
Pharmaciens Sans Frontieres—Comite International
Protos—Projectgroep Voor Technische Ontwikkelingssamenwerking
Rongead—Reseau Des Ong Europeennes Sur Les Questions Agro-Alimentaires
Et Le Developpement
Sante Sud
Sight Savers International
Stichting Cordaid
Verein Zur F. Staedtepartnerschaft Freiburg—Wiwili
Veterinaires Sans Frontieres
Voluntary Services Overseas
Vredeseilanden—Coopibo
Welthaus Bielefeld E.V

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the delivery of aid to *(a)* Falluja and *(b)* Najaf in Iraq in April. [167373]

Hilary Benn: Iraqi Ministries, United Nations agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, NGOs and Iraqi citizens have been working together to assist people affected by conflict in Falluja. For example: the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) have provided blankets, mattresses, food, water, stoves, plastic sheets and emergency health kits for Fallujans outside the city; the Iraqi Ministry of Health, together with the World Health Organisation (WHO), the Red Cross and Red Crescent and NGOs, have been working to ensure that sufficient medical supplies and assistance reach hospitals and clinics inside Falluja; and NGOs

and local groups have distributed items including cooking gas, sanitation kits and hygiene buckets. The British office in Baghdad is in contact with a local NGO about providing DFID funding for urgent humanitarian supplies.

Iraqi Ministries, UN agencies, the ICRC and others have made preparations for the provision of emergency humanitarian assistance, if required, in other Iraqi cities including Najaf. For example, 1.5 tonnes of medical and surgical supplies were distributed in early April to the Najaf health directorate.

An emergency coordination group has been established to ensure the effective coordination of emergency assistance in Iraq. Its membership includes UN agencies, the Red Cross and Red Crescent, and NGOs.

Kenya

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the recent flooding in Western Kenya. [167817]

Hilary Benn: Recent heavy rains have led to flooding in Western Kenya as in other parts of the country. It is estimated that approximately 14,000 people are affected in western Kenya. The response is being managed by the Government, with assistance from the Kenya Red Cross Society (KRCS). The Government are distributing food to seven districts, and KRCS is distributing non-food items. Neither are currently asking for additional assistance from the international community. The Kenya Meteorological Office is predicting that average to above average rains will continue in parts of western Kenya. The Rapid Onset Disaster Committee is planning for a potential figure of 60,000 affected, should the heavy rains continue into May. If this were to happen, then the Government of Kenya may ask the World Food Programme and others for assistance. DFID Kenya will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Millennium Development Goals

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate he has made of the number of new jobs that need to be created annually in the developing world if the Millennium Development Goal to eradicate extreme poverty is to be achieved. [167210]

Hilary Benn: The MDG for income poverty targets a reduction by 50 per cent. of the proportion of the population living in extreme poverty (defined as an income of less than US$1 per capita per day in purchasing power parity terms) between 1990 and 2015. The World Bank's[1] latest estimates indicate that about 1.1 billion people worldwide live in extreme poverty. If projected growth remains on track, global poverty rates will fall to 13 per cent.—less than half the 1990 level.

Reliable estimates of the number of new jobs required to eliminate extreme poverty do not exist. The majority of poor people in developing countries are outside formal employment, and progress towards the MDG can be achieved by improving opportunities in subsistence agriculture and the informal economy as well as by creating more formal sector jobs. Thus poverty can be reduced without necessarily involving the creation of additional formal sector jobs—for example, India has witnessed a sharp fall in poverty with little expansion of the formal sector job market. While a well-paid job can lift an entire household out of poverty, a poorly paid job may not lift anyone out of poverty. The International Labour Organisation (ILO)'s 'Decent Work' agenda[2] emphasises that the quality as well as the quantity of jobs is important. The rate of economic growth is the most critical factor in determining the attainment of this MDG.

[1] World Bank, "Global Economic Prospects 2004", Chapter 1 page 45.

[2] ILO, "Working Out Of Poverty", 2003.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of reducing maternal mortality by 75 per cent. by 2015. [167212]

Hilary Benn: The Millennium Development Goal of improving maternal health has a target to reduce the maternal mortality ratio (the number of maternal deaths per 100,000 live births) by three-quarters between 1990 and 2015. This is equivalent to an annual reduction of 5.4 per cent. Approximately 529,000 women die annually from complications of pregnancy and childbirth.

Trends in maternal mortality are difficult to measure, but available data suggest that progress in reducing the maternal mortality ratio has been slow in recent years. With an average annual decline of 3.2 per cent. in the 1990s, the developing world as a whole is off target. While some countries have reduced maternal mortality, data suggest that some parts of Africa have seen an increase. A recent World Bank analysis suggests that only 17 per cent. of developing countries, containing 32 per cent. of the world's population, are on track to achieve the target.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what recent assessment he has made of progress towards the Millennium Development Goal of reducing infant mortality by 66 per cent. by 2015. [167214]

Hilary Benn: The Millennium Development Goal (MDG) for child health is to reduce the rate of mortality in children under five by two-thirds between 1990 and 2015. The indicator that measures progress against this target directly is the under-five mortality rate. Infant mortality (deaths of children under one year old) and the proportion of one-year old children immunised against measles are used as intermediate indicators of progress.

Globally child mortality is declining, and between 1990 and 2000 the under-five mortality rate was reduced from 92 to 82 deaths per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate declined from 64 to 57 deaths per 1,000 live births in the same period. There is, however, considerable regional variation in the rates of progress being made. Latin America is expected to meet the MDG target, but there has been much slower progress in South Asia, and slowest progress in sub-Saharan Africa, which accounts for over half of all under-five

deaths. Recent World Bank analysis suggests that only 16 per cent. of developing countries are on track to achieve the target.

Rwanda

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance is being given to help women who were raped during the genocide in Rwanda and who now suffer from HIV/AIDS. [167826]

Hilary Benn: HIV/AIDS is a serious problem in Rwanda. Rwanda does not yet have the health infrastructure required to effectively deliver anti-retroviral therapy (ART) countrywide. But the Government have produced a comprehensive "Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS Control" and all the major donors, including the Clinton Foundation, the Global Fund and the World Bank, have committed to support it. This framework includes the progressive provision of ART to all who need it, through a network of health centres. Through a partnership between UNAIDS and five of the leading multinational pharmaceutical companies (the Accelerating Access to HIV/AIDS Care, Treatment And Support Initiative), Rwanda is one of the countries that have reached agreement with manufacturers on significantly reduced drug prices in the context of its national HIV care and treatment plans.

The UK has committed £25 million through the International Partnership Against AIDS in Africa Programme (IPAA) to increase capacity in certain National HIV/AIDS Commissions, including Rwanda. DFID is currently considering whether we can build on this engagement, to ensure that Rwanda has the capacity to manage and direct the various programmes of support.

DFIF is also providing direct assistance to the survivors of the genocide through the Government's Survivors Fund (FARG). This assistance is currently running at some £200,000 per annum, and planned additional support up to £850,000 will enable FARG to broaden the services it provides to include advice and counselling on issues around HIV/AIDS.

I have a specific concern over the inequity in access to Anti-Retroviral Treatment between the defendants and the witnesses at the International Criminal Tribunal (ICTR) for Rwanda, which is considering crimes committed during the genocide. While defendants have access to health care including ART, witnesses generally do not. I wrote to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, asking how the United Nations and the international community could work to resolve this inequity. The UN Secretary General replied, reporting that UNAIDS/WHO were identifying suitable health care providers, but seeking assistance from the UK to fund ART treatment for witnesses. I have responded positively and offered DFID assistance up to £200,000 for ICTR witnesses and others called by the Tribunal to receive healthcare, including ART, from a centre in Kigali.

SCOTLAND

Boundary Commission for Scotland

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland when he expects the recommendations of the Boundary Commission for Scotland to be implemented. [165982]

Mr. Darling: The Boundary Commission for Scotland must report to me on its current review before December 2006. As I have said before, it is a matter entirely for the Commission when, within that timescale, it does so. I am required to lay the report before Parliament as soon as may be after its receipt, together with an Order giving effect to its recommendations.

Commission on the Scottish Parliament

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive on the remit of his Commission on the Scottish Parliament. [165983]

Mr. Darling: The remit for the commission on boundary differences and voting systems was discussed with the First Minister before it was finalised.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what budget has been set for the operating costs of his Commission on the Scottish Parliament. [165984]

Mr. Darling: The budget for the commission on boundary differences and voting systems will be set during the course of this year. The financial provision will come from within current Scotland Office resources.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166366]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office shares an information technology system with the Scottish Executive, which is responsible for the administration and maintenance of the system. The Executive has recently completed an upgrade of both computer hardware and standard software packages, including IT equipment used in the Scotland Office.

Whisky Duties

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what recent discussions he has had with the Treasury on the proposed introduction of the whisky strip stamp. [166019]

Mr. Darling: I have regular discussions with my right hon. Friend the Chancellor of the Exchequer on a range of issues affecting Scotland.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Colombia

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Colombia on tackling organised crime. [167593]

Mr. Rammell: We are in regular discussion with the Colombian Government over tackling organised crime, particularly the drugs trade, not least because so much of the cocaine from Colombia finds its way onto our streets with devastating consequences. The drugs trade fuels the armed conflict in Colombia and seriously distorts the country's productive capacity. We will continue to work with the Colombian Government and other countries to end the global scourge of organised crime.

England Cricket Tour (Zimbabwe)

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last met representatives from *(a)* the England and Wales Cricket Board and *(b)* the International Cricket Council to discuss the proposed cricket tour by the England team to Zimbabwe later this year. [167185]

Mr. Straw *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) officials have been in regular contact with the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). At the ECB's request my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Culture Media and Sport and I will be having a meeting with the ECB on 4 May. The FCO has had no meetings with the International Cricket Council on this matter. We would be ready to do so if requested by the ECB.

EU, Latin America and Caribbean Summit

Mr. Allan: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if his Department will press for the issue of human rights defenders to be on the agenda of the EU-Latin America and Caribbean summit in May. [168818]

Mr. Rammell: Preparations for the Summit are well under way, both within the EU and with our Latin American and Caribbean partners. Discussions at the Summit will cover the many shared interests and values of our two regions, including respect for human rights.

Iraq

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress of the coalition's strategy for replacing soldiers with Iraqi police for law enforcement duties, with reference to *(a)* provision of appropriate equipment and training and *(b)* ensuring appropriate knowledge of international standards for law enforcement. [166994]

Mr. Rammell: There are now more than 75,000 Iraqi police working around the country. There is an extensive programme to train, equip and mentor both existing and newly recruited police officers in Iraq, in which over 100 British police trainers are involved. While significant progress has been made in many areas in building the capacity of the Iraqi police and ensuring that police take the leading role in law and order, the current security challenges mean that there is a continuing need for support from the coalition and Iraqi Civil Defence Force. The Coalition's objective is to hand responsibility for security in Iraq to the Iraq police and other security forces as soon as their capability and security conditions allows.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of President Gayoom's support for the Ba'athist Party of Iraq. [167277]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: We are aware that President Gayoom has met Saddam Hussein in the past, but have no reason to interpret this as support for the Ba'athist Party of Iraq.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the second source referred to in Paragraph 93 of the Intelligence and Security Committee's report, "Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction—Intelligence and Assessments", September 2003, was the intelligence based on documentary evidence referred to in Paragraph 89 of the report; and when this second source first reported to the Secret Intelligence Service. [168301]

Mr. Straw: The Intelligence and Security Committee's report made clear that the Secret Intelligence Service's judgment about its second source was not affected by doubts about the authenticity of some of the documentary evidence received by the International Atomic Energy Agency. The report also made clear that the second source reported in September 2002.

Irish Waters (Navigational Aids)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) what discussions he has had with the Irish Government regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters; [168259]

(2) what discussions he has had with *(a)* the Department for Transport and *(b)* the Northern Ireland Office regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [168260]

Mr. Rammell: Discussions are going between the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Department for Transport at official level regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. It has been agreed that the Department for Transport should take forward negotiations with the Irish Government. A meeting with the Irish Government is scheduled shortly.

Latin America

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions have taken place with the Government of *(a)* Guatemala, *(b)* Mexico, *(c)* Peru and *(d)* Chile; and if he will make a statement. [167880]

Mr. Rammell: The United Kingdom enjoys good relations, and has regular discussions on a broad range of bilateral and multilateral issues, with the Governments of Guatemala, Mexico, Peru and Chile. I myself visited Mexico in October 2003, Chile in December 2003, and Guatemala in January 2004. I hope that I will be able to visit Peru later this year.

Middle East

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent representations have been made to the Israeli Government in respect of concluding arrangements for the return of Palestinian refugees to their homes, [167374]

Mr. Rammell: We regularly discuss with the Israeli Government issues relating to the Middle East Peace Process. However, the return of refugees is a final status issue and as such must be agreed by negotiation between the two parties. We continue to urge both the Israeli Government and the Palestinian Authority to implement their commitments under Phase One of the Roadmap as the best way to get to a negotiated settlement, and to the discussion of such issues which will take place in Phase Three.

Nepal

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1449W, on the gifting of military equipment to Nepal, what the agreed lines were relating to the planned supply of short take-off and landing aircraft to Nepal; and if he will make a statement. [168175]

Mr. Straw: I refer the right hon. Gentlemen to the reply I gave on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1449W. I expect to make a full statement on the supply of two unarmed STOL aircraft once a final decision is made. A departmental minute is to be laid before the House in the near future.

The agreed lines used by the embassy in Kathmandu in responding to press queries in December 2003 were as follows:

"The UK Government is committed to supporting the Government of Nepal and working to end the suffering of the Nepalese people. One strand of this support is assistance to the Nepalese Security Forces, including the Royal Nepalese Army, in their efforts to combat Maoist aggression. Our non-lethal support aims to enhance RNA capability across a range of military activities.

As part of this support the UK plans to provide two Short Take Off and Landing aircraft to the RNA in 2004. There is still some way to go on this process, which will go through the appropriate Parliamentary channels".

Official Residences

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the *(a)* cost of and *(b)* charge for an overnight stay is at each ambassador's and high commissioner's official residence; and what rules and protocols govern the calculation of charges to users. [167243]

Mr. Mike O'Brien *[holding answer 22 April 2004]*: We have no record of official guests being charged to stay at residences overseas, although they may be invited to leave a small gratuity for the domestic staff. Costs to the Government would be limited to providing meals for the guests and costs such as utilities, laundry, and subsistence where applicable.

Seasonal Agricultural Workers

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many seasonal agricultural workers scheme students are awaiting visa processing from *(a)* Romania and *(b)* Bulgaria. [168378]

Mr. Mullin: The figures for the number of entry clearance applications submitted under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme which still await processing in Romania and Bulgaria are:

(a) Romania: 0

(b) Bulgaria: 228

The consideration of all applications under this scheme has been temporarily suspended at our embassies in Bucharest and Sofia since 30 March.

Sudan

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the situation in Darfur region and the allegations of acts of genocide committed by the Sudanese Government; and what discussions his Department has held with the *(a)* Sudanese Government, *(b)* United Nations and *(c)* EU on the situation. [166995]

Mr. Mullin: The reports of systematic attacks on civilians, including rape, pillage and destruction of livelihoods in Darfur are alarming. We have for some time been urging the parties to the conflict to ensure the protection of civilians and to respect the principles set down in International Humanitarian Law. We, and the UN, are agreed that what is happening in Darfur cannot, however, be described as genocide.

We have lobbied at the highest levels in Khartoum on Darfur, and are in almost daily contact with the Government of Sudan and the Darfur groups. My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn) spoke to the Sudanese Foreign Minister about Darfur on 24 March, and since then our ambassador in Khartoum has had a number of discussions with him.

The UN Secretary General and my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister discussed Darfur when they met on 15 April. We are in close contact with the UN, both in New York and in Sudan, on Darfur, and the Department for International Development have provided key personnel to support the UN co-ordination there. We are also working closely with the European Commission and our EU partners on this issue.

A humanitarian ceasefire agreement was signed on 8 April. This is an important step forward in resolving the crisis in Darfur. Work continues on implementation arrangements.

The Maldives

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will meet representatives of the Maldivian Democratic Party. [167275]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has no current plans to meet with the Maldivian Democratic Party (MDP). However, officials in London and at our High Commission in Colombo (accredited to the Maldives) have met representatives of the MDP several times, most recently on 24 March.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many Maldivian nationals are being held at Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. [167276]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: This is a matter for the US Government.

United States Entry Rules

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what advice is available to UK citizens wishing to travel to the US on the requirements of the US Administration for *(a)* confidential financial information, *(b)* availability of visas and *(c)* grounds for possible deportation. [168251]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: All information about US visa and immigration procedures is available from the US authorities through their London Embassy website: www.usembassy.org.uk or by telephone to their Visa Information Service, details of which are available on the website. The Foreign and Commonwealth Office's (FCO) travel advice for the United States also gives information about some aspects of US immigration procedures of which British citizens should be aware when planning a trip to the US. FCO travel advice is available on the FCO's website: www.fco.gov.uk

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action he is taking to protect the interests of UK citizens wishing to travel to America, with particular reference to visa requirements. [168256]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has expressed his concerns to US Secretary of State Colin Powell about changes to the US Visa Waiver Programme that are due to come into effect on 26 October 2004. As US legislation stands, all British passports issued after 26 October 2004 will require a biometric for the holder to visit the US visa-free after that date. The UK is committed to introducing biometric passports, but not until end-2005. UK Government officials are also in discussions with the relevant US authorities on this issue. We hope that an extension will be granted to the 26 October 2004 deadline, which would minimise disruption to travellers. It is too early to be able to predict the outcome of these discussions. In the interim, some 400,000 UK citizens planning to visit the US would need visas. Those holding passports issued prior to 26 October 2004, provided that they were machine readable, would continue to be able to travel to the US under the Visa Waiver Programme.

TRANSPORT

Bus Lanes (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Burnley since 1997. [167884]

Mr. McNulty: Four stretches of priority bus lane have been created in Burnley since 1997, on St. James street, Church street, Westway and Padiham road, with a total length of 1.2 km.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group (iii) registered disabled and (iv) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166392]

Mr. McNulty: Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service is collected by the Cabinet Office and published in Civil Service Statistics. A copy of Civil Service Statistics, 2002 is available in the Library, and at www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

Cycle Lanes (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Burnley since 1997. [167882]

Mr. McNulty: The information is not available in the form requested. There are currently 1.3 km of on-road cycle lanes, 6.7 km of off-road cycle paths and 7.8 km of improved canal towpaths where cycling is allowed, in Burnley. The majority of these have been provided since 1997.

Cycling (Gloucestershire)

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps his Department is taking to encourage cycling in *(a)* the City of Gloucester and *(b)* the rest of Gloucestershire. [167596]

Mr. McNulty: The Department does not hold information for the City of Gloucester specifically, but by the end of the period 2000–01 to 2005–06, Gloucestershire county council and South Gloucestershire council project that they will have spent £4.5 million of Local Transport Plan funding on cycling schemes.

Both authorities have now drawn up action plans to improve their performance on cycling, building on a review of promotion and provision carried out by the English Regions Cycling Development Team.

Green Transport Schemes

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what progress is being made on the Department's strategy towards the implementation of green transport schemes. [167974]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The main focus of the Department's work to promote sustainable travel is by supporting the development and implementation of school and workplace travel plans. However, the Department also promotes and supports other sustainable travel measures such as car clubs and car sharing.

On 17 September last year, the Secretaries of State for Transport and for Education and Skills published "Travelling to School: An Action Plan" and announced £50 million funding over the next two years to support this. The Action Plan asks schools and local authorities to work together to develop and implement travel plans for all schools before the end of the decade.

We have also announced the continuation of our £500,000 a year programme of free Site Specific Advice to help organisations develop workplace, tourism and leisure site travel plans.

Motorcycle Diesel Spillage

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport in how many *(a)* accidents and *(b)* fatal accidents involving motorcycles diesel spillage has been found to be a cause or a contributory factor in each of the last three years. [168625]

Mr. Jamieson: The available information does not indicate whether diesel spillage was a cause or contributory factor in accidents. However the following table shows the number of accidents where at least one two wheeled motor vehicle was involved and where oil or diesel was present.

	Fatal	*Serious*	*Slight*	*Total*
2002	0	35	166	201
2001	1	32	168	201
2000	1	37	178	216

Rail Review

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will make a report on the current rail review. [168072]

Mr. McNulty: As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport, said in his Statement to the House on 19 January, the review's conclusions will be published in the summer.

Railways

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many peak-time train services serving *(a)* Chelsfield, *(b)* Knockholt and *(c)* Dunton Green (i) there are at present and (ii) are proposed by the Strategic Rail Authority in the Integrated Kent Franchise. [167651]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The numbers of peak trains (arriving at the London terminus between 0700 and 0959) are:

	Present	*Proposed*
Chelsfield	12	6
Knockholt	7	3
Dunton Green	7	3

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the passenger usage data for *(a)* Chelsfield, *(b)* Knockholt and *(c)* Dunton Green that the Strategic Rail Authority used in their consultation document on the Integrated Kent Franchise, broken down by (i) passengers buying season tickets and those not and (ii) passengers taking fast peak-hour trains to London and those taking slow, stopping trains in the peak period. [167652]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* This information is not available in the format requested. Ticket information for the year 2002–03 suggests that the average number of passenger journeys to and from these stations per day was:

	Season	*Ordinary*	*Total*
Chelsfield	1,700	350	2,050
Knockholt	180	130	310
Dunton Green	110	40	150

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assumptions were made by the Strategic Rail Authority in the Integrated Kent Franchise document about *(a)* current and *(b)* future capacity in the peak-hour train services between Chelsfield, Knockholt, Dunton Green and London. [167653]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* Based on current rolling stock diagrams, and assumed train formations under IKF, the total number of seats on trains that stop at these stations in the morning peak period will be as follows:

	Current	*Proposed*
Chelsfield	8,200	4,620
Knockholt	5,300	2,310
Dunton Green	5,300	2310

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assumptions were made by the Strategic Rail Authority in the Integrated Kent Franchise about the number of peak-time passengers who will be diverted from *(a)* Chelsfield, *(b)* Knockholt and *(c)* Dunton Green to other stations because of the reduction in services; and what plans there are to (i) identify and (ii) address the consequences of diversion of passengers for (A) car parking and (B) disabled access. [167654]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The modelling work undertaken to date has been at a strategic level. Bidders for the Integrated Kent

Franchise will be expected to tailor train capacity and local infrastructure based on their own demand forecasts.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when the Rail Review is expected to be completed; and when he plans to make a statement. [167973]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport, said in his Statement to the House on 19 January, the review's conclusions will be published in the summer.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the owners of rolling stock leased by train operators. [168181]

Mr. McNulty: Virtually all the rolling stock leased by passenger train operating companies is owned by either Porterbrook Leasing, HSBC, Angel Trains or Halifax Asset Financing.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will make a statement on the progress being made in improving disabled access to trains; [168659]

(2) if he will bring forward the end date for inaccessible trains to 2020. [168662]

Mr. McNulty: Since the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations into force in 1999, hundreds of new trains, which comply with the high standards of access for disabled people required by the regulations, have been introduced. These include 1,400 new carriages which have come into service in the last 2½ years. Another 1,000 are due in the next 18 months. In addition, many older trains, while not meeting full RVAR standards already have wheelchair accommodation and other features to assist disabled passengers.

We have recently consulted on a number of proposals to amend the rail provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act. These include setting an 'end date' by which time all rail vehicles would have to comply with the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations. We have not yet taken a final decision on the best date to set. We are currently analysing the consultation responses and looking carefully at the costs and benefits of a range of options, including 2020. We will consult on the draft regulations needed to implement our proposals when the required new primary legislation is introduced in the form of the Disability Discrimination Bill.

Rural Bus Services

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rural bus services in Burnley are supported by rural bus grants. [167883]

Mr. McNulty: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is paid to local transport authorities; in the case of Burnley this is Lancashire County Council. It is for the authority to decide which services should be supported with the grant. We understand from the County Council that 2 rural bus services serving Burnley are provided by RBSG. There are a further 7 rural bus services serving Burnley provided through Revenue Support Grant funding.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rural bus services in Heywood and Middleton are supported by rural bus grants. [168548]

Mr. McNulty: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is paid to local transport authorities, in the case of Heywood and Middleton this is the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (PTE). It is for the authority to decide which services should be supported with the grant. We understand from the PTE that no bus services in Heywood and Middleton are provided by RBSG as this area is predominantly urban.

Shipping

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport for what reason the Government has not yet complied with the EU Directive on vessel traffic monitoring and information systems. [167634]

Mr. Jamieson: The United Kingdom already implements much of what the directive requires. My Department's Maritime and Coastguard Agency held a consultation on draft regulations to implement the remaining requirements, which ended on 23 April. Analysis of responses and introduction of those regulations, amended as necessary, will proceed without delay.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what action the UK Government will take against ships entering UK ports without International Ship and Port Security Code certification after 1 July. [167635]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department for Transport is the Designated Authority to oversee the implementation and compliance of the International Ship and Port Security (ISPS) Code in the United Kingdom.

Post 1 July implementation deadline, compliance with the ISPS Code will be required to guarantee entry into UK ports. Ships that do not provide evidence of having an International Ship Security Plan will be liable to control measures, which may include denial of entry, detention of a vessel or its expulsion from a port.

Taxis (Regulation)

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he will respond to the Transport Committee's Report on the Regulation of Taxis and Private Hire Vehicle Services in the UK. [168587]

Mr. McNulty: We shall respond shortly.

Unmanned Railway Crossings

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were killed on unmanned *(a)* pedestrian and *(b)* vehicular railway crossings in each of the last five years. [167225]

Mr. McNulty: Details on the number of people killed on unmanned pedestrian and vehicular railway crossings in the five years 1999–2000 to 2003–04, provided by the Health and Safety Executive's Railway Inspectorate, are set out in the following table.

	Unmanned pedestrian level crossings	*Unmanned vehicle level crossings*
1999–2000	4	3
2000–01	3	1
2001–02	0	1
2002–03	2	7
2003–04 (Provisional)	3	5

Further details on accidents at level crossings are contained in the Health and Safety Executive's Annual Reports on Railway Safety, copies of which are in the Libraries of the House.

US (Visitor Visas)

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will take steps to publicise the requirements of the US Administration for visitor visas for UK citizens. [168257]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: I have been asked to reply.

It is primarily the responsibility of the US authorities to provide information on their immigration and visa requirements for British citizens. However, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office gives information through its Travel Advice about certain aspects of US immigration procedures which may be of particular interest to British travellers. This is regularly updated to reflect the latest position and is available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office website at www.fco.gov.uk.

West Coast Main Line

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the upgrading of the Liverpool spur of the West Coast Main Line. [166978]

Mr. McNulty: As part of West Coast Route Modernisation, it is planned to upgrade the line progressively between Weaver Junction and Liverpool, with the benefits being delivered from June 2005 onwards. These changes, along with improvements to other sections of the West Coast route, will provide for faster services between Liverpool, London and other key destinations.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the total estimated cost is of the West Coast Main Line upgrade; and what proportion of this cost is accounted for by *(a)* construction, *(b)* consultants and *(c)* compensation to train operating companies. [166007]

Mr. McNulty: The total estimated cost of the West Coast Main Line project is forecast to be £7.6 billion. The upgrade comprises a large number of individual contracts whose composition is a matter for the contracting parties.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to publish his response to the consultation into the implementation of the Working Time Directive for mobile workers in the transport sector. [165973]

Mr. Jamieson: An announcement on this issue will be made very shortly.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Local Government Pension Scheme

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on his proposed changes to the Local Government Pension Scheme. [168049]

Phil Hope: Draft regulations designed to ensure that the Local Government Pension Scheme in England and Wales remains affordable to employers, members and taxpayers were circulated to interested parties for their comments on 31 March. Subject to the outcome of that consultation, the new provisions will come into force on 1 April 2005. The proposals reflect the policies set out in our June 2003 White Paper "Simplicity, security and choice; working and saving for retirement" (Cm 5835) and are part of a programme of changes to the scheme announced on 23 July 2003. Further measures to modernise the scheme and to ensure its sustainability for the longer term will be circulated later this year.

Balance of Funding Review

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether interim financial measures will be put in place pending the outcome of the Balance of Funding Review. [168585]

Phil Hope: No. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister awaits the report of the Review which is due in the summer. We shall then consider what action is appropriate.

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions he has had with National Assembly for Wales Government on the *(a)* Balance of Funding Review and *(b)* the parallel exercise in Wales. [168586]

Phil Hope: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1256W. The Office Of the Deputy Prime Minister will consult the Welsh Assembly Government before making any changes as a result of the Review.

Diesel Spillages

Vera Baird: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the cost has been to each fire brigade to clean up diesel spillage in each of the last three years. [168627]

Mr. Raynsford: The costs to fire brigades of cleaning up diesel spillages, or other hazardous chemicals, are not held centrally, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Empty Homes

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the Government intend to allocate the council tax received from empty homes. [168374]

Mr. Raynsford: A dwelling, which is unoccupied and substantially unfurnished is exempt from council tax for a period of up to six months. A dwelling which

is unoccupied, substantially unfurnished and either requires, is undergoing or has undergone within the last six months major repair work to make it habitable or is undergoing or has undergone within the last six months major repair work or structural alteration is exempt for a period of up to 12 months. After the exempt period, council tax is payable. Until 31 March 2004, a 50 per cent. discount applied but now local billing authorities may choose to reduce or remove this discount. The additional council tax raised from reducing or removing the discount on long term empty homes will be taken into account in the calculation of formula grant in due course. The Government have no role in the allocation of council tax received from empty homes.

Fire Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the impact of a Public Service Comparator solution to the Ministry of Defence Airfield Support Services Project on the commercial viability of the Fire Service College at Moreton in Marsh; and if he will make a statement. [167252]

Phil Hope: The Fire Service College is a service provider for the consortia bidding for firefighter training under the Airfield Support Services Project. The college welcomes the possibility of joint working with the Ministry of Defence. It has made provision in its business plan to do so but the College's planning remains flexible.

Green Minister

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what work his Department's Green Minister has undertaken in that capacity in the last three months. [165649]

Phil Hope: As the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Green Minister I have considered issues surrounding the Sustainable Development Task Force and the Sustainable Energy Policy Network (SEPN) of which I am a member. I am also lead Minister on the Sustainable and Secure Buildings Bill.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in that capacity in the last 12 months. [165650]

Phil Hope: As the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Green Minister I am a member of the Sustainable Development Task Force, the Sustainable Energy Policy Network and ENV(G). I have also attended meetings of the ad hoc Ministerial Group on Climate Change and the Sustainable Building Task Group. However, it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the meetings at which a representative of his Department was present regarding the delivery of sustainable development across Government, as co-ordinated by the Ministerial Sub-committee of Green Ministers. [165651]

Phil Hope: As the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Green Minister I am a member of the Environmental Sub-Committee, ENV (G). However it has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet Committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Gypsies/Travellers

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the costs to Chelmsford local authority of the eviction of Gypsies and Travellers in the last six months. [164094]

Yvette Cooper: No estimate has been made by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of the costs to Chelmsford local authority of the eviction of Gypsies and Travellers in the last six months.

Homelessness

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many people are registered as homeless in North Tyneside; [165354]

(2) what recent steps his Department has taken to tackle homelessness in North Tyneside. [165363]

Yvette Cooper: Information on homelessness collected by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is in respect of applicant households, rather than persons. In the 12 months to the end of September 2003—the most recent period for which the authority provided information—North Tyneside reported 1,066 households accepted as eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need. As at 30 September 2003, 69 households were in temporary accommodation provided by the authority. Of these, 24 were housed pending completion of inquiries or a review; the remaining 45, along with a further 331 classified as "homeless at home", continued to be owed a main homelessness duty.

The latest local authority Housing Investment Programme returns for spring 2003 show that North Tyneside submitted a 0–10 estimate on rough sleeping.

In the quarter to the end of September 2003, the most recent period for which the authority provided information, North Tyneside reported that 14 households were in bed and breakfast accommodation provided by the authority.

The Homelessness and Housing Support Directorate within the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has provided North Tyneside Metropolitan District Council with funding of £79,593 in 2003–04 and allocated £92,000 for 2004–05. This funding will support the authority in their continued implementation of their homelessness strategy which they had to publish for the first time last year.

The Government's approach to tackling homelessness focuses on the problems homeless people face as well as places they live. This approach was set out in our March 2002 publication, "More than a roof".

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister are investing significant resources into tackling homelessness—£260 million over three years (2003–04 to 2005–06)—

double previous spending plans, together with changes to housing benefit subsidies, which are helping local authorities to meet the Government's commitment that by March 2004 there should be no homeless families with children living in B&B accommodation for longer than six weeks, and to sustain low levels of rough sleeping. It will also support new approaches that help people tackle the problems that are making and keeping them homeless—helping them rebuild relationships with their family, access training or employment, overcome debt or tackle drug addiction.

Housing (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect of the change in the level of council funding for housing on the residents of Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167463]

Mr. Raynsford: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Manchester's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by over 200 per cent. and have been supplemented by the announcement of £125 million to be made available to the Manchester/Salford Housing Market Renewal pathfinder project between 2003–04 and 2005–06. In addition to this welcome increase there is support through the Community Housing Task Force and Government Office for the North West to help the local authority and its tenants to choose the best strategy for long term improvement.

Local Authority Confidentiality Rules

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many local authorities had complaints upheld against them for the breach of rules on confidentiality in 2003–04. [167595]

Mr. Raynsford: Between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004 ethical standards officers of the Standards Board for England completed 52 investigations (in respect of 34 authorities) relating to allegations of failure to comply with paragraph 3*(a)* of the code of conduct for local authority members. This provision requires that the member must not disclose information given to him in confidence or which he believes is of a confidential nature without the consent of a person authorised to give it, or unless he is required to do so by law. Of the total number of investigations, 11 were referred for decisions on action either by the Adjudication Panel for England or the standards committee of the relevant authority. Sanctions were imposed in five of the cases, and in two cases it was decided that there was no failure to comply with the code. Decisions on the other four cases are still to be taken.

Local Government Finance

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which authorities receive area cost adjustment; on what basis it is calculated; how much each receives; and what plans he has to review it. [166926]

Mr. Raynsford: The area cost adjustment is the element of the funding formula which directs extra resources to local authorities with higher wage and rates costs. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister calculates an area cost adjustment (ACA) for every authority in England and it acts as a multiplier on formula spending share (FSS) formulae. Where local wages are low the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister raised the ACA value of that area to one, to ensure that low pay local authority areas do not lose out. Where wages and rates costs are higher, the authority receives a positive ACA top-up.

It is possible to present the FSS figures for each authority in terms of a basic amount plus top-ups, one of which is the ACA. The figures provided in the table, which have been made available in the Library of the House, detail which authorities receive an ACA top-up and how much each authority receives split by FSS sub-block. These figures are consistent with the 'Simple Presentation' guide to the funding formulae, which is available on the internet at; http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/0405/simppress/index.htm.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister calculates the ACA using the best available evidence on wage and business rate costs. The calculation is set out in the area cost adjustment methodology guide. This document is on the Internet at http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/0405/acamethods.pdf and can be made available in the Library of the House.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced in the 2001 white paper 'strong local leadership—quality public services' (CM5237) that following the anticipated reforms in 2003–04 the funding formulae will be frozen for at least 2004–05 and 2005–06. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not intend to change the way that the ACA is calculated during this period. If it is decided that changes to the formulae should be made for 2006–07, a full consultation on options for change would take place prior to the normal settlement round for that year.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department includes fire authority, police authority and parish council precepts in calculations determining the level of increase in council tax bills; and if he will make a statement. [167294]

Mr. Raynsford: The published figures for council tax bills in each billing authority area include all precepts. However, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has always published figures for the level of, and increase in, police and fire authorities' precepts as well as the billing authority's council tax including parish precepts and the total council tax bill payable in a billing authority's area. For 2004–05, information on levels of, and increases in, billing authority council tax with and without parish precepts, were published on 25 March and are available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website: www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ctax/ctax045.htm.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average council tax bill for a Band D property in Herefordshire was last year; what it is expected to be in the forthcoming year; what percentage change this represents; and if he will make a statement. [167295]

Mr. Raynsford: The average council tax bill for a Band D property in Herefordshire was £1,071 for 2003–04 and is £1,185 for 2004–05. This represents an increase of 10.7 per cent. if the underlying figures are rounded to the nearest penny.

Local Government Reorganisation

Ann Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress with stakeholders on potential arrangements for local government re-organisation. [167340]

Mr. Raynsford: As stated in the House on 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1524W, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has established a working group to look at the practical implications of reorganisation, the first meeting of which took place on 9 March. Two sub-group meetings have also been held to discuss issues relating to continuity of functions and transfer of assets and liabilities. Meetings of sub-groups to discuss finance and staffing issues are to be held in early May.

Operation Fresco

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what costs of the Defence Fire Service, incurred during Operation Fresco, were charged to his office's budget. [168077]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has agreed to meet the additional costs incurred by the Ministry of Defence in providing emergency fire cover during the firefighters pay dispute, through Operation Fresco. As at 26 March 2004, the Ministry of Defence had informed the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister that the likely total bill for this service would be in the region of £80 million. The Defence Fire Service's costs will fall within that total, but, as my right hon. Friend the Member for East Kilbride (Mr. Ingram) made clear in his answer of 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 8W, these could be provided only as a discrete figure at disproportionate cost.

Torbay Council

Mr. Steen: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether he will cap Torbay council in the year 2004–05. [167495]

Mr. Raynsford: When the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister announced the council tax increases for 2004–05 on 25 March, we confirmed that we were ready to use our targeted capping powers if necessary and that we aimed to notify any authorities which might be in line for capping by the end of April. I cannot say in advance which authorities these may be.

Traveller Pitches

Mr. Paice: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what guidance he has issued to *(a)* planning authorities and *(b)* the Planning Inspectorate regarding the number of traveller pitches which should be permitted in any specific location; [168453]

(2) what discussions he has had with representatives of gypsies and travellers regarding *(a)* the size of traveller camps and *(b)* agreed limits on the maximum number of pitches in any location. [168454]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has issued no specific guidance relating to the size of caravan sites, nor have we had discussions with Gypsies or travellers regarding the size of caravan sites. Planning Policy Guidance note 3 on housing requires local planning authorities to assess the local needs of specific groups across all tenures in their area. Development plans should wherever possible identify locations suitable for Gypsy sites and local authorities must decide planning applications in accordance with development plans unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

CABINET OFFICE

Buckingham Palace Garden Parties

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office for what reason the nomination form for garden parties at Buckingham palace excludes Commonwealth citizens resident in the UK from being nominated; and if he will make a statement. [168814]

Mr. Alexander: Different procedures are in place for extending invitations to Commonwealth citizens. Commonwealth citizens who are either visiting or resident in the UK may apply to their respective High Commissions in London who may nominate them for an invitation.

Contingency Planning

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what recent representations he has received on funding for contingency planning. [166533]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office continues to be in discussion with representatives of local responder bodies on the funding of their civil protection work. The public consultation on the draft Civil Contingencies Bill specifically asked about funding to support the Bill. The results of the public consultation exercise were published in January 2004 and copies are available in the Library.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte and Touche, (ii) Ernst and Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166089]

Mr. Leslie: From 1 January 2000 until 31 March 2004, my Department has let contracts for consultancies and other services with these accountancy firms on a number of occasions for a variety of reasons.

Our net expenditure with these companies, for the period in question, together with examples of the type of services they provided and the projects they supported are set out.

Service provider	Net spend 1 January 2004 to 31 March 2004 (£)	Examples of services provided
Deloitte and Touche	535,000	Consultancy support on the Tribunals for Users Programme and the IT Shared Services Project. Risk management training.
Ernst and Young	760,000	Consultancy support on the Courts and Tribunals Modernisation Programme. Financial advice linked with the Libra Project and the Queen Anne's Gate Project. Financial advice on major construction schemes.
KPMG	361,000	Consultancy support connected with the Unified Courts Administration Programme. Support in connection with work to develop leadership capability. Financial advice on major construction schemes.
PricewaterhouseCoopers	3,900,000	Consultancy support on the Consumer Strategy Project. Risk management advice and the provision of Interim Managers. Financial advice on major construction schemes.

This expenditure reflects the wide-ranging and fast-paced programme to modernise the Department's work, to increase efficiency, provide better customer service, and value for money for the taxpayer.

Debt Recovery

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many *(a)* state-employed bailiffs and *(b)* enforcement agents are employed by county and magistrates courts for the enforcement of debts; and how many of them have been certificated through a court procedure. [166804]

Mr. Leslie: 609 bailiffs are employed in the county courts. County court bailiffs do not require certification as this is only necessary for certificated bailiffs who, among other things, levy distress for rent under the Distress for Rent Rules 1988; this is not an activity undertaken by county court bailiffs. No other enforcement agents are employed by the county courts, and no enforcement agents are employed by the magistrates courts for the enforcement of debts.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will list the bailiff firms and enforcement agencies each magistrates court uses; and what fees and charges agreement each court has in place with the relevant firms. [166805]

Mr. Leslie: Responsibility for the employment of bailiffs and other enforcement agencies in the magistrates court system lies with individual Magistrates Court Committees (MCC), of which there are 42 in England and Wales. A list of the bailiff firms or other enforcement agencies used in each MCC area is set out in the following table. Fees and charges for the employment of bailiffs and enforcement agencies is a matter for each individual MCC and is therefore commercial in confidence.

Bailiff or enforcement agencies used

MCC name	Name
Avon and Somerset	Drakes Group Ltd. Police Police
Bedfordshire	Drakes Group Ltd.
Cambridgeshire	Drakes Group Ltd.
Cheshire	IPL International Ltd.
Cleveland	AS Gent and Associates Equita Ltd.
Cumbria	Police
Derbyshire	MA Julious and Co XMS Warrants Loss Control Solutions Ltd.
Devon and Cornwall	Churchill DC Ltd. Drakes Group Ltd. Police
Dorset	CCS Enforcement Services Ltd.
Durham	Trans National Corporation (TNC) Plc
Dyfed Powys	Menai Collect Ltd.
Essex	Police
Gloucestershire	Drakes Group Ltd Trans National Corporation (TNC) Plc Police
GLMCA	CCS Enforcement Services Ltd. Drakes Group Ltd. Equita
Greater Manchester	National Bailiff Services Equita Ltd. AS Gent and Associated
Gwent	Swift Credit Services Ltd.
Hampshire and IOW	CCS Enforcement Services Ltd.
Hertfordshire	Drakes Group Ltd.
Humberside	Jacobs Wigglesworth and Co (Northern) Ltd.
Kent	Trans National Corporation (TNC) plc
Lancashire	Birchalls Ltd.
Leicestershire	—
Lincolnshire	Drakes Group Ltd. Loss Control Solutions Police
Merseyside	IPL International Ltd. Howard Roberts Ltd. Reliance Security Group
Norfolk	Drakes Group Ltd.
North Wales	Menai Collect Ltd. North West Commercial Services
North Yorkshire	Phillips Collection Services

Bailiff or enforcement agencies used

MCC name	*Name*
Northamptonshire	Rossendales Ltd.
Northumbria	Regional Collection Services
Nottinghamshire	Bristow and Sutor Police
South Wales	Swift Credit Services Ltd.
South Yorkshire	MA Julious and Co Rossendales Ltd. Equita Ltd.
Staffordshire	Bristow and Sutor CCS Enforcement Services Ltd.
Suffolk	Drakes Group Ltd.
Surrey	Drakes Group Ltd. Chandlers Ltd. Police
Sussex	Chandlers Ltd. Police
Thames Valley	Equita Ltd. Drakes Group Ltd.
Warwickshire	Professional Recovery Services Ltd.
West Mercia	Bristow and Sutor Loss Control Solutions Ltd.
West Midlands	CCS Enforcement Services Ltd. Equita Ltd.
West Yorkshire	AS Gent and Associates IPL International Ltd. Police
Wiltshire	Drakes Group Ltd.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

British National Party

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether British National Party members have become school governors. [168286]

Mr. Miliband: The Department does not collect details of individual governor appointments or the political affiliations of governors. The British National Party is not a proscribed organisation and, therefore, its members are free to stand for election or appointment to school's governing bodies. Once elected or appointed all school governors must comply with the laws including the legislation on race discrimination. Governing bodies have a specific duty to promote equality of opportunity and to promote good relations between persons of different racial groups.

Capita

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools Capita has entered as part of the Fresh Start scheme in each year since 1997; and how much funding they received for this. [167562]

Mr. Miliband: Capita has not entered any schools for the Fresh Start scheme. It is for local education authorities to propose schools for this scheme to the Department.

Child Care

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four year olds in Manchester Gorton in each of the last seven years. [167450]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested. Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year olds in Manchester local education authority area are shown in the table. The latest figures on provision for three and four year olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin 'Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.aov.uk/rsaatewav/.

From April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three year olds in England whose parents want one, will have access to a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by three and four year old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers Manchester Local Education Authority area 1997–2003
Position in January each year

	Three year olds	*Four year olds*
1997	3,700	6,000
1998	4,400	5,600
1999	4,200	5,500
2000	4,600	5,400
2001	4,600	5,400
2002	4,600	5,300
2003	4,600	5,200

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for thirty-three weeks of the year, usually three terms of eleven weeks.

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many places providing wraparound care linked to early education have been provided since 2000. [167555]

Margaret Hodge: We had created, at December 2003, over 50,000 new wraparound care places linked to early education since 2001, and expect continued progress.

In addition, we have now adopted a significant new approach to encouraging the integration of early years services. Since this manifesto commitment was made, the Children's Centres initiative has been launched and is now our key contributor to the growth of integrated early learning and childcare provision. Our intention is that 43,000 new integrated places will be created in Children's Centres by 2006. By 2008 we are committed to having Children's Centres in the most disadvantaged areas in England. Our long term aim is to have a Children's Centre in every community.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many child care places have been created in Manchester, Gorton since 1997; [167436]

(2) how many children in Manchester, Gorton have benefited from the National Childcare Strategy. [167453]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Manchester, Gorton. However, from April 1999 to December 2003 Manchester local authority created 6,115 new child care places helping some 11,153 children. This shows an increase in stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 3,629 helping some 6,772 children.

Children's Centres

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what mechanisms he will put in place to ensure that the additional £669 million to fund one children's centre in each of the country's 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards by 2008, will be used specifically for that purpose; and if he will make a statement. [167255]

Margaret Hodge: The Chancellor announced in the Budget that the overall allocation for Sure Start would be £669 million higher in 2007–08 than in 2004–05. This additional funding will take the Sure Start allocation to £1.167 billion in 2005–06, £1.483 billion in 2006–07 and £1.567 billion in 2007–08.

This allocation is ring fenced for the full range of Sure Start activities, including the expansion of children's centres. The Chancellor announced a number of new commitments in the Budget that that will need to be met from the allocation, including increasing children's centres towards the goal of a children's centre in every community. We are committed to ensuring that these centres provide services for all children in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards by 2007–08. he funding for children's centres will make up a significant part of the full Sure Start allocation and will be subject to full monitoring and financial controls.

Children's Commissioner for England

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make it his policy that the Children's Commissioner for England should have powers equivalent to those of the Children's Commissioners for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales. [167055]

Margaret Hodge: The Government are proposing through the Children Bill that the powers of the Children's Commissioner based in England should be in keeping with his responsibilities, which are not identical to those of Commissioners elsewhere in the United Kingdom. His proposed functions will include, among other things, acting as a children's champion and advising the Secretary of State on their views and interests, helping them to achieve the outcomes that children have identified as important investigating the effectiveness of complaints procedures open to them, and reporting annually to Parliament on how well the outcomes children seek are being met.

Class Sizes

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Greater London were taught in classes of more than *(a)* 25 and *(b)* 30 in each year since 1997, broken down by local education authority. [165837]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The information requested has been placed in the House of Commons Library.

Classroom Assistants (Liverpool)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many classroom assistants have been employed in schools in Liverpool, Walton in each year from 1997 to 2003. [166958]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the full time equivalent number of teaching assistants in service in maintained schools in the Liverpool, Walton constituency in each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which information is available.

Liverpool, Walton

1997	80
1998	90
1999	100
2000	120
2001	180
2002	170
2003	210

Source:
Annual Schools Census.

Criminal Records Bureau Checks

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received on requiring people coming from abroad to work with children or young people to have checks equivalent to those carried out by the Criminal Records Bureau before they begin work. [165830]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* I have received no representations on this matter.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will require people coming from abroad to have Criminal Records Bureau checks before they can take up positions working with children or young people; and if he will make a statement. [165833]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The Criminal Records Bureau is not able to obtain details of a person's criminal record from overseas. A limited number of overseas convictions are recorded on the Police National Computer, but the data are not comprehensive.

My Department's guidance to employers in the education service about pre-appointment checks on teachers and other people whose work will bring them into regular contact with children draws attention to the

fact that, if a person who they intend to appoint to work with children or young people has never lived in the UK, no purpose will be served by asking them to apply for a Disclosure when they come to this country as they will neither have a criminal record in this country, nor appear on List 99 or the Protection of Children Act List.

The Bureau's Overseas Information Service provides advice to employers on the availability of criminal record information from overseas. The service currently covers 17 countries (Denmark, France, Germany, Irish Republic, Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, Poland, Canada, Jamaica, South Africa, Malaysia, Philippines, Australia, New Zealand, Italy (excluding Vatican City) and Finland). The CRB is in discussions with the 10 accession countries to the European Union and aims to provide information through the Overseas Information Service about the criminal record information available from these countries within the next few months.

Where criminal record information is not available, we recommend that employers take extra care in taking up references and carrying out other checks on a person's background.

FE Colleges

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the changes he is proposing for the funding of new buildings for further education, with specific reference to altering the match funding criteria. [168361]

Alan Johnson: All of the Department's funding for post-16 learning and skills sector capital investment is allocated to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Council has sole discretion in how it chooses to allocate these funds to further education colleges. This includes decisions about the level of funding that it expects colleges to contribute to capital projects. This is an operational matter for the LSC. Mr. Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, will write to the hon. Member on this matter. A copy of his reply will be placed in the House Library.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many child care places there were in North Tyneside local education authority in each of the last seven years. [164373]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is shown in the table.

Numbers of day care places[1] by type of provider—North Tyneside local education authority area—1997–2003
Position at 31 March each year

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Day nurseries[2]	[3]—	600	620	770	860	[3]—	[3]—
Full day care[4]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	1,600
Playgroups and pre-schools[2]	680	680	630	590	560	[3]—	[3]—
Sessional day care[4]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	600
Child minders	1,540	1,430	1,300	1,300	1,100	[3]—	1,300
Out of school clubs[2]	130	200	210	190	260	[3]—	[3]—
Holiday schemes[2,5]	140	190	2,300	[6]1,500	[7]180	[3]—	[3]—
Out of school day care[4]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	700
Crèche day care[4]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	200

[1] Figures have been rounded to the nearest 100.
[2] Data Source: Children's Day Care Facilities.
[3] Not available.
[4] Data Source: Ofsted.
[5] From 1999, places at holiday schemes were counted once for each school holiday during the year. Prior to 1999, places were counted once only.
[6] Includes schemes which were exempt from registration.
[7] Places may have been counted once only. See footnote 5.

With the introduction of the National Day Care Standards and the transfer of responsibilities for registration and inspection to Ofsted, child care places are classified according to whether they are full day care, sessional day care, childminder, out of school day care or crèche day care places. Previously, child care places were classified according to whether they were provided by day nurseries, playgroups and pre-schools, childminders, out of school clubs or holiday schemes. Figures for 2003 are not directly comparable with figures for earlier years because they are collected on a different basis. Some playgroups and pre-schools provide full day care and some former playgroups and pre-schools have converted to day nurseries.

Statistics on the number of childcare places registered in England were published on 19 February 2004 in a report by Ofsted "Registered Childcare Providers and Places in England, 31 December 2003". The report is available on the Ofsted website, www.ofsted.gov.uk/publications.

Education Finance

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the standard spending assessment funding was per child in *(a)* England and *(b)* the North Somerset local education authority in each year since 1997. [167530]

Mr. Miliband: There have been changes to the structure of Standard Spending Assessments and their successor from 2003–04, Education Formula Spending, which make them incomparable over time: for example, several large transfers from SSA/EFS to grant funding. Only total funding per pupil (including SSA/EFS and grants) is comparable between years. Also, for 2003–04 and 2004–05, pension transfers to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council are excluded from EFS and total funding figures to enable comparison between years.

Funding per pupil aged 3 to 19—Real terms at 2002–03 prices

£

	North Somerset			England		
	SSA/EFS	*Grants*[1]	*Total funding*	*SSA/EFS*	*Grants*[1]	*Total funding*
1997–98	2,510	110	2,620	2,720	110	2,830
1998–99	2,610	80	2,690	2,820	60	2,880
1999–2000	2,670	150	2,820	2,880	130	3,010
2000–01	2,730	290	3,020	2,950	290	3,240
2001–02	2,740	360	3,100	2,990	400	3,390
2002–03	2,580	580	3,170	2,880	610	3,490
2003–04	2,720	[2]560	[2]3,290	3,010	[2]580	3,590
2004–05	2,970	[3]—		3,280	[3]—	

[1] Grants are all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to EFS pupils aged 3–19. Education maintenance allowances (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level are excluded.
[2] Provisional.
[3] Not available.
Notes:
1. Per pupil figures are rounded to the nearest £10 so may not sum.
3. The pupil numbers used are those underlying the SSA/EFS settlement calculations plus Pupil Level Annual Schools Census (PLASC) 3-year-old maintained pupils and estimated 3 to 4-year-olds funded through state support maintained and other educational institutions where these are not included in the SSA pupil numbers.
4. Real terms figures based on GDP deflators as at 26 March 2004 (2002–03 prices).

Failing Schools

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Burnley deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [167926]

Mr. Miliband: Three schools in Burnley have been classified by Ofsted as needing Special Measures since summer 1997 and have subsequently come out of special measures status.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Manchester, Gorton deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [167447]

Mr. Miliband: Two schools in Manchester Gorton have been placed in special measures since 1997, an infant and a junior school which amalgamated in January 2001 and became one primary school. The resulting school remained in special measures until 2001. It was inspected by Ofsted in November 2003 and was found to be an effective and improving school with good teaching and rising standards.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Preston deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [168127]

Mr. Miliband: Six schools in Preston have been classified by Ofsted as needing Special Measures since summer 1997 and have subsequently been restored to health. Three schools that were already in Special Measures before 1997 have been restored since.

Educational Attainment

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in Manchester, Gorton achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A*-C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [167439]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows.

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] *achieving five or more grades A*-C*

Percentage

Academic year	*Manchester, Gorton parliamentary constituency*	*England*
1997	19.4	45.1
1998	26.2	46.3
1999	27.9	47.9
2000	29.8	49.2
2001	26.5	50.0
2002	34.9	51.6
2003	36.8	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year ie 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils in Manchester, Gorton reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years. [167448]

Mr. Miliband: The results from the 2003 National Curriculum tests showed that 75 per cent. of 11-year-olds in England reached Level 4 in English and 73 per cent. in mathematics. These results represent a significant improvement in standards—of 12 percentage points in English and 11 percentage points in mathematics—since 1997, reflecting the impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies on primary schools. We remain absolutely committed, through our new Primary Strategy, to supporting schools to achieve the ambitious targets we have set for standards of literacy and numeracy.

The follow table shows the number and percentage of pupils in Manchester Gorton who have achieved Level 4 or above in the Key Stage 2 English and mathematics tests since 1997. The results for Manchester Gorton are below the national average but show significant improvements since 1997 in both English and mathematics in line with the improvements nationally.

	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
English[1]	568	548	593	621	638	688	690
Mathematics[1]	526	456	584	612	628	711	659
English[2]	53	52	56	61	62	62	64
Mathematics[2]	49	43	55	60	61	64	61

[1] The number of eligible pupils for the Key Stage 2 tests varies slightly from year to year
[2] Percentage of pupils

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of pupils in England achieved grades A*-C at GCSE in *(a)* mathematics, *(b)* English and *(c)* mathematics and English in each year since 1997. [167568]

Mr. Miliband: The percentage of 15-year-old pupils achieving grades A*-C in GCSE *(a)* mathematics, *(b)* English and *(c)* mathematics and English are shown in the following table:

Percentage

	Mathematics	English	Mathematics and English
2003	51.1	60.2	42.9
2002	52.3	59.9	43.4
2001	50.8	58.6	41.9
2000	50.0	58.6	41.2
1999	48.6	57.8	39.8
1998	47.4	56.1	38.1
1997	46.8	54.8	36.8

Further Education (Cleethorpes)

Shona McIsaac: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people attended *(a)* university and *(b)* further education from Cleethorpes constituency in each year since 1995. [158116]

Alan Johnson: Figures are not available by constituency. The available information is given in the tables.

Number of 18-year-old applicants, domiciled in North East Lincolnshire LEA[1] accepted through UCAS to full time undergraduate HE study, 1995–2002 entry.

Academic year	North East Lincolnshire	Humberside
1995/96	—	1,663
1996/97	—	1,714
1997/98	312	—
1998/99	306	—
1999/2000	317	—
2000/01	311	—
2001/02	339	—
2002/03	312	—

[1] Prior to 1997, North East Lincolnshire was contained within Humberside LEA on the UCAS dataset, along with the City of Kingston upon Hull, North Lincolnshire and East Riding of Yorkshire.

Number of 16 and 17-year-olds in North East Lincolnshire LEA[1] participating in full-time further education from 1995/96 to 2001/02:

Academic year	16-year-olds	17-year-olds	16 and 17-year-olds
1995/96	7,300	5,200	12,500
1996/97	1,300	1,000	2,400
1997/98	1,300	1,100	2,400
1998/99	1,300	1,000	2,300
1999/2000	1,400	1,000	2,400
2000/01	1,400	1,100	2,500
2001/02	1,600	1,100	2,600

[1] Prior to 1996, North East Lincolnshire was contained within Humberside LEA along with the City of Kingston upon Hull, North Lincolnshire and East Riding of Yorkshire. Therefore, the number of 16 and 17-year-olds for the academic 1995/96 is the figure for Humberside LEA since no individual figures for the four LEAs are available.

Gloucestershire Local Education Authority

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much extra money in net terms is provided to the local education authority in Gloucestershire through the area cost adjustment; and if he will make a statement. [168063]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* In 2004–05 Gloucestershire's Education Formula Spending Share includes provision of £5.345 million through the area cost adjustment.

GNVQs

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the future of intermediate and foundation GNVQs. [167873]

Mr. Miliband: The timetable for the withdrawal of the individual 6-unit (foundation and intermediate) GNVQs was published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority on 27 November 2003. The withdrawal is taking place in three stages from 2005 to 2007, starting with titles with extremely low numbers of candidate entries.

Graduate Employment

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many graduates left university in each of the last five years; and how many went into full-time employment. [164470]

Alan Johnson: Information on the number of students graduating, and their first destinations, is published by the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA) in

"Students in Higher Education Institutions" and "First Destinations of students leaving HE institutions" respectively. The latest editions cover students graduating in 2001/02; copies of these, and editions for earlier years, are available from the House Library.

Higher Education

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures are in place in the proposed higher education reforms to ensure that students from *(a)* less advantaged and *(b)* other family backgrounds can attend the higher education institution of their choice. [165425]

Alan Johnson: We remain committed to fair access and believe that all those who have the potential to benefit from higher education should have the opportunity to do so. The social class gap among those entering higher education is unacceptably wide, particularly at the extremes. We are putting in place a range of measures, several of them through the HE Bill (so subject to Parliamentary approval), that support students' prospects of attending the higher education institution (HEI) of their choice.

(a) For students from less advantaged backgrounds, we will provide help in a number of ways:

by introducing a new Higher Education Grant, worth up to £1,000 a year, for new students who start courses from this September. Students with a family income of £15,200 or less will receive the full £1,000 grant, and those from families with income from £15,201 to £21,185 will qualify for a partial grant;

by proposals to raise the maximum rate of the student maintenance loan to match median student expenditure on basic living items as measured by the latest Student Income and Expenditure Survey. The biggest increase will be for those students living independently in London. The loans will continue to be means tested as now for those from higher family income backgrounds. The higher rate of maintenance loans will be available to both new students and those who entered higher education prior to 2006;

by proposals to introduce a new maintenance grant, for new students starting courses from 2006/07, of up to £2,700. This will benefit students from low income households thereby helping broaden access to higher education. We are proposing that an element of this new grant will be in substitution for the maintenance loan. In addition, students may choose to reduce the level of maintenance loan they apply for still further in the light of this new grant being made available and, in doing so, reduce their outstanding debt;

by continuing to provide additional targeted financial support for vulnerable students via higher education institutions through the Access to Learning Fund. This will ensure that more of them are able to access and remain in higher education;

by requiring any institution that wants to charge higher variable fees to give more help to poorer students, in terms of bursaries and other financial support, to do outreach work to encourage a wide range of students to apply to higher education, and to provide clear information on the financial help available to those from the poorest backgrounds. Details will be set out in an access plan, and agreed with the Director of Fair Access; by the operation, from August 2004, of the new integrated Aimhigher programme. This will help to raise young people's levels of educational attainment and aspirations. It will include supporting a range of activities that bring young people into contact with higher education institutions and their students, helping them to better appreciate what higher education involves and the likely benefits of undertaking it.

(b) For those from all family backgrounds there are a range of other measures that will help prospective students make and pursue their choice of higher education institution:

provision of support on tuition fees—from 2006, all full-time undergraduate students will be entitled to defer payment of fees until after they graduate and are earning more than £15,000. Repayments will then be made under a generously subsidised, income-contingent repayments system, with no real rate of interest;

development with the National Union of Students of a new guide which will help students understand and access the range of information available and so make more effective decisions and choices;

the availability, from 2004/05 onwards, of much more information about the quality and standards of academic provision at institutions. This will be readily accessible to applicants via a Teaching Quality Information (TQI) website, and will ensure that potential students have access to key information about institutions to inform their choice of HE institution and course.

University Research

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the level of Government funding for university-based research in each of the past 10 years. [152629]

Alan Johnson: The latest available information, shown in cash terms, is given in the table. Comparable figures for 1993/94 are not held centrally.

Research income[1] of HEIs in the UK

	£ thousand
1994/95	2,245,467
1995/96	2,356,831
1996/97	2,455,930
1997/98	2,616,607
1998/99	2,846,527
1999/2000	3,016,130
2000/01	3,277,808
2001/02	3,518,439
2002/03	3,772,504

[1] Covers income from Funding Research Grants, the Office of Science and Technology Research Grants, and Other Research Grants

Jobs (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Burnley on the latest date for which figures are available. [167911]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Pike, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Burnley.

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of jobs in tourism related industries in Burnley was 2,700. This total is obtained by

combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels

restaurants

bars

activities of travel agencies

library, archives, museums etc.

sporting activities

other recreational activities.

Learning Disabled Children

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many learning disabled children there are in England. [165538]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not available centrally at present.

Information on special educational needs by type of need was collected for the first time in January 2004 and provisional data will be available at the end of April.

Available information on the number of pupils with special educational needs is given in the table.

All schools[1]: number of pupils with special educational needs—January 2003 England

	Number of pupils and percentage
Number of pupils with a statement of SEN	250,545
Percentage of pupils with a statement of SEN	3.0
Number of pupils with SEN without a statement	1,169,780
Percentage of pupils with SEN without a statement	14.0

[1] Includes maintained nursery, primary, secondary and special schools, pupil referral units, independent schools, city technology colleges, city academies and non-maintained special schools

Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Local Education Authorities

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many local education authorities have been taken over by an improvement team in each year since 1997. [167576]

Mr. Miliband: Following agreement with the local authority in question, we have used various models of intervention to address poor performance in education services depending on the local circumstances. On the occasions where these models include the outsourcing by authorities of various education functions to another body, statutory directions have been used to enable that outsourcing to take place. Directions have been issued to the following nine local education authorities to contract out differing ranges of functions:

1999—Hackney LEA;

2000—Islington LEA;

2001—Bradford, Haringey, Leeds, Southwark, Walsall and Waltham Forest LEAs;

2002—Hackney[1], Swindon and Walsall[1] LEAs; and,

2003—Southwark[1] LEA.

[1] second directions.

Non-outsourcing solutions have frequently been adopted. They have included (sometimes in combination) the restructuring of internal management; partnerships with other local education authorities; partnership boards involving local stakeholders and members with external and independent expertise in the local education authorities' strategic decision making processes; and the establishment of predominantly private sector brokerage alongside a partnership board.

None of the interventions have resulted in a local education authority being "taken over" by an improvement team or any other body. Whatever the model adopted, the local education authority has retained overall responsibility and accountability for the quality of its education services.

Mothers with Learning Difficulties

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what level of IQ would as a general rule indicate that a pregnant woman, without a partner, is so severely learning disabled her child should be removed at birth for adoption; whether the support and help of the woman's parents would be a factor in the decision; and if he will make a statement; [165102]

(2) what his policy is on the care of children whose parent or parents have moderate learning difficulties; and if he will make a statement; [165103]

(3) what support is offered to mothers with learning difficulties to assist them to retain care of their children; and if he will make a statement; [165104]

(4 what *(a)* redress and *(b)* support is available to pregnant women with learning difficulties who are faced with the forced removal of their child at birth for adoption; and if he will make a statement. [165105]

Margaret Hodge: A general duty is placed on local authorities by section 17 of the Children Act 1989 to safeguard and promote the welfare of children under 18 who are in need by providing a range of services appropriate to meeting those needs.

Assessments undertaken by local authorities of children who may be in need focus on the needs of the child, the capacity of the parents and wider environmental factors, rather than solely on the characteristics of the parents. Whether or not any particular child is considered to be in need will depend upon the individual circumstances, taking all relevant factors into consideration.

The White Paper "Valuing People" (2001) recognises that "social services have a duty to safeguard the welfare of children and in some circumstances a parent with learning disabilities will not be able to meet their child's needs. However, we believe that this should not be the result of agencies not arranging for appropriate and timely support". This means that the removal of children from parents with learning difficulties should be rare, but may be necessary in particular instances.

Learning disability, whether moderate or severe, does not necessarily indicate that a person will be unable to care for their child, with adequate support where necessary. Factors such as communication skills and social functioning are also important.

Later this year there will be a conference on parenting, run by parents with learning disabilities, and supported by the Government and the learning disability voluntary organisation CHANGE.

National Childcare Strategy

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many children in Birkenhead have gained from the National Childcare Strategy; and if he will make a statement; [166303]

(2) how many child care places have been created in Birkenhead since 1997. [166334]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Birkenhead. However, from April 1999 to December 2003 Wirral Local Authority created 5,245 new child care places helping 9,597 children. Taking into account however, the stock of child care places in Wirral increased by 3,158 in this period.

Between 1999 and December 2003 the Government's National Childcare Strategy has helped 1.67 million children by creating 925,000 child care places nationally.

New Deal for Schools

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding each school in Manchester, Gorton has received from the New Deal for Schools; [167445]

(2) how much public funding has been spent on repairing schools in Manchester Gorton in each year since 1997. [167454]

Mr. Miliband: Table A shows the schools in the Manchester Gorton constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Since 2001 the majority of capital support has been allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level. Table B sets out the capital support made by the Department to Manchester Local Education Authority since 1997–98, in total and by programme (including all allocations through NDS mentioned in table A).

Table A: NDS allocations to schools in the Manchester Gorton constituency

£

Year	*School*	*Project details*	*Grant awarded*
1997–98	St. Peters	Urgent maintenance works	[1]928,000
	Birchfields Primary School	Improved Security	[1]1,448,000
1999–2000	Stanley Grove Primary School	Replacement of HORSA unit	275,000
	Wilbraham Primary School	Replacement of HORSA unit	350,000
	Wright Robinson Sports College	Boiler replacement	1,001,000
2000–01	Wright Robinson Sports College	Replacement of defective window frames (Phase 1)	459,200
	Whalley Range 11–18 High School	Public Private Partnership Project	1,185,862
	Whalley Range 11–18 High School	Provision of two additional classrooms and administration offices	82,344
	Gorton Mount Infant School	Upgrading of toilets	195,000
	Heald Place Primary School	Upgrading of toilets	195,000
	St. Agnes CofE Primary School	Roofing	724,400
	Wright Robinson Sports College	Various school—upgrading technology rooms	270,000

[1] For NDS 1 the £928,000 and £1,448,000 grant allocated was for Manchester local education authority (LEA) wide projects, part of which was used for building maintenance work and improved security at each of two schools in the Manchester Gorton constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.

Table B: Capital Allocations to Manchester Local Education Authority

£000

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*200[illegible]*
Assistance with Asset Management Plans	—	—	60	—	—	—	—
Voluntary Aided formulaic capital	—	—	—	—	111	629	799
Basic Need	5,944	3,171	1,513	7,043	9,835	687	3,753
City Learning Centres	—	—	20	3,445	2,415	—	—
Class Size initiative	—	137	—	141	—	—	—
Condition	—	—	—	—	2,949	4,542	5,877
Devolved Formula	—	—	—	3,143	2,476	3,753	5,826
Early Excellence Centre	—	—	110	—	—	—	—
Energy	—	138	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation	—	—	—	—	—	1,875	3,522
NDS1	1,448	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS2	—	2,827	—	—	—	—	—
NDS3	—	—	2,056	—	—	—	—
NDS4	—	—	—	5,726	—	—	—
Nursery Provision	—	—	—	77	—	—	—
Outside Toilets	—	83	—	—	—	—	—
Private Finance Initiative	—	3,700	—	—	—	—	35,000
School Labs	—	—	—	221	221	—	—
School Security	122	151	151	149	100	86	—
Schools Access Initiative	30	105	150	280	447	615	914

Table B: Capital Allocations to Manchester Local Education Authority

£000

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Seed Challenge	—	—	—	264	297	521	517
Specialist Schools	—	—	—	300	—	200	—
Staff Workspace	—	—	—	—	—	99	216
Supplementary Credit Approvals	250	771	1,029	909	441	1,881	—
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools	—	—	—	235	43	—	—
Targeted Capital Funding	—	—	—	—	—	2,140	—
Teaching Environments for the future	—	—	—	—	—	—	970
Voluntary Aided School Grant	1,302	1,351	897	911	4,002	4,309	—
Total	9,096	12,434	5,986	22,844	23,337	21,337	57,394

To date we have allocated £30.3 million capital funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Newcastle Children's Fund Partnership

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will set out the sequence of changes in financial allocations to the Newcastle Children's Fund Partnership for 2004–05; whether the clawback of funds in the 2003–04 year has been reversed; what the outline annual planning figures are for the partnership for *(a)* 2004–05 and *(b)* 2005–06; and whether underspending in earlier years can be added to future planning totals. [161949]

Margaret Hodge: Newcastle Children's Fund has an allocation of £1,215,059 for 2004–05. This is a small reduction from the original allocation of £1,250,000. The partnership had £65,135 identified as genuine underspend in the 2003–04 mid-year review and this was reallocated by the Department. I am keen to give partnerships as much flexibility as possible within Government Accounting Rules. This means I have restored flexibility to re-profile from one quarter to the next during the year and I am allowing partnerships to carry forward end year underspend.

We are also giving partnerships more flexibility in delivering their commitment on joint working with local Youth Offending Teams to prevent crime. We have moved away from the rigid menu approach, although we are continuing to emphasise the need to focus on effective projects, such as Youth Inclusion Support Panels and Junior Youth Inclusion Panels. Where partnerships already have a strong focus on tackling antisocial behaviour and youth crime, they will be able to count those activities towards their collaborative working with Yots.

The allocation for 2005–06 will be announced by August 2004. However we recognise that partnerships are keen to get some indication of funding levels for 2005–06, in order to help them plan effectively. The Secretary of State has therefore indicated to partnerships at this stage that the budget for 2005–06 will be no less than £110 million. We hope this provides a clear framework for partnerships to plan and maintain Children's Fund activity right through to the end of 2005–06, the end of the current Spending Review period. Beyond that, the Chancellor, in his Budget statement, has signalled a commitment to the Children's Fund until 2008.

Non-Pathfinder Schools

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what additional resources will be made available to non-Pathfinder schools after 2005–06 to provide for additional staff to meet the requirement of the workload agreement. [167000]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Our approach in 2004–05 has been to ensure a rigorous analysis of average cost pressures and a guaranteed minimum level of per pupil increase that gives schools headroom above those cost pressures. The details of our approach for 2005–06 will be announced later this summer. The level of resources in school budgets after 2005–06 will be announced in due course and will take account of the spending settlement for the Department for 2006–07 to 2007–08.

However, workforce reform cannot simply be about the use of additional resources. Schools need to consider how they make best use of their existing resources, for example, by extending the role of support staff, maximising the impact of ICT and reducing reliance on expensive short term supply teachers.

Pathfinder Children's Trusts

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills on what basis the contribution from each relevant service to each pathfinder children's trust was determined. [166545]

Margaret Hodge: The contribution of resources to a Children's Trust is a matter for local determination between the partners of the Children's Trust board. Integration of services and resources will be based on local needs and circumstances.

Pre-school Provision (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Birkenhead in each of the last seven years. [166301]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-olds in Wirral local education authority area are shown in the table.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by three and four-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers Wirral local education authority area—1997–2003
Position in January each year

	Three-year olds	Four-year-olds
1997	1,600	3,800
1998	1,700	3,900
1999	1,700	3,900
2000	2,900	3,900
2001	3,100	4,400
2002	3,200	3,000
2003	3,200	3,500

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-old children.
[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

The latest figures on provision for three and four-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003" which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

We have made the commitment that by April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three-year-olds in England whose parents want one, will have access to a free, part-time early education place.

Primary Schools (Administrative Staff)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the job evaluation schemes carried out in primary schools for administrative staff. [167980]

Mr. Miliband: Most local authorities, including Herefordshire, are party to the national agreement on pay and conditions of local government staff (commonly known as the Single Status Agreement), which was negotiated by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services in 1997. The agreement commits authorities to carrying out job evaluations. My Department does not hold information on the job evaluation schemes either nationally or in individual local authorities.

School Meals

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 626W, on school meals, how many *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary school pupils live more than three miles away from the school that they attend; and how many of those are eligible for free school meals. [166999]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Numbers of pupils living more than three miles[1] from the maintained primary and secondary schools[2] that they attend—January 2003

	Primary	Secondary
Number of pupils travelling more than three miles	155,187	583,446
Percentage of pupils travelling more than three miles (as percentage of all pupils)	3.7	17.8
Number of pupils eligible for free school meals travelling more than three miles	12,204	46,596
Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals travelling more than three miles (as percentage of all FSM pupils)	1.7	9.8

[1] Distances calculated are straight line
[2] Includes middle schools as deemed
Source:
Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census

School Standards (Liverpool and Berkshire)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-old pupils in *(a)* Liverpool and *(b)* Berkshire achieved five or more GCSEs at Grades A*-C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [166961]

Mr. Miliband: The percentages of 15-year-old pupils achieving five or more grades A*-C at GCSE/GNVQ in Liverpool and Berkshire LEAs from 1997 to 2003 are shown in the following table.

Please note that since 1997 the results of pupils within the county of Berkshire have been reported under the six local education authorities which make up this county following local government re-organisation.

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A-C*

Percentage

Local education authority	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Liverpool	30.1	30.9	32.4	35.3	35.2	39.2	41.3
Berkshire	48.9	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bracknell Forest	—	45.4	45.4	46.6	49.1	45.5	49.2
Windsor and Maidenhead	—	57.2	57.9	59.2	58.8	56.4	59.8
West Berkshire	—	54.5	56.8	56.0	56.1	57.1	60.6
Reading	—	42.7	42.9	45.7	46.8	44.3	45.5
Slough	—	42.9	48.1	51.4	52.4	50.5	53.4
Wokingham	—	56.2	58.2	59.9	61.3	62.6	62.7
England	45.1	46.3	47.9	49.2	50.0	51.6	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year ie 31 August, and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Schools (Capital Funding)

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much capital funding for schools has come from *(a)* private and *(b)* public sources in each year since 1997. [167578]

Mr. Miliband: The Government encourage capital investment from private sources, but do not hold information about total amounts. Recent government programmes which encourage such investment include the Private Finance Initiative, specialist schools, academies and Seed Challenge. This approach will continue in Building Schools for the Future. Local authorities can also secure private investment through agreements with developers.

The following table shows the Department's support for capital investment, including the Private Finance Initiative, in each year since 1997. Some other departments also provide capital support for schools.

	£ billion
1997–98	0.8
1998–99	1.1
1999–2000	1.4
2000–01	2.1
2001–02	2.2
2002–03	3.0
2003–04	3.8
2004–05[1]	4.5

[1] Budgeted allocation

Sexual Abuse

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what requirement there is on head teachers in private schools to report to the police allegations of sexual abuse of pupils by school employees. [165943]

Margaret Hodge: Proprietors of independent schools are under the same duty as governing bodies of maintained schools to safeguard and promote the welfare of their pupils. They must comply with DfES Circular 10/95, "Protecting Children from Abuse: The Role of the Education Service". This guidance includes advice about the action to take following allegations of suspected abuse of pupils by a member of staff, including referral to child protection agencies.

Sure Start

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average full cost per child care place at a children's centre operating under Sure Start is for children aged *(a)* 0 to six months, *(b)* six months to two years and *(c)* two to four years. [166464]

Margaret Hodge: The Sure Start Unit does not collect this information. However according to research undertaken by the Daycare Trust the typical weekly cost of a fulltime nursery place for a child under two ranges from £107-£169. For children over two it ranges from £103-£149. Local authorities and childcare providers will decide on fee policies locally. LAs may offer free or subsidised places to children in need.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate the full annual running costs of a typical children's centre operating under the Sure Start scheme. [166466]

Margaret Hodge: It is not possible to estimate the typical annual running costs for a children's centre. Children's centres will offer a core programme including childcare integrated with early education, health, family and parenting support. They may offer additional services depending on the needs of the community. Local authorities are being asked to work with partners to reshape existing funded services, such as health visiting. Furthermore children's centres will be developed from a variety of existing provision such as Sure Start local programmes, neighbourhood nurseries, early excellence centres, maintained nursery schools and health centres all of which have wide ranging annual budgets.

Teachers

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new teachers entered full-time teaching in each year since 1990. [167557]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of newly qualified teachers entering full-time service in maintained schools in England in each year from 1989–90 to 2001–02, the latest period for which information is available.

	Number
1989–90	12,700
1990–91	12,300
1991–92	12,700
1992–93	13,900
1993–94	16,700
1994–95	16,600
1995–96	16,300
1996–97	17,100
1997–98	18,000
1998–99	16,800
1999–2000	17,600
2000–01	16,900
2001–02	17,700

Source:
Database of Teacher Records.

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many registered teachers were recorded as working in a non-teaching capacity in each year since 1997; [167563]

(2) how many registered teachers worked for local education authorities in a non-teaching capacity in each year since 1997. [167564]

Mr. Miliband: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people have qualified as *(a)* teachers and *(b)* advanced skills teachers in each year since 1997. [167577]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of people who successfully completed initial teacher training courses in each academic year between 1996/97 and 2001/02, the latest period for which information is available. The table excludes teachers who gained

qualified teacher status through employment based routes because the information was not available until 2001/02. In that year 2,210 teachers gained qualified teacher status by those routes.

	Number
1996/97	25,310
1997/98	24,040
1998/99	24,070
1999/2000	21,690
2000/01	22,640
2001/02	23,280

Source:
Teacher Training Agency.

The following table gives the numbers of teachers who have been successfully assessed for advanced skills teacher status in each financial year between 1998–99 and 2003–04. These assessments commenced in July 1998.

	Number
1998–99	142
1999–2000	480
2000–01	120
2001–02	865
2002–03	1,895
2003–04	1,145

Source:
Westminster Education Consultants, National Assessment Agency.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Manchester, Gorton on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [167458]

Mr. Miliband: The information is not available in the form requested. In January 2003, there were two advertised vacancies for full-time permanent teachers in maintained schools in the Manchester local education authority area.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what measures he is taking to ensure that fully-qualified teachers employed by Social Services have parity of pay and conditions with colleagues in mainstream schools. [168176]

Mr. Miliband: None. My right hon. Friend has no responsibility for the pay and conditions of service of teachers employed by Social Services.

Teaching Assistants (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Manchester, Gorton *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [167459]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the full time equivalent number of teaching assistants in service in maintained schools in the Manchester, Gorton constituency in each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which information is available.

Manchester, Gorton	*Number of assistants*
1997	150
1998	150
1999	160
2000	180
2001	260
2002	300
2003	360

Source:
Annual Schools Census.

Universal Day Care

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the additional cost of offering universal day care for children under five. [165481]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 20 April 2004]:* We have made no such estimate. Child care places, including those for full day care, are offered by a wide range of providers, including private nurseries, childminders, employers, local government and community organisations. The Government make start up grants available to help potential childminders and day care providers set up in business, as well as sustainability funding to help support good quality child care provision in danger of closing in disadvantaged areas.

University Students

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of students attending university were from each of the lowest two social classes in each of the last 10 years. [166733]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the University and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and covers UK-domiciled applicants, accepted to full-time undergraduate courses. The method of calculating social class adopted for social class data for 2002 entry onwards is the National Statistics Socio-Economic Class (NS-SEC). Hence, proportions for 2002 entry and 2003 entry are not directly comparable to earlier years and have been given separately.

Proportion[1] of UK domiciled applicants, accepted through UCAS from each social class, 1994–2001 entry

	Year of entry							
Social Class	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
I—Professional	16	16	16	15	15	15	14	14
II—Intermediate	44	43	44	44	44	44	44	44
IIIn—Skilled non manual	13	13	13	14	14	14	14	14
IIIm—Skilled manual	17	18	17	17	17	17	17	18
IV—Partly skilled	8	8	8	9	9	9	9	8
V—Unskilled	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Combined groups: IV and V	10	10	10	11	11	11	11	10
Total	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100

[1] of those of known social class
Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Proportion[1] of UK domiciled applicants, accepted through UCAS, from each social class, 2002–03 entry

National Statistics Socio-Economic Class (NS-SEC)	Year of entry 2002	2003
1. Higher managerial and professional occupations	23	22
2. Lower managerial and professional occupations	31	31
3. Intermediate occupations	16	15
4. Small employers and own account workers	7	7
5. Lower supervisory and technical occupations	5	5
6. Semi-routine occupations	13	13
7. Routine occupations	6	6
Total	100	100

[1] of those of known social class

Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

University Students (EU Member States)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many undergraduate students from other EU member states have been accepted at United Kingdom universities in each of the past 10 years. [166736]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and cover EU domiciles accepted through UCAS to full-time first degree and HMD courses at UCAS member institutions in the UK. Early figures for 2004 entry show that EU applicants have risen by 14 per cent.

EU domiciles accepted through UCAS to UK institutions, 1994–2003 entry

Domicile	Year of entry 1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Austria[1]		78	132	208	176	193	189	198	179	201
Belgium	290	295	377	416	401	431	401	424	442	485
Denmark	128	148	207	279	259	269	272	269	285	251
Finland[1]		180	444	724	655	557	457	447	421	404
France	487	720	883	1,288	1,337	1,519	1,690	1,551	1,710	2,029
Germany	891	1,021	1,102	1,475	1,656	1,624	1,693	1,541	1,609	1,675
Gibraltar	132	192	152	175	203	177	220	160	156	158
Greece	2,207	3,448	4,947	5,804	5,565	5,046	4,005	2,721	2,081	1,690
Irish Republic	2,984	4,298	3,815	3,878	2,933	2,602	2,273	2,180	2,390	2,874
Italy	329	395	414	538	572	645	499	496	505	510
Luxembourg	89	111	103	143	163	176	188	167	162	174
Netherlands	210	224	233	237	250	245	268	242	284	340
Portugal	134	177	242	287	269	313	304	313	321	356
Spain	371	464	521	617	659	788	674	693	720	742
Sweden[1]		213	365	674	791	936	913	773	727	683
Total EU	8,252	11,964	13,937	16,743	15,889	15,521	14,046	12,175	11,992	12,572

[1] Austria, Finland and Sweden joined the EU in 1995.

Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Urban Education Projects

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his policy is on Urban Education projects, with particular reference to the St. Cuthbert's Care project in Byker. [166538]

Margaret Hodge: There is no policy on Urban Education projects as such. This Department supports education initiatives in a wide range of settings and for diverse client groups, and the Children's Fund supports well over four thousand projects for children and young people. Newcastle Children's Fund Partnership has provided over £85,000 to the St. Cuthbert's Urban Education project between 2002–2004. Following a competitive application process against a range of criteria, the Partnership decided not to fund the project in 2004–05.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Academic Selection

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the alternative forms of academic selection to the 11-plus assessed by the Department of Education in the last year. [166713]

Mr. Gardiner: The Post-Primary Review Working Group considered alternative forms of academic selection but concluded that no alternative form of testing, or teacher assessment, would be any less problematical than the current arrangements; that age 11 is too early to commit pupils to particular pathways and that it is unsound to believe that the more able should follow only academic type courses.

Assembly Elections (Malpractice)

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Electoral Office has received complaints about malpractice following the latest Assembly Elections in Northern Ireland. [168300]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Electoral Officer has received one complaint about malpractice following the Assembly Elections in November. However, it could not be fully investigated as no evidence to substantiate the complaint was provided.

Asylum Seekers

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what plans he has to designate the Home Office under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, with particular reference to functions in relation to asylum seekers and refugees; [165819]

(2) what plans he has to *(a)* designate Work Permits UK under section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and *(b)* provide that the collection and reporting of statistics on work permits be subject to the public equity duty. [165820]

Mr. Spellar: The Home Secretary has advised me that in his view designation would have a serious and adverse effect on the work of his department, which includes Work Permits UK, specifically on the work of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. For that reason I accept his view that designation of the Home Office would not be appropriate. Wherever possible the Home Office is working within the spirit of the legislation.

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what training student teachers receive on the needs of children with autistic spectrum disorders. [167722]

Mr. Gardiner: There is a comprehensive range of core competences to be covered by student teachers during their Initial Teacher Education (ITE) courses when most of a student's time is spent on school placement.

As such, special educational needs provision mainly covers the recognition of pupils' special needs and focuses on strategies to meet those needs. Current ITE provision is, nevertheless, under review with the intention of developing approaches which match, more closely, the needs of teachers entering the profession.

Cannabis

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* arrests and *(b)* cautions there have been in Northern Ireland for (i) the possession of and (ii) the sale of cannabis since its reclassification. [164535]

Mr. Pearson: The Chief Constable advises me that PSNI record the number of persons arrested or cautioned for possession or supply of Class C drugs. The following table sets out these figures in respect of all Class C drugs since 29 January when cannabis was reclassified. Statistics relating to Class C drugs are not maintained by the type of drug involved and it is not therefore possible to disaggregate those relating solely to cannabis.

	Persons arrested	*Persons cautioned*
Possession of a Class C drug	94	19
Trafficking offences involving a Class C drug	33	0

Cross-Border Bodies (Salaries)

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the salary of each chief executive of the cross border bodies was in the last financial year; when the salaries were last revised; and what the percentage increase was in each case in comparison with *(a)* the rate of inflation and *(b)* the Civil Service pay increase. [163677]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The salary of each Chief Executive of the North South Implementation Bodies and Tourism Ireland in 2002–03 is set out as follows. (There was no Chief Executive in post in the Ulster Scots Agency in post during that period.) Since bodies with headquarters in Northern Ireland operate for salary purposes on 1 April-31 March financial years, the figures given in the table are those that applied throughout the financial year in question. Those bodies with headquarters in Ireland operate on a calendar year and the figures given are those that applied with effect from 1 October 2002.

The salaries of Chief Executive Officers' (CEOs) of those bodies with headquarters in Northern Ireland were last revised with effect from 1 April 2002, while those for CEOs of bodies with headquarters in Ireland were revised with effect from 1 October 2002, except for the CEO of Foras na Gaeilge whose salary was revised on 1 February 2003. The percentage increases involved in the 2002 revisions are shown in the table. The rate of inflation in the UK in 2002–03 was 3.29 per cent., while that in Ireland in 2002 was 4.6 per cent. The Northern Ireland Civil Service base pay increase for 2002–03 was 4.38 per cent. for the Senior Civil Service and 4.8 per cent. for other grades. The Irish Civil Service pay increase with effect from 1 October 2002 was 4 per cent.

Body	*CEO salary*	*Percentage increase*
Special EU Programme Body	£66,953	4.5
Waterways Ireland	£70,725	6.3
InterTradeIreland	£57,822	4.5
FCILC—Loughs Agency	£53,511	5.1
Tourism Ireland Ltd.	€126,246	4
Foras na Gaeilge	€92,949	4
Food Safety Promotion Board	€90,651	4

Curriculum Classification

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the Department of Education's definition and criteria are for classifying curriculum subjects as *(a)* vocational and *(b)* academic in secondary schools in Northern Ireland. [166714]

Mr. Gardiner: No decisions have yet been taken on these issues, which will be considered in the context of the proposed Entitlement Framework.

Housing

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the increase has been in housing executive rents in Northern Ireland over the past five years. [168297]

Mr. Spellar: The increase in Housing Executive rents in Northern Ireland over the past five years is as follows:

Increase in housing executive rents in Northern Ireland

	Percentage
2000–01	4.5
2001–02	3
2002–03	3.5
2003–04	3.25
2004–05	3

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what discussions he has had with the Northern Ireland housing industry regarding the possible introduction of home information packs. [168187]

Mr. Spellar: I have had no representations from the housing industry regarding the possible introduction of home information packs in Northern Ireland.

I will, however, continue to monitor developments as regards the home information pack with a view to determining whether there may be merit, at some time in the future, in introducing similar measures in Northern Ireland.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what estimate he has made of the total of unpaid housing executive house rents in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [168188]

Mr. Spellar: The information is not available in the format requested, however, collectable rental income and gross arrears in each of the last five years are as follows:

£ million

	Collectable rent	*Gross arrears at year end*
1999–2000	286.0	14.6
2000–01	285.5	17.4
2001–02	280.4	19.0
2002–03	273.3	18.9
2003–04	265.5	19.1

Notes:
1. Collectable Rent includes rents of dwellings, garages and district heating charges.
2. Gross arrears include overpayment of housing benefit arising from tenants failing to correctly advise of thief financial circumstances.
3. Gross arrears is a rolling figure which includes un-recovered arrears from previous years.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average financial assistance offered by Invest Northern Ireland was per job retained in each of the last five years. [159746]

Mr. Gardiner: The following table shows the number of jobs expected to be retained as a result of projects secured between 1998–99 and 2002–03, and the assistance Invest NI offered to retain those jobs. The information in the table does not reflect all job retention as a result of Invest NI activity, but is restricted to those generally larger indigenous businesses and inward investors for which information on job promotions/ retentions are available.

Assistance offered for retained jobs

Financial year	*Expected retained jobs*	*Assistance offered for expected retained jobs (£)*	*Cost per expected retained job (£)*
1998–99	2,931	17,430,392	5,947
1999–2000	1,796	14,059,950	7,828
2000–01	1,896	11,936,019	6,295
2001–02	1,711	15,351,204	8,972
2002–03	4,175	26,974,296	6,461
Grand total	12,509	85,751,861	6,855

Libya

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the quantity of arms and explosives supplied by Libya to the Provisional IRA in the last 30 years. [165221]

Mr. Pearson: This information is only available from intelligence sources. In the view of the Government it falls within the terms of Paragraph 4 of Part II (Law enforcement and legal proceedings) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information. Accordingly it would be inappropriate for the Government to comment.

The Independent International Commission on Decommissioning has undertaken to provide an inventory of the arms decommissioned to the two governments when its task is completed.

Motorcar/Motorcycle Racing

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much public sector money has been allocated to *(a)* motorcar racing and *(b)* motorcycle racing in each of the last five years in Northern Ireland. [167488]

Angela Smith: The amount of public sector money allocated to *(a)* motorcar racing and *(b)* motorcycle racing in each of the last five years by the Sports Council, the Northern Ireland Events Company and the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment is as follows:

(a) Motorcar Racing:

Public funds (includes Sports Council Exchequer, Sports Council Lottery, Northern Ireland Events Company awards and Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment funding administered through the Northern Ireland Tourist Board).

Motorcar racing

	£
1999–2000	86,300
2000–01	14,500
2001–02	0
2002–03	28,240
2003–04	173,000
Total	302,040

(b) Motor Cycle Racing:

Public funds (includes Sports Council Exchequer, Sports Council Lottery, Northern Ireland Events Company awards and Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment funding administered through the Northern Ireland Tourist Board).

Motor cycle racing

	£
1999–2000	9,700
2000–01	56,161
2001–02	132,100
2002–03	282,268
2003–04	320,702
Total	801,231

The following table shows the total amount of Sports Council Exchequer funding allocated to the 2 and 4 Wheel Motorsport Steering Group Ltd. in each of the

last five years. It is not possible at this time to break this funding down into separate data for motorcar racing and motorcycle racing.

Sports Council for Northern Ireland Exchequer funding allocated to the 2 and 4 Wheel Motorsport Steering Group Ltd.

	£
1999–2000	0
2000–01	0
2001–02	0
2002–03	15,000
2003–04	200,000
Total	215,000

Nitrates Directive

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has been made of the effects of the Nitrates Directive on the *(a)* pig, *(b)* poultry and *(c)* dairy industry in Northern Ireland; and if he will undertake a full consultation before the provisions are adopted. [166828]

Angela Smith: Responsibility for ensuring that Northern Ireland meets its obligations under the Nitrates Directive rests jointly with my Department and the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development. The hon. Member for Dudley and I recognise that implementation of the Nitrates Directive will have significant implications for the farming industry. However, we also recognise that agriculture is a major source of water pollution and that measures to minimise the negative impact from agriculture must be introduced if we are to meet the requirements of the Directive. Our officials have been working closely with the industry in developing our proposals for compliance. The first of these, relating to the application of an action programme under the Directive to the whole of Northern Ireland, is currently the subject of a consultation exercise launched on 14 April 2004. Two further consultation exercises, on associated action programme measures and draft regulations, are planned for May 2004 and April 2005 respectively. An Economic Appraisal on the implementation of the Directive has also been carried out.

The Department of Agriculture and Rural Development is currently consulting in parallel on a Farm Waste Management Scheme to provide capital grant support and has allocated funding of £30 million.

In addition, our officials are also committed to working with the industry to explore innovative and alternative approaches to slurry disposal which will be particularly important in the dairy, pig and poultry sectors.

Planned Maintenance Work

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the amount of planned maintenance work suspended in each education area in Northern Ireland. [166716]

Mr. Gardiner: Responsibility for maintenance work in controlled and maintained schools and other Board property rests with Education and Library Boards, while for voluntary grammar and grant-maintained integrated schools the responsibility rests with individual school authorities. Each Education and Library Board has been asked to submit a resource allocation plan for 2004–05 showing how they will allocate their total budgets and indicating the outputs that will be delivered with those budgets. The plans will include the amounts that the Boards propose to spend on maintenance this year. Before giving approval, the Department of Education will be considering the plans to make sure that they provide a clear picture of how the resources allocated to the Boards will be used and that they reflect the Government's commitment to raise educational standards in Northern Ireland.

Police Service

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many constables have joined the Police Service of Northern Ireland since the recent change in transfer arrangements from other police forces; how many full-time reservists have been offered the same facility to become regular constables; and what additional training would be required *(a)* for those transferring from other police services and *(b)* for full-time reservists transferring. [163713]

Mr. Pearson: Following recent changes to the transfer arrangements from other police forces, provided by Section 23 of the Police (NI) Act 2003, PSNI intend to recruit 12 officers at the rank of Detective Constable. Two of this number have already been appointed.

One officer has joined the PSNI as an experienced Police Trainee with a reduced period of training as allowed by the Police Trainee (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003.

There have been no full-time reservists offered the same facility to become regular constables as the Police (NI) Act 2003 Section 23 (3)(1) specifically requires the appointment of people with 'specified policing skills' and in respect of the Police Trainee (Amendment) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 the Chief Constable has deemed an experienced police trainee as a person who has successfully completed a two year probationary period in a UK police service.

The additional training provided for those transferring to the PSNI is bespoke and based upon the individuals' prior experience and training. However it is at least six weeks in duration and will include the following topics: Police and Community Relationships; Human Rights; Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland; Northern Ireland Specific Legislation; Firearms Training and Tactical Patrolling.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total expenditure on recruitment advertising by the Police Service of Northern Ireland has been in each year since its formation; what form this advertising has taken; and if he will make a statement. [164542]

Mr. Pearson: I am advised that the spend on police support staff recruitment advertising in 2002–03 was £432,921 and for 2003–04 was £128,860.

For police trainee and part time recruitment the costs were as follows: for 2001–02 £1,135,047, for 2002–03 £440,750 and for 2003–04 £402,617.

The costs of police trainee recruitment include television production and advertising costs. Television advertisements were shown on a number of channels including Ulster Television, Channel Four and RT .

Newspaper advertisements were also printed in a diverse range of publications in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland.

Psychiatry Services (Prisoners)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the general psychiatry service to prisoners in the Province. [164912]

Mr. Pearson: The Prison Service has contracts with two Health and Social Services Trusts for the provision of psychiatric services. Two Consultant Forensic Psychiatrists provide a total of 12 sessions (1.2 whole-time equivalent). A Specialist Registrar on a post-graduate training programme in forensic psychiatry, partially funded by the Prison Service, supports one of the consultants. A Staff Grade psychiatric registrar supports the second consultant. In addition, a medical officer from the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety with a qualification in psychiatry provides two sessions a week at Maghaberry Prison.

Public Holiday Entitlement

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether he plans to abolish the public holidays on *(a)* 17 March and *(b)* 12 July in any part of the public service in Northern Ireland. [166131]

Mr. Pearson: I have no plans to change the observance of the bank holiday on 17 March and the bank and public holiday on 12 July by civil servants in the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration and the Northern Ireland Office who are located in Northern Ireland. Holidays for other public service workers are a matter for the relevant employer.

Travellers

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he will take to ensure that legal protection of Travellers is enhanced by the EU Race Directive. [165821]

Mr. Spellar: Irish Travellers are already covered by the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997. The amendments to this Order to give effect to the provisions of the EU Race Directive apply to Irish Travellers and came into effect on 19 July 2003 to meet the deadline for implementation.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in *(a)* giving legal effect to and *(b)* promoting a Code of Practice to Promote Racial Equality in Housing and Accommodation under Article 45 of the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997; and what measures he proposes to promote good relations between travellers and settled communities. [165822]

Mr. Spellar: The Equality Commission for Northern Ireland consulted on a Code of Practice on Housing in September 2001. The Government will begin the process of giving legal effect to the Code when it is submitted to it as required by the Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997.

Irish Travellers will be covered by a Race Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland, to be published later this year.

A Promoting Social Inclusion Working group was set up to recommend ways of alleviating the disadvantage faced by Travellers and the Government published its response to the recommendations of this working group on 25 February 2003. A Travellers Sub-Group is being set up within the NI Race Forum to oversee the implementation of the Government's response and have input, through the forum, into the implementation of the Race Equality Strategy.

Tree Preservation Orders

Mr. Hume: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the target length of time is between submissions of a request for a tree preservation order and a decision on such a request; and whether there are guidelines on keeping interested parties informed of progress. [166778]

Angela Smith: The Planning Service is responsible for processing requests for a Tree Preservation Order. There is no agreed time scale for processing such requests. These requests are processed as quickly as possible and each case is considered on its own merits. Interested parties are informed of Planning Service's decision in these cases.

PRIME MINISTER

Lyons Report

Ms Walley: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on Sir Michael Lyons' report's recommendations to set up a Cabinet committee with a lead Minister. [167959]

The Prime Minister: I will announce the arrangements for following up Sir Michael Lyons' report at the conclusion of the current Spending Review.

Phillips Review

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make a statement on progress with the Phillips Review of the honours system, and on the methodology being employed. [168850]

The Prime Minister: Sir Hayden Phillips, Permanent Secretary at the Department for Constitutional Affairs with special responsibility for the honours system on behalf of the Cabinet Secretary, is reviewing current arrangements in the honours system, examining issues of diversity and transparency.

Information has been collected from those involved in the system and views from members of the public and other interested parties have also been collected via the Cabinet Office website. Recent commentary in the press and by members of the public will be taken into account. It is hoped that Sir Hayden's review will be completed by the summer.

Chemical and Biological Weapons

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister what response he has given to the submission of the Royal Society on the case for a research centre to investigate the dangers from chemical and biological weapons. [168624]

The Prime Minister: We have not formally responded to the Royal Society Report. Senior Home Office scientists and the Chief Scientific Adviser to the Government have arranged to meet the Chair of the working group, Professor Herbert Huppert, shortly to discuss the group's recommendations.

The report confirms that the Government's approach to coordinating the scientific response to terrorism is the right one. We are in complete agreement on the desired outcome towards a coordinated, cross-government research programme driven by the unique requirements of civil defence. The Government have put in place the measures needed to deliver this, including a cross-government civil counter terrorism research programme led by the Home Office Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Team.

Correspondence

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Prime Minister how many letters he has received from members of the public in each year since 1997–98. [168658]

The Prime Minister: The information is not available in the format requested.

I receive many items of correspondence including from hon. Members, the general public, various charities and private companies. In the last two years, the total number of items of correspondence has been approximately 1.1 million, an increase from approximately 500,000 in 1999, 2000 and 2001 and 300,000 in 1998.

The correspondence covers a wide range of issues and my office deals with them efficiently.

Europe

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his oral statement of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 156, what the evidential basis is for his statement that the myths that *(a)* the EU will be renamed the United States of Europe, *(b)* the Queen will be replaced as our head of state, *(c)* Britain will be forced to join the euro, *(d)* Britain could not mount a Falklands war or an Iraq campaign without permission from Brussels, *(e)* we would lose our seat on the UN Security Council, *(f)* Brussels will seize control of our oil supplies, *(g)* Brussels will have the power to set taxes in Britain, *(h)* our foreign policy will be decided by the EU and *(i)* we will surrender control of our borders have been propagated about the proposed European constitutional treaty. [168451]

The Prime Minister: All the myths that I quoted in my statement of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 155–57 are in the public domain.

Flooding (Lewes)

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will visit the Lewes constituency to inspect those areas which were subject to flooding in 2000 and where no flood defence works have yet been proposed. [167799]

The Prime Minister: I have no plans to do so.

Planned expenditure by the Environment Agency on flood risk management in 2005–06 will be 80 per cent. higher than in 2000–01. This increase has and will continue to enable greater protection of communities that are vulnerable to flooding. In the case of Lewes, in at least one area, planning permission has recently been granted for this work and construction should begin this year.

G8 Summit

Alistair Burt: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make representations at the G8 summit for funds to be committed to implement the strategic framework by UNAIDS on Orphans and Vulnerable Children. [167612]

The Prime Minister: We strongly support the lead role that UNAIDS plays in co-ordinating efforts to tackle the HIV crisis, including the needs of orphans and vulnerable children. We will continue to press G8 members to play their role in tackling this crisis.

Global Warming

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister whether he has accepted the advice of his Chief Scientist that global warning represents as big a threat to the world as terrorism. [167790]

The Prime Minister: Terrorism and climate change clearly pose different kinds of threats to the world. Both are an extremely high priority for this Government, and we are doing all we can to tackle each in the way that is the most appropriate.

HIV/AIDS

Alistair Burt: To ask the Prime Minister if he will call for support for children affected by HIV/AIDS to be made a priority at the G8 summit. [167611]

The Prime Minister: Tackling HIV/AIDS is a priority for the UK Government. We are concerned about the devastating impact AIDS is have in creating millions of orphans and vulnerable children. We are committed to playing our part is an effective response and this will be reflected in the new government strategy on AIDS, which will be published later this year and in raising it at the G8 summit.

Iraq

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Prime Minister when the director of the CIA first advised the British Government not to use the allegation that Iraq could ready weapons of mass destruction in 45 minutes. [168617]

The Prime Minister: It has been the practice of successive Governments not to comment on intelligence matters. However, this was not an issue between the US and the UK.

Meetings

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the environmental groups he has met since 1 January 2003. [167801]

The Prime Minister: I have meetings with a wide range or organisations and individuals. As with previous Administrations it is not my practice to provide details of all such meetings.

Since January 2003, I have met a number of environmental groups and their workers, ranging from mass membership organisations to local bio-diversity and quality of life organisations.

Ministerial Visits

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the towns and cities in the UK he visited in 2003, giving in each case the purpose of the visit. [167794]

The Prime Minister: In 2003, I undertook the following official visits within the UK:

Date	*Destination*
2003	
16 January	Edinburgh
25 January	Manchester
6 February	Newcastle Darlington
12 February	Hillsborough (Northern Ireland)
13 February	Sheffield, Bradford, Wakefield, Leeds, Edinburgh Glasgow
27 February	Canterbury
28 February	Swansea
3–4 March	Hillsborough (Northern Ireland)
3 April	Aldershot and RAF Lyneham
7–8 April	Hillsborough (Northern Ireland)
11 April	Sandhurst
15 April	Glasgow and RAF Leuchers
24 April	Birmingham, Cardiff
28 April	Manchester, Dundee
9 May	Middleton St. George
7 June	Durham
3–5 July	Birmingham, Liverpool, Garsten, Broughton
30 July	Thames Gateway Ingress Park, Kent
4 September	Northampton
9 September	Brighton
18 September	Bexleyheath
27 September	Southampton/Bournemouth
23–24 October	Nottingham
6 November	Basildon
17 November	Birmingham
27–28 November	Newport, Gwent, Cardiff, Bristol
1 December	Leeds
19 December	Darlington

I have also visited various areas within London including Croydon, Southwark and St John's Wood and travel regularly to my constituency.

My visits covered a range of matters including health, education, criminal justice and visiting the families of Forces serving in the Gulf.

I travel making the most efficient and cost-effective arrangements. My travel arrangements are in accordance with the arrangements for official travel set out in Chapter 7 of the Ministerial Code, and the accompanying guidance document, "Travel by Ministers".

National Security

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what definition of national security is used by the Government. [168789]

The Prime Minister: There is no statutory definition of national security. The courts accept that the interpretation of what is national security is, within a wide margin of appreciation, a matter for the Secretary of State to determine on a case-by-case basis.

Washington Meeting

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what matters in respect of *(a)* compliance with the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and *(b)* ratification of the Kyoto Protocol on climate change were discussed during his meeting with President Bush on 16 April in Washington. [168775]

The Prime Minister: I discussed a wide range of issues with President Bush, including Iraq, the Middle East Peace Process and other international security issues. As with previous Administrations, it is not the practice of this Government to make public all the details of discussions with foreign Governments.

Yemen

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister what steps the British Government is taking to keep allies informed of developments in the fight against terrorism, with particular reference to the Yemen. [168075]

The Prime Minister: We have regular contact with our key international counter terrorism partners including the Yemeni Government.

HEALTH

Social Services Departments

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to ensure that local authority social services departments abide by confidentiality guidelines. [167594]

Dr. Ladyman: The protection of privacy and confidentiality by local authority social services is one of the criteria taken into account in the course of the inspection and assessment of performance carried out by the Commission for Social Care Inspection.

The Department has carried out a range of activities to ensure local authority compliance with confidentiality guidelines. In 2001, the Caldicott principles and processes for the management of confidentiality and access to personal information were extended from the National Health Service into social care. At this time, councils with social services responsibilities (CSSRs) were required to appoint social care Caldicott guardians to take the lead in this within their organisations. The Department has issued guidance on confidentiality issues and is currently preparing an information governance toolkit for social care, which will include further guidance on confidentiality and information sharing.

Accident and Emergency Departments

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were admitted to the accident and emergency departments at *(a)* Weston General Hospital, *(b)* the Royal United Hospital, Bath and *(c)* the Frenchay Hospital, Bristol in each of the last five years. [167500]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* Information on the number of attendances at accident and emergency for each National Health Service trust is published and available at http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity.

Copies of the tables for each quarter from 2001–02 are available in the Library. Prior to this, information was published annually in Outpatient and ward attenders, England, copies of which are available in the Library.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what funding has been made available for the accident and emergency departments at *(a)* Weston General Hospital, *(b)* the Royal United Hospital, Bath and *(c)* the Frenchay Hospital, Bristol in each of the last five years. [167501]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The information requested is not held centrally.

Agency Nurses

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much the NHS spent on agency nurses in each year from 1997–98 to 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [156701]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service does not separately record the cost of employing agency staff. The figures shown in the table include total cost to the NHS of nurses not directly employed by NHS bodies.

Expenditure by the NHS on non-NHS nurses is shown in the table. The figures include all agency nursing staff and any other staff not directly employed by NHS trusts, primary care trusts and strategic health authorities. Information is not yet available for 2003–04.

Expenditure by the NHS on non-NHS nurses

£

	Amount
1997–98	216,338,567
1998–99	272,225,162
1999–2000	361,656,683
2000–01	435,431,882
2001–02	554,323,821
2002–03	627,889,817

Note:

2002–03 data remains provisional.

Source:

Annual Financial Returns of NHS Trusts 1997–98 to 2002–03.

Annual Financial Returns of Health Authorities 1997–98 to 2001–02.

Annual Financial returns of Primary Care Trusts 2000–01 to 2002–03.

Annual Financial Returns of Strategic Health Authorities 2002–03.

Ambulance Service

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance his Department issues in relation to the maximum time which ambulances should take in transporting pregnant mothers to hospitals in emergencies. [167486]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* All patients requiring urgent hospital treatment should be transported to hospital without delay. There are no maximum transport times which ambulances should take in transporting pregnant mothers to hospitals in emergencies. There are, however, targets for response times. As with all emergency calls to ambulance services, guidance on response times is based on medical need.

Current ambulance response targets include:

Category A calls: Presenting conditions which may be immediately life threatening and which should be responded to within eight minutes irrespective of location in 75 per cent. of cases.

Category B calls: Presenting conditions which, though serious are not immediately life threatening and should be responded to within 14 minutes (urban) and 19 minutes (rural) in 95 per cent. of cases.

Autopsies

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department is taking to encourage hospitals to carry out autopsies. [166731]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The decision as to whether to request a hospital post-mortem examination is for the treating clinician and the deceased's family. However, we are aware that in the past the taking and use of organs and tissue without consent at post-mortems has damaged public and professional confidence in the hospital post-mortem examination.

We have issued new guidance to the national health service to help restore that confidence. This takes the form of a code of practice for those involved in communicating with families where a post-mortem may be necessary or desirable. It includes a revision of the consent forms required to be completed by relatives with the aim of helping families understand the procedure and enabling them to grant an informed consent to a post-mortem and the disposal of organs or tissue. This guidance is available on the Department's website at: www.dh.gov.uk/tissue Later this year we will be making available to NHS trusts a short video/DVD produced with the support of the Royal College of Pathologists that explains the reasons for, and benefits to be obtained from, a post-mortem and encouraging the consent of families to the procedure.

We are also taking positive action to change the law to secure further changes to re-establish confidence. The Human Tissue Bill, currently before Parliament, ensures that whatever is done with the human body and its parts after death within the NHS will be done only as part of a transparent process and with appropriate consent. It will also introduce penalties for organ retention without consent as additional reassurance for the integrity of the new procedures.

CFS/ME

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what evidence he has collated to indicate that CFS/ME is a neurological disorder; [166704]

(2) what has been learned from studies of the effectiveness of cognitive behavioural therapy in patients suffering CFS/ME; and if he will make a statement; [166706]

(3) what evidence he has collated of *(a)* cardiovascular and *(b)* biochemical features in ME/CFS. [166711]

Dr. Ladyman: In our present state of knowledge, chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME) remains medically unexplained with various associated risk factors, and with variable symptoms from various systems in the body, including some neurological, immunological, cardiovascular, digestive and psychological symptoms. There are many different views on what causes these symptoms, and some of them are strongly held.

In its report to the Chief Medical Officer in 2002, the independent working group on CFS/ME noted that there is no cure for CFS/ME but identified three specific strategies as potentially beneficial in modifying the illness: graded exercise, cognitive behavioural therapy, and pacing. Graded exercise focuses on gradual but progressive increases in aerobic exercise, such as walking or swimming. Cognitive behavioural therapy aims to empower patients to identify, understand, and modify their belief systems and behaviours. Pacing is an energy management strategy in which patients are encouraged to achieve an appropriate balance between rest and activity.

Conception Statistics

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many conceptions there were in Southend-on-Sea in each year since 1997, broken down by month; and if he will make a statement. [166934]

Dr. Ladyman: The information requested is not held centrally by the Department. However, the information shown in the table has been obtained from the Office of National Statistics.

All age conceptions for residents of Southend-on-Sea by month of conception, 1997 to 2001[1]

Number

Month	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*[2]
January	218	226	193	229	220
February	195	179	198	197	205
March	182	205	214	213	225
April	225	184	205	224	199
May	208	234	198	208	218
June	210	196	202	215	168
July	230	232	195	167	198
August	228	202	176	205	201
September	197	192	205	205	191
October	243	226	208	187	211
November	253	220	202	203	237
December	243	231	230	209	202
All	2,632	2,527	2,426	2,462	2,475

[1] Latest year available.

[2] Provisional figures.

Source:

Office of National Statistics.

Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many consultancy posts were filled in the last 12 months with non-British trained specialists in cases where British trained specialists had applied. [167062]

Mr. Hutton: The information is not collected by the Department.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the revised good practice guidance on the appointment of consultants will be published; and if he will make a statement. [166114]

Mr. Hutton: We anticipate that the revised version of The national health service (Appointment of Consultants) Regulations good practice guidance will be released this summer. The NHS will be informed of the release of the document through entries in the human resources bulletin and the chief executive's bulletin. A copy of the guidance will be made available on the Department's website.

Delayed Hospital Discharges

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the average delayed hospital discharge time was for *(a)* England and *(b)* the Weston Area Health NHS Trust in each year since 1997. [167532]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department does not collect data on the average length of delays. However, data is collected on length of delays, broken down into four time bands. Due to reductions in the overall number of delayed discharges and the proportion of delays which exceed 28 days, the number of people who have been delayed for over 28 days is now less than 20 per cent. of the recorded over 2,790 in September 2001 to under 550 in December 2003.

Percentages

Quarter/ year	*Delays less than 8 days*	*Delays between 8 14 days*	*Delays between 14–28 days*	*Delays more than 28 days*
2001–02				
Quarter 2	22.7	17.9	19.8	39.5
Quarter 3	24.3	16.6	19.2	39.9
Quarter 4	23.9	19.5	20.6	36.0
2002–03				
Quarter 1	26.5	18.1	20.6	34.8
Quarter 2	27.6	18.4	19.8	34.2
Quarter 3	30.0	18.8	20.5	30.7
Quarter 4	36.1	20.2	17.4	26.3
2003–04				
Quarter 1	37.6	20.0	19.2	23.3
Quarter 2	35.5	18.6	19.7	26.3
Quarter 3	49.2	18.0	15.9	17.0

Health Service Ombudsman

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many cases are being investigated by the Health Service Ombudsman; what the duration of an investigation by the Ombudsman from start to finish has been in the last five years; and what penalties are available to ensure that the Ombudsman investigates within a reasonable amount of time and ensures that hospital trusts report back within set time limits. [166693]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This is a matter for the Ombudsman, who is completely independent of the Government. The Ombudsman's remit and powers are set out the Health Service Commissioners Act 1993 as amended. Ministers have no say in the Ombudsman's decisions or investigations, nor access to the detailed information being requested.

Hip Replacements (Essex)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the waiting times for hip replacements on the NHS are in each hospital in Essex. [167204]

Dr. Ladyman: The finished admission episodes, mean and median time waited in days for hip replacements on the national health service within NHS trusts in Essex are shown in the table.

Trust name	*Finished in-year admission episodes*	*Median waiting time in days*	*Mean waiting time in days*
Southend Hospital	458	323	296.8
Basildon and Thurrock University Hospital (Foundation) Trust	369	178	194.2
Essex Rivers Healthcare	547	183	190.3
Princess Alexandra Hospital	399	348	283.5
Mid-Essex Hospital Services	451	288	346.6

Notes:

1. A finished in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant and within one health care provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the datayear. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. The main operation is the first recorded operation in the hospital episode statistics (HES) data set and is usually the most resource intensive procedure performed during the episode. It is appropriate to use main operation when looking at admission details, e.g. time waited, but the figures for "all operations count of episodes" give a more complete count of episodes with an operation.
3. Time waited statistics from HES are not the same as the published waiting list statistics. HES provides counts and time waited for all patients admitted to hospital within a given period whereas the published waiting list statistics count those waiting for treatment on a specific date and how long they have been on the waiting list. Also, HES calculates the time waited as the difference between the admission and decision to admit dates. Unlike published waiting list statistics, this is not adjusted for self-deferrals or periods of medical/social suspension.
4. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are un-grossed).

Source:

HES, Department of Health.

Hospices

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to ensure that *(a)* adult and *(b)* children's hospices receive a fixed proportion of public funding. [167229]

Dr. Ladyman: No. We believe that decisions on local health care provision should be made locally. Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible within the national health service for commissioning and funding services for their resident population, including palliative care. PCTs are at the centre of the local planning process, working with voluntary health care providers such as hospices for adults or children who are viewed as important players and partners in the planning, provision and development of these services. The process of discussion leading to NHS funding agreements applies equally to hospices providing support and services to children as it does for those supporting adults in need of palliative care.

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the current arrangements are for funding hospices; what plans there are for changes in these arrangements; and if he will make a statement. [168076]

Dr. Ladyman: The level of national health service funding provided for hospices remains a matter for local decision. There are no plans to change these arrangements.

Primary care trusts (PCTs) are responsible within the national health service for commissioning and funding services for their resident population, including palliative care. Working as part of cancer networks, PCTs should negotiate and agree with hospices the level of funding support provided for agreed levels of service.

Intermediate Care Places

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* intermediate care beds and *(b)* non-residential intermediate care places there were in March; and if he will make a statement. [168645]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department is currently collecting and validating this data. It is anticipated that the information will be available at the end of May 2004.

Medical Students

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many students completed their studies in medicine at each university in each of the last six years; and how many in each year chose not to continue their training at hospitals within the United Kingdom. [161482]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 March 2004]:* This information is not available in the form requested. There is no precise data on how many students do not complete undergraduate medical degree courses, nor on how many do not join the national health service medical workforce after graduating. However, apart from those overseas students who return home immediately upon graduating, we believe that virtually all graduates from English medical schools take up posts as pre-registration house officers (PRHOs) in the NHS within 18 months of graduating.

The number of students who graduated from medical schools in England in the last six years is shown in table 1.

1. Actual medical school output in England 1997–99 to 2002–03

	Total output of students					
University	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
University of Birmingham	155	169	169	192	191	189
University of Bristol	141	141	139	124	158	142
University of Cambridge	115	133	132	134	128	126
University of Leeds	153	181	189	158	155	155
University of Leicester	122	167	140	156	164	159
University of Liverpool	180	162	173	190	180	187
King's College (incl. United Medical and Dental Schools), London	322	320	359	309	308	322
University College Medical School (incl. Royal Free Hospital School of Medicine), London	338	297	352	320	305	361
St. George's Hospital Medical School, London	189	150	157	160	127	189
Imperial College (St. Mary's and Charing Cross), London	269	207	263	257	275	273
Queen Mary's, London (Bart's and the London)	220	223	212	205	164	251
University of Manchester	280	280	306	304	279	352
University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	164	137	161	182	193	178
University of Nottingham	162	152	168	164	188	197
University of Oxford	106	100	102	100	102	94
University of Sheffield	191	144	196	189	214	198
University of Southampton	154	134	149	142	149	149
Total England	3,261	3,097	3,373	3,286	3,280	3,522

Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England.

The number of United Kingdom-qualified PRHOs in England in the last six years is shown in table 2.

2. UK qualified house officers in England 1998–2003

	Number
1998	3,173
1999	3,122
2000	3,297
2001	3,176
2002	3,205
2003	3,344

Source:

Department of Health medical and dental workforce survey.

Responsibility for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved administrations.

Mid and South Bucks Health Community

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the definition is of the Mid and South Bucks Health Community; and whether this body has a statutory basis in law. [167600]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The term 'Mid and South Bucks Health Community' refers to both the providers of health services and the people who use or have access to the health services in the Mid and South Buckinghamshire area.

The body does not exist in law, but, within the geographical area of Mid and South Buckinghamshire there are the following trusts:

Chiltern and South Bucks Primary Care Trust (PCT).

Wycombe PCT.

Vale of Aylesbury PCT.

Buckinghamshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust.

Buckinghamshire Mental Health NHS Trust.

Minimum Data Setting Software

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on progress in the use of minimum data setting software in the care sector. [161631]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 16 March 2004]*: I am not aware of any developments on minimum data setting software.

Work continues on the development of minimum data sets to support the sharing of information along care pathways and the production of comparative clinical information to enable services to monitor quality and clinical performance in each of the following national service framework areas:

Cancer

Coronary heart disease

Mental health

Older people, including single assessment, stroke, falls and dementia

Diabetes

Renal services

In relation to social services, which are not covered by the majority of the above, core information requirements for adult and elderly social services were published in August 2001. More recently the Department has published a document defining the electronic social care record.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list those local authorities which have been trialling minimum data setting software; and when they are expected to make an evaluation of its effectiveness. [161632]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 16 March 2004]*: I am not aware of any nationally sponsored trials of minimum data setting software in local authorities.

Motor Neurone Disease

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his plans for *(a)* research into and *(b)* treatment of motor neurone disease. [167228]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government are investing an additional £40 million in stem cell research in 2004–06, which offers enormous potential in producing new treatments for diseases such as motor neurone disease (MND).

The Government are also funding the creation of a national stem cell bank. The first of its kind in the world, it will hold all types of stem cells as a resource for researchers.

The main Government agency for research into the causes of and treatments of diseases is the Medical Research Council (MRC) which receives its funding via the Department of Trade and Industry. The MRC spent £2 million in 2002–03 on research relevant to MND and on basic work on the function of motor neurones.

We are developing a national service framework (NSF) for long-term conditions which will focus on services for people with neurological conditions such as MND.

The National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) has been asked to develop a clinical guideline on appropriate methods of feeding for patients who have difficulty in swallowing, which is due to be published in 2005.

We have also commissioned NICE to develop and publish evidence-based guidance on supportive and palliative care, which was published in March 2004.

Neurosurgical Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many neurosurgical registrars are due to obtain a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training in each six month period over the next three years. [R] [167067]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of expected CCST completion dates, in six month intervals, for Neurosurgical Registrars for England—as at 31 March 2003

Date	*Expected Number*
1 April 2004 to 31 September 2004	8
1 October 2004 to 31 March 2005	6
1 April 2005 to 31 September 2005	9
1 October 2005 to 31 March 2006	8
1 April 2006 to 31 September 2006	6
1 October 2006 to 31 March 2007	5

Source:
Department of Health Planning Extract– 31 March 2003

NHS Wages

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the average wage of NHS laboratory technicians was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003; [166950]

(2) what the average wage of NHS cleaners was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [166951]

Mr. Hutton: The estimated average earnings of national health service laboratory technicians was £17,900 in 1997, increasing to £23,400 in 2003. These figures are based on the average earnings of medical laboratory scientific officers and medical laboratory assistants. Equivalent information about the pay for cleaners in the NHS cannot be separately identified from the pay of other support staff.

Sources:
NHS Staff Earnings Survey 1997 and 2002.

Paediatric Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what attempts were made by Buckinghamshire Hospitals NHS Trust to recruit paediatric staff in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003. [167484]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 April 2004]*: The information requested is not collected centrally. In line with our policy on "Shifting the Balance of Power", responsibility for local services now rest with the local trusts.

However, I have been informed that considerable efforts have been made by Buckinghamshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust and its predecessors to recruit paediatric staff since 2001. Trusts have been

successful in attempts to recruit senior house officers (SHOs) over recent years. However, there has been no consultant recruitment in this period.

The trust is currently exploring more ways to support the service such as gaining further accredited training posts, and is also introducing a new foundation programme post at the SHO level.

Parkinson's Disease

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his plans for *(a)* research into and *(b)* treatment of Parkinson's disease. [167227]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government are investing an additional £40 million in stem cell research in 2004–06, which offers enormous potential in producing new treatments for diseases such as Parkinson's.

The Government are also funding the creation of a national stem cell bank. The first of its kind in the world, it will hold all types of stem cells as a resource for researchers.

The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body that receives its grant-in-aid from the Office of Science and Technology. In 2001–02 the MRC provided more than £3 million for research relevant to Parkinson's disease.

We are developing a national service framework for long-term conditions which will focus on improving services for people with neurological conditions such as Parkinson's disease.

We have commissioned the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to prepare guidelines for the diagnosis, management and treatment of Parkinson's disease in primary and secondary care. We expect that the guidelines will be published in spring 2006.

Patient Choice Scheme

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what advice he is making available to patients who have been waiting for surgical procedures on the NHS for six months or more on how they can use the Patient Choice Scheme; and if he will make a statement. [167230]

Mr. Hutton: It is the responsibility of strategic health authorities (SHAs) to ensure that local arrangements are in place for offering choice of hospital to patients waiting longer than six months for surgery. "Guidance on Choice of Hospital" was issued in July 2003. It sets out the key responsibilities for national health service organisations in delivering choice to patients waiting longer than six months. The initial contact with patients should incorporate the following:

Patients will be informed about how they will be provided with choice and the role of patient care advisors (PCAs).

PCAs will explain the offer of choice, provide the necessary information to support the patient in making their choice and make the necessary arrangements if the offer is accepted. The PCA will be able to support the patient if any problems occur.

Safeguards and security measures for confidentiality should be outlined to patients.

Private Operations

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations have been purchased from the private sector in the last 12 months. [164692]

Mr. Hutton: Information relating to the number of operations purchased from the private sector in the last 12 months is not available.

The number of finished consultant episodes (FCEs) that were sub-contracted or directly commissioned from non-national health service providers by the NHS during the financial year 2002–03 was reported as 60,922. This figure includes both operative and non-operative procedures and treatments, for elective and emergency admissions to hospital.

Details of the activity can be found in Appendix SRC5 of the "Payment by Results: Core Tools 2004" publication, available on the Department's website at:

http://www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/OrganisationPolicy/FinanceAndPlanning/NHSReferenceCosts/fs/en

The information is also available on the CD "Payment by Results : Core Tools 2004". The CD contains unit cost information for each NHS provider in 2002–03 for designated procedures, diagnoses and treatments.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the impact of purchasing operations from the private sector on NHS waiting lists. [164694]

Mr. Hutton: The national health service has in recent years purchased surgical procedures from the independent sector under the 'Concordat' arrangement. 60,922 such procedures were purchased last year.

We recognise that the independent sector could make a greater contribution to reducing waiting times and lists for less complex diagnostic and surgical procedures, such as endoscopies, cataract treatment, hernia repairs and primary hip and knee replacements. This is why we have established the independent sector treatment centre (ISTC) programme.

Two services are already open: a cataract treatment centre at Daventry and the mobile cataract treatment service run by Netcare. Both schemes are already bringing immediate improvements to patients and cutting waiting times, but have not yet been running long enough to have a significant impact on waiting lists. When fully established, the ISTC programme will treat 250,000 patients a year from NHS waiting lists.

Sexually Transmitted Diseases

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many sexually transmitted diseases were diagnosed in Southend-on-Sea in each year since 1997, broken down by disease; and if he will make a statement. [166913]

Dr. Ladyman: The incidences of sexually transmitted diseases for the Essex Strategic Health Authority area are shown in the table.

Reported diagnoses of select STIs by sex, KC60 statutory reporting. GUM Clinics, Essex Strategic Health Authority, 1997–2002

Diagnosis/Sex	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Primary and Secondary Syphilis						
Male	1	2	5	2	4	1
Female	—	—	2	1	—	—
Total	1	2	7	3	4	1
Uncomplicated Gonorrhoea						
Male	57	80	94	128	129	150
Female	31	34	49	51	58	70
Total	88	114	143	179	187	220
Herpes, first attack						
Male	111	115	132	120	143	145
Female	256	253	261	243	306	301
Total	367	368	393	363	449	446
Warts, first attack						
Male	791	805	891	897	973	997
Female	787	717	788	788	883	911
Total	1,578	1,522	1,679	1,685	1,856	1,908
Uncomplicated Chlamydia						
Male	265	324	404	397	524	626
Female	449	563	720	763	980	1,114
Total	714	887	1,124	1,160	1,504	1,740

Source:

KC60 returns—Statistics provided by the policy branch within the Department of Health responsible for Sexual Health and HIV Strategy.

Surgical Instruments (Middlesbrough)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department has taken in response to the incident in Middlesbrough regarding quarantining of surgical instruments. [164614]

Mr. Hutton: Guidance on the re-use of surgical instruments after brain biopsy is already published, in "Transmissible spongiform encephalopathy agents: safe working and the prevention of infection". This guidance, endorsed by the Advisory Committee on Dangerous Pathogens, is available in the following location on the the Department's website: www.dh.gov.uk > Policy and guidance > Health and social care topics > CJD >CJD publications > Transmissible spongiform encephalopathy agents: Safe working and the prevention of infection

Additional guidance on the reuse of surgical instruments after brain biopsies is in preparation and will be published shortly.

Teenage Pregnancies

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the rate of teenage conception in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority was in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available. [167394]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Sir Nicholas Winterton, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking what the rate of teenage pregnancy in the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority was in each of the last ten years for which figures are available.

For this purpose, 'teenagers' are interpreted as the under 18 age group, in line with the target set by The Government Strategy on Teenage Pregnancy. The numbers of conceptions are estimated from registrations of live and still births, and notifications of abortions. They exclude miscarriages before the 24th week of gestation.

The teenage conception rates for Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority for 1992 to 2001, the latest year for which figures are available, are shown in the table below.

Number, rate

	Number of conceptions	*Conception rate*[1]
1992	1,916	45.2
1993	1,913	46.2
1994	1,853	44.2
1995	1,934	46.0
1996	2,143	48.3
1997	2,051	49.1
1998	2,100	47.8
1999	2,093	47.1
2000	2,027	44.1
2001[2]	1,938	41.0

[1] The rate shown represents the number of conceptions among all females aged under 18 per 1,000 females aged 15 to 17.

[2] Rate for 2001 is provisional.

Source:

Office for National Statistics

Teenage Sexual Health (Taunton Deane)

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* girls and *(b)* boys under 16 suffered from a sexually transmitted disease in Taunton Deane in each year since 1997. [167551]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many girls under *(a)* 16 and *(b)* 17 were (i) registered as pregnant and (ii) gave birth in Taunton Deane in each year since 1997. [167552]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Adrian Flook, dated 26 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many girls under *(a)* 16 and *(b)* 17 were (i) registered as pregnant and (ii) gave birth in Taunton Deane in each year since 1997. (167552)

The most recent year for which figures are available is 2001.

The table below gives figures for:

a) all conceptions, and

b) conceptions leading to maternities

for girls aged under 16 and under 17 in Taunton Deane for 1997 to 2001.

	Under 16		Under 17	
Year	Conceptions	Maternities[1]	Conceptions	Maternities[1]
1997	11	6	30	15
1998	18	7	42	15
1999	16	4	42	18
2000	18	5	40	17
2001[2]	13	7	38	17

[1] Maternities resulting in one or more live birth or stillbirth.
[2] Provisional figures.

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* boys and *(b)* girls under 16 have been issued with contraceptives in Taunton Deane in each year since 1997. [167553]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Treatment of Children

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what guidance his Department issues on the treatment of children in hospital by staff not specifically trained to treat children; [167598]

(2) what guidance his Department issues on the treatment of children in hospital in facilities not specifically designated for children. [167599]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answers 23 April 2004]:* In April 2003, the Department issued the first part of the national service framework for children relating to hospital standards. This describes essential considerations and best practice in caring for children and young people in hospital, including staff training and facilities for children. The standards are available at: http://www.paediatrics.ox.ac.uk/profile_20of_20paeds/documents/hospitalstandard.pdf.

Treatment Sector Contracts

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many contracts for independent sector treatment centres have so far been signed in the NHS in England; [167412]

(2) what his Department's projected timetable is for introducing independent sector treatment centres into the NHS in England; [167429]

(3) how many independent sector treatment centres are in the process of construction in England. [167430]

Mr. Hutton: Four contracts for independent sector treatment centres (IS-TCs) have so far been signed for treatment centres in North Bradford, Trent and South Yorkshire, and Daventry, and for two mobile ophthalmology treatment centres operating throughout England. Of these, the IS-TC at Daventry and the mobile ophthalmology treatment centres are already treating patients. In addition, there is a IS-TC at Redwood, which is a public-private partnership between the national health service and BUPA that opened in October 2002.

A further 31 IS-TCs that are in development subject to negotiations with preferred bidders and schemes will proceed only if they provide the required level of value for money for NHS commissioners. We have appointed preferred bidders for 30 of these schemes and expect to reach contract close by the end of summer 2004 with the treatment centres becoming fully operational over the following 18 months.

In addition, the Government announced in the White Paper, "Building on the Best: Choice, Responsiveness and Equity in the NHS (December 2003)", their intention to explore ways to develop extra diagnostic services capacity in order to help reduce waiting times and facilitate choice. This will be sourced from NHS and independent sector providers.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Post Office Closures

8. **Simon Hughes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effect of Post Office closures in Greater London on the collection and payment of pensions. [167682]

Mr. Pond: We have made no such assessment. Direct Payment still allows customers to access their money weekly at the Post Office if that is what they wish to do.

The Government are investing record amounts in the Post Office network, some £2 billion over a five-year period.

Jobcentres

10. **Sir Teddy Taylor:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many persons are employed in jobcentres; and what estimate he has made of the total in 2004–05. [167686]

Jane Kennedy: Jobcentre Plus is at the cutting edge of a programme of public service investment and reform that is now starting to deliver efficiencies and improvements by releasing more people to front line employment and benefit services.

Jobcentre Plus had 62,595 people employed in these roles at the end of March this year. By the same time next year we estimate this figure will be around 61,000.

In the hon. Members' own constituency, there are over 200 people currently employed providing advice and information on training, jobs and benefits.

Over the last financial year they contributed to the success of the Essex District in helping 574 people back in to work through the New Deal and their disabled employment advisers helped 41 disabled people into work.

Corporate Manslaughter

17. **Mr. Dismore:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the likely impact on health and safety at work of the Government's proposed legislation on corporate manslaughter. [167693]

Jane Kennedy: I am well aware of the keen interest that exists in this House on the proposed reforms. I congratulate my hon. Friend on the work he has done in promoting this issue.

The Home Office is leading on the preparation of the draft bill on corporate manslaughter.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment, dealing with both the potential costs and benefits of change, is being prepared. This will be made available when the Government publishes their proposals for legislation.

The new legislation will have a positive impact on health and safety by bringing to account those that grossly fail to comply with existing health and safety legislation. We have, however, already made clear that the law will not create new standards in the health and safety requirements.

Following extensive consultation, the Home Office intends to publish the draft bill shortly. This will fulfil the Government's commitment given in the manifesto and in Revitalising Health and Safety.

Pensioner Poverty

18. **Jonathan Shaw:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what assessment he has made of the effect of changes since 1997 on the incomes of the poorest pensioners. [167694]

Malcolm Wicks: As a result of measures we have already undertaken, including the introduction of pension credit, on average pensioner households are now £1,350 a year (£26 per week) better off, than they would have been under the 1997 system. The poorest third of pensioner households are on average, £1,750 a year (£33 per week) better off.

I am sure that the House will agree with me that this represents good progress in tackling pensioner poverty. Figures out just last month show pensioner poverty down again—with absolute low income cut by two thirds, lifting 1.8 million pensioners out of acute hardship since 1997.

Workplace Inspections

19. **Mr. Drew:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the current level of workplace inspections carried out by inspectors on behalf of the Health and Safety Executive is; and if he will make a statement. [167695]

Jane Kennedy: Statistics for the last year (2003–04) are still being compiled and are not yet available. The most recent published figure is for the year 2002–03 when 84,234 preventive inspections were made by HSE Inspectors.

HSC considers inspection as one of HSE's core activities but it is not the only type of intervention that should be used. They have just published their "New Strategy for Workplace Health and Safety in Great Britain" to 2010 and beyond.

HSE intend to focus on the most effective way to reduce injuries and ill health.

The UK is one of the safest places to work and the HSE deserve credit for the part they have played in creating a safer working environment.

Work at Height Directive

20. **Alistair Burt:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what recent representations he has received on the draft Temporary Work at Height Directive; and if he will make a statement. [167696]

Jane Kennedy: My colleagues and I have received 47 letters regarding the temporary work at height Directive (2001/45/EC) and the proposed Work at Height Regulations since the start of the Health and Safety Commission's consultation period on the draft regulations (4 December 2003).

Falls from height are the largest cause of fatalities at work, and the second largest cause of major injuries. Because work at height is such an important issue the HSC, when implementing the Temporary Work at Height Directive, decided to consolidate this with other relevant existing legislation into a single set of goal setting regulations.

Consultation on the draft Regulations took place between 4 December 2003 and 2 April 2004, and has now ended.

Council Tax

21. **Mr. Heath:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners over 70-years-old he expects to benefit from the payments to mitigate council tax increases. [167697]

Malcolm Wicks: We expect around 4.86 million households in Great Britain to benefit from this payment.

Note:

Any residence found to have four or more occupants is not included in these figures as it is assumed to be a Residential Care Nursing Home.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, Winter Fuel Payments data Winter 2002–03 100 per cent. sample.

Occupational Pensions

22. **Sue Doughty:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to compensate workers who lose occupational pension rights prior to the introduction of the pension protection fund. [167698]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government are sympathetic to all those people who will not receive the pension they worked so hard to build up for their future retirement. We have been meeting some of those affected and listened to suggestions regarding assistance ahead of the Pension Protection Fund's introduction. But there are complex arguments on both sides and we are giving them serious consideration

We are currently exploring with industry representatives the basis on which we can establish firm estimates of the extent of the problem of defined benefit schemes winding-up underfunded, the numbers affected and the potential scale of losses.

Pension Rights

23. **Mr. Jim Cunningham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to protect the pension rights of workers transferred from one employer to another. [167699]

Malcolm Wicks: We are introducing measures in the Pensions Bill to protect the rights of employees with access to an occupational pension where there is a TUPE transfer.

For the first time transferred employees will be provided with an assured minimum level of pension provision by transferee employers, if they had access to an occupational pension scheme with an employer contribution pre-transfer.

Benefits

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people received *(a)* sickness benefit, *(b)* incapacity benefit and *(c)* disability living allowance in (i) England and Wales and (ii) Scotland in the last three years for which figures are available. [168450]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the tables.

Recipients in England, Wales and Scotland as at 30 November each year

Thousands

	November 2001	*November 2002*	*November 2003*
Incapacity Benefit			
England	1,167.3	1,172.1	1,166.2
Scotland	189.9	187.1	185.0
Wales	138.1	137.5	134.1
Disability living allowance			
England	1,854.0	1,968.8	2,066.7
Scotland	187.5	199.4	207.9
Wales	256.5	271.0	283.6

Notes:
1. Incapacity benefit replaced sickness benefit (SB) and invalidity benefit (IVB) from 13 April 1995.
2. Figures are shown in thousands and are rounded to the nearest hundred.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 5 per cent. sample

Child Support Agency

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will inquire from the Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency why the letters of 26 January, and of 24 March, from the hon. Member for Walsall, North regarding a constituent had not been located; what steps were taken arising from telephone calls to the Chief Executive's office to try and track down the two letters; why the further letter of 8 April from the hon. Member for Walsall North was received in the Chief Executive's office on 19 April; and when a substantive reply will be sent regarding the constituent's position, latest ref: PCU131435. [168380]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. David Winnick, dated 26 April 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will enquire from the Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency why the letter of 26th January, and again of 24th March, from the honourable Member for Walsall North regarding a constituent had not been located; what steps were taken arising from telephone calls to the Chief Executive's office to try and track down the two letters; why the further letter of 8th April from the honourable Member for Walsall North was received in the Chief Executive's office on the 19th; and when a substantive reply will be sent, regarding the constituent's position, latest ref: PCU131435.

I apologise for the delays in responding to these letters. A substantive response has now been provided to them.

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will inquire from the Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency when the hon. Member for Walsall, North will receive a substantive reply to his letter of 25 February regarding a constituent, ref PCU129400; and if he will inquire for what reason there has been a delay in the reply being sent. [168381]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to my hon. Friend with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. David Winnick, dated 26 April 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will enquire from the Chief Executive of the Child Support Agency when the honourable Member for Walsall North will receive a substantive reply to his letter of 25th February regarding a constituent, ref: PCU129400; and if he will enquire for what reason there has been a delay in the reply being sent.

I apologise for the delay in responding to this letter. A substantive response has now been provided to it, which includes an explanation for the delay.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions since the introduction of the new payment system in the Child Support Agency, how many cases on that system have been successfully concluded in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the Angus constituency. [168652]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Michael Weir, dated 26 April 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked; since the introduction of the new payment system in the Child Support Agency, how many cases on that system have been successfully concluded in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the Angus constituency.

Regular reports on the progress of child support reform are made to the House. The most recent of these covered the period to 31 March and was made on 21 April 2004. In the period from the introduction of the new arrangements to 31 March 152,560 cases had progressed to the point of calculation or closure. I am unable to indicate how many of these relate to Scotland or the Angus constituency.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many Child Support Agency cases in the Angus constituency are being dealt with under *(a)* the previous and *(b)* the new assessment system. [168653]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Michael Weir, dated 26 April 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked, how many Child Support Agency cases in the Angus constituency are being dealt with under *(a)* the previous and *(b)* the new assessment system.

Around 1,100 cases relating to the Angus constituency are currently being dealt with by the Child Support Agency under the old arrangements. I do not have similar information in relation to cases being dealt with under the new arrangements.

Departmental Communications

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff are employed in the Department to work in the communications field, broken down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others. [158163]

Maria Eagle: The available information is in the table.

DWP business unit	*GICS (a)*	*Other staff (b)*	*(i) of which are Press Officers (c)*	*(ii) of which are Special Advisers (d)*	*(iii) Others (e)*
DWP	—	2	—	2	—
Human resources	—	14	—	—	14
Communications Directorate	[1]91	124	13	—	111
The Pension Service	7	7	—	—	7
Jobcentre Plus	20	126	—	—	126
Child Support Agency	1	66	—	—	66
Appeals Service	—	4	—	—	4

[1] Includes 27 press officers.

Notes:

1. Non GICS press officers are regional press officers.
2. The combined total of national communications staff and regional/district marketing executives, who have a dedicated remit for the provision of customer service information, is 122, of whom 18 are GICS.
3. Figures include all staff working in the communications teams of DWP, Jobcentre Plus, The Pension Service, Child Support Agency, The Appeals Service and Human Resources. Their work includes: marketing (national and regional); media relations; internal communications; communication standards; customer service information; information services, i.e. the Library, Public Enquiry Office and Knowledge Management Team; Intranet; Internet; planning and finance and other support staff.
4. Also, included in the Jobcentre Plus figures there are 24 staff of whom 2 are GICS engaged solely on internal communications activity nationally across Jobcentre Plus.
5. Jobcentre Plus Regions and District Offices contain small Business Development Units (of which marketing executives are members). These have a wide-ranging remit, covering such areas as customer service standards, planning, partnership working, correspondence handling etc. as well as communications. Staff work flexibly within these units to maximise efficiency and—apart from dedicated marketing executives—it is not possible to identify the precise amount of additional staff time spent on communication issues.
6. The information in the table does not take account of staff throughout the Department who may carry out communications work as a minor or integral part of their job. This information could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Working Groups

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the aims are of the *(a)* Modern Service Working Group and *(b)* Activities for Managing Life Working Group; what funding his Department has granted to each in each year since 2001; how many people each has employed in each year since 2001; and if he will make a statement. [167416]

Maria Eagle: The Modern Service Working Group meets on a quarterly basis and is the external reference group for the Disability and Carers Service Change Programme. It provides advice and guidance to officials of the Department on the impact of modernisation initiatives on disabled customers. Membership is drawn from a range of disability organisations that represent customers with physical, mental and sensory impairment.

The Activities for Managing Life Working Group was established to enable DWP to discuss directly with organisations representing the interests of disabled people, issues surrounding an alternative means of assessing entitlement to disability living allowance. It has now ceased to meet.

All external members of both MSWG and the AML Working Group were volunteers who gave up their time freely, and no budget was set aside for this purpose. The groups were supported by the Disability and Carers Service Change Programme and neither employed staff directly. Costs were limited to incidental expenses of minimal value.

Employment

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Heywood and Middleton over the last seven years. [168539]

Jane Kennedy: The UK has one of the strongest labour markets in the world. We have the highest employment and the lowest unemployment of the major industrialised countries.

Through a combination of economic stability and radical labour market reforms, more than 1.75 million more people are in work now than in 1997 and unemployment is at its lowest level for nearly 30 years.

Specific information for Heywood and Middleton is in the table.

	Number unemployed for a year or more	
	Over 25s	*18 to 24-year-olds*
1997	693	144
2004	148	12
Percentage change	-79	-92

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the level of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Manchester, Gorton over the last seven years. [167347]

Jane Kennedy: The UK has one of the strongest labour markets in the world. We have the highest employment and the lowest unemployment of the major industrialised countries.

Through a combination of economic stability and radical labour market reforms, more than 1.75 million more people are in work now than in 1997 and unemployment is at its lowest level for nearly 30 years.

Specific information for Manchester, Gorton is in the table.

	1997	*2004*	*Percentage change*
Number of over-25s unemployed for a year or more	1,490	534	-64
Number of 18 to 24-year-olds unemployed for a year or more	412	37	-91

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Stalybridge and Hyde over the last seven years. [168742]

Jane Kennedy: The UK has one of the strongest labour markets in the world. We have the highest employment and the lowest unemployment of the major industrialised countries.

Through a combination of economic stability and radical labour market reforms, more than 1.75 million more people are in work now than in 1997 and unemployment is at its lowest level for nearly 30 years.

Specific information for Stalybridge and Hyde is in the table.

	1997	*2004*	*Percentage change*
Number of over-25s unemployed for a year or more	633	144	-77
Number of 18 to 24-year-olds unemployed for a year or more	102	10	-90

"Making the Market Work"

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the trade associations which replied to the making the market work initiative, referred to in the second stage report of the review of employers' liability compulsory insurance. [168660]

Jane Kennedy: 'Making the Market Work' is an initiative established and maintained by the Association of British Insurers (ABI). The Department understands from the ABI that the following trade associations have made applications for assessment under the initiative:

British Chambers Connections
British Coatings Federation
British Furniture Manufacturers
British Printing Industry Federation
British Woodworking Federation
Federation of Small Businesses
Heating and Ventilating Contractors' Association
Mastic Asphalt Council
National Federation of Roofing Contractors
Screen Printers Association

Collectively, these bodies have around 190,000 members.

Means-tested Benefits

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what *(a)* number and *(b)* percentage of pensioners who were eligible non-recipients of (i) minimum income guarantee and (ii) council tax benefit as identified in the Income Related Benefits Estimates of Take-Up in 2001–02 research, were in receipt of (A) another means-tested benefit and (B) attendance allowance or disability living allowance. [166234]

Malcolm Wicks: The available information is tabled as follows.

Percentage of pensioner eligible non-recipients to minimum income guarantee and council tax benefit in receipt of other benefits, 2001–02

Percentage

	Proportion of eligible non-recipients in receipt of	
Pensioner eligible non-recipients of	*Other income-related benefits*	*Attendance allowance or disability living allowance*
Minimum income guarantee	41	35
Council tax benefit	6	18

Notes:

1. Results are based on the 2001–02 DWP Family Resources Survey. These may understate the true percentages since the 2001–02 Family Resources Survey understated the numbers in receipt of attendance allowance, disability living allowance and income-related benefits other than council tax benefit.
2. Estimates are based on an initial assessment of cases modelled as eligible non-recipients from the underlying microdata. Therefore, they do not take into account the possibility that a significant proportion of those appearing to be eligible non-recipients will not be true eligible non-recipients, and a significant proportion of true eligible non-recipients may not be identified. As a result, along with the effects of other data imperfections, the estimates should be interpreted with caution; and only percentage estimates can be provided.

Pensioners

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners benefit from *(a)* the minimum income guarantee and *(b)* free TV licences, broken down by constituency, with constituencies grouped by region. [166679]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on minimum income guarantee is not available in the form requested. Since 6 October 2003 pension credit has replaced the minimum income guarantee and the 1.8 million cases receiving minimum income guarantee prior to 6 October were automatically transferred to pension credit. Information on pension credit take-up, including by parliamentary constituency, is available in the Library.

The information requested about the number of pensioners who benefit from a free TV licence is not available in the format requested. However, people aged 75 and over are entitled to free TV licences and information on the number of households in Great Britain with at least one resident aged 75 or over, broken down by constituency with the constituencies grouped by region has been placed in the Library.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many press officers were employed in his Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if he will make a statement. [162834]

Maria Eagle: The Department for Work and Pensions was formed on 8 June 2001 from parts of the former Department of Social Security, the former Department for Education and Employment and the Employment Service. Information on costs for 1994 to 2001 is not held centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. At the end of March 2004, the Department employed 20 national press officers at an annual cost of £1,146,255. This included three part-time staff. A further 20 press officers worked in the regions across England, Scotland and Wales at an annual cost of £954,500.

During 2002–03 the Department employed 16 national and 13 regional press officers, at an annual cost of £1,739,935. The total for 2001–02 was 21 national press officers at an annual cost of £816,725.

Retirement Planner

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reasons the launch of his Department's proposed web-based retirement planner has been delayed, from the initial target year set out in Simplicity, Security and Choice: Working and Saving for Retirement, page 42. [166246]

Malcolm Wicks: The launch of the web-based retirement planner is not delayed. The first elements—the provision of state pension forecasts in real-time—will be introduced in 2004, as set out in the Green Paper 'Simplicity, security and choice: working and saving for retirement'. As announced in February 2004 in Cm 6111, 'Simplicity, security and choice: Informed choices for working and saving', we intend to launch the web-based retirement planner in spring 2006.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioner households will benefit from the winter fuel allowance; and what amount of funding for winter fuel allowance will be given to each constituency in the UK, with constituencies grouped by region. [166684]

Malcolm Wicks: About 8.2 million pensioner households[1] in Great Britain are expected to receive a winter fuel payment this winter. My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland is responsible for the Northern Ireland scheme. The value of individual payments made in each constituency so far this winter is in the table which has been placed in the Library.

[1] Estimate. Figures for households are rounded to the nearest 100,000.

Note:

Please note that the amounts for individual payments made refer only to the main payment run, i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claims had not been received by the Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. sample

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 27 April 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Ammonium Nitrate

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the regulation of the sale, storage and use of ammonium nitrate products. [165829]

Alun Michael: The potential hazards of ammonium nitrate (AN) are well-known and well-documented. The Government has already taken a number of measures to tighten controls in the general climate of heightened security, We need to balance the risks of potential misuse associated with AN against its clear and proven benefits in supporting food output in this country.

The Government has been working with the fertiliser industry to ensure the safe supply of Ammonium Nitrate (AN) fertiliser. We have endorsed Industry Guidelines which advise producers and sellers of AN fertiliser to:

sell only to known, bone fide customers, in particular those who have a credit account;

refrain from making cash sales;

ask questions to potential buyers of AN fertiliser to establish their knowledge of agriculture;

in the case of suspicious enquiries, to record and notify the police of the purchaser's name and address (verified by documentary proof such as details from a driving licence) and full details of the enquirers vehicle, including the registration number.

We are continuing our dialogue with Industry and have invited them to produce a Code of Practice to encourage direct deliveries from manufacturers to farmers to shorten supply chains and ensure better traceability, Industry will also be working closely with the National Farmers Unions to remind farmers about the safe storage and use of AN.

To supplement these voluntary measures, the Government has taken a number of steps to tighten controls on AN:

Defra has introduced regulations to control the supply of both home produced and imported AN. The regulations require AN fertiliser, with a high nitrogen content, including mixtures, to have satisfied a Detonation Resistance Test.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) has issued a self-help checklist to all those known to be handling or storing significant quantities of AN. The checklist has been distributed widely. It is aimed at spreading good practice and offering HSE as a source of further advice.

Additionally, HSE has lowered the notification threshold under the Notification of Installations Handling Hazardous Substances Regulations 1982 from 500 to 150 tonnes and widened the range of products to be included in the notifications. Further measures will be taken if necessary.

Mr. Hammond: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to ban the use of ammonium nitrate fertilisers for agricultural purposes. [166212]

Alun Michael: There are no current plans to ban the use of Ammonium Nitrate (AN) fertilisers. The Government have already taken a number of measures to tighten controls on AN in the general climate of heightened security We need to balance the risks and potential misuse associated with AN against its clear and proven benefits in supporting food output in this country. Further measures will be taken if necessary.

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will take steps to control the sale of ammonium nitrate; and if she will make a statement. [165836]

Alun Michael: The potential hazards of AN are well-known and well-documented. The Government has already taken a number of measures to tighten controls in the general climate of heightened security. We need to balance the risks of potential misuse associated with AN against its clear and proven benefits in supporting food output in this country.

The Government has been working with the fertiliser industry to control the supply of Ammonium Nitrate (AN) fertiliser. We have endorsed Industry Guidelines which advise producers and sellers of AN fertiliser to:

sell only to known, bone fide customers, in particular those who have a credit account;

refrain from making cash sales;

ask questions to potential buyers of AN fertiliser to establish their knowledge of agriculture;

in the case of suspicious enquiries, to record the purchaser's name and address (verified by documentary proof such as details from a driving licence) and full details of the enquirers vehicle, including the registration number.

We are continuing our dialogue with Industry and have asked them to produce a Code of Practice to encourage direct deliveries from manufacturers to farmers to shorten supply chains and ensure better traceability.

To supplement the voluntary measures, Defra introduced regulations on 1 May 2003 to control the supply of both home produced and imported AN. The regulations require AN fertiliser, with a high nitrogen content, including mixtures, to have satisfied a Detonation Resistance Test. Further measures will be taken if necessary.

Ancient Woodland

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of each county was covered by ancient woodland in *(a)* 1983, *(b)* 1993 and *(c)* 2003. [165750]

Mr. Bradshaw: An initial inventory of ancient woodland was undertaken in the 1980s. Some counties have been fully resurveyed since then, and some sites newly added or deleted. To update the inventory country-wide, English Nature has begun a 10 county pilot project using digital boundaries and aerial

photography. This pilot will be complete in June 2004. The following table provides the best data available at present.

Percentage cover of ancient woodland[1] by county from 1980s and 1990s

County[2]	*Percentage cover from:* *Original data (1981–88)*	*Most recent data (1998)*
Avon	2.4	2.3
Bedfordshire	2.1	2.1
Berkshire	4.6	4.4
Buckinghamshire	4.5	4.7
Cambridgeshire	0.8	0.8
Cheshire	0.7	0.7
Cleveland	2.5	2.4
Cornwall	1.9	1.9
Cumbria	2.3	2.3
Derbyshire	1.7	1.7
Devon	2.2	2.2
Dorset	2.9	2.9
Durham	1.7	1.7
East Sussex	10.4	10.4
Essex	2.4	2.4
Gloucestershire	6.7	6.8
Greater London	1.6	1.6
Greater Manchester	0.6	0.6
Hampshire	7.5	7.7
Hereford and Worcester	4.7	4.7
Hertfordshire	3.3	3.5
Humberside	0.2	0.2
Isle of Wight	4.1	4.1
Kent	8.0	7.9
Lancashire	0.9	0.9
Leicestershire	1.0	1.0
Lincolnshire	1.0	1.0
Merseyside	0.2	0.2
Norfolk	0.5	0.5
North Yorkshire	1.7	1.7
Northamptonshire	2.7	2.8
Northumberland	1.0	1.0
Nottinghamshire	1.0	1.0
Oxfordshire	2.9	2.9
Shropshire	2.7	2.7
Somerset	2.6	2.6
South Yorkshire	2.9	2.9
Staffordshire	2.1	2.1
Suffolk	1.1	1.1
Surrey	5.8	5.8
Tyne and Wear	2.0	2.0
Warwickshire	2.1	2.1
West Midlands	0.8	0.8
West Sussex	8.5	8.6
West Yorkshire	1.7	1.7
Wiltshire	3.7	3.7

[1] Ancient woodlands are areas that have been continually wooded since 1600. There are two types of ancient woodland—ancient semi-natural woodlands and plantations on ancient woodland sites.

[2] Post-1974 counties.

Source:

English Nature.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department carries out routine monitoring of feral cats to ascertain the incidence of TB in this population. [158009]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no routine monitoring by Defra of feral cats to ascertain the incidence of TB in this population.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of establishing the experimental badger research facility in Weybridge; and what the status of the unit is. [159118]

Mr. Bradshaw: The cost of establishing the badger facility was about £350,000. The facility contains a colony of animals, known to be uninfected with bovine TB, living in their natural environment.

Common Agricultural Policy

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her most recent assessment is of the effect of the Common Agricultural Policy on the cost of the average family's weekly food purchases. [162949]

Alun Michael: The consumer cost of the CAP can be estimated by examining the difference between UK and world prices for agricultural food products. Our latest provisional estimates for 2002 show a cost of the Common Agricultural Policy to a notional family of four due to higher food prices at approximately £4 to £4.50 per week.

Common Land

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what provisions are in place to enable mistakes following the initial registration of common land to be rectified. [168651]

Alun Michael: The provisions of the Commons Registration Act 1965, and subsequent regulations which set out the detailed registration procedures, make only very limited provision for an amendment to the registers to be made to resolve minor clerical errors or omissions. Additionally, in certain cases, errors may be rectified by the High Court. The Common Land Policy Statement, published in July 2002, contains an outline proposal to make further provision in new legislation for the correction of errors. It is also intended that the scope of this provision will be wider than before. Although we hope to bring forward measures as soon as Parliamentary time permits, I can give no guarantee at this stage either about the timing of legislation, or its scope.

Departmental Expenditure (Sittingbourne and Sheppey)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the expenditure of her Department and its predecessors was for the constituency of Sittingbourne and Sheppey between *(a)* 1992 and 1997, *(b)* 1997 and 2001 and *(c)* 2001 and 2004. [159491]

Alun Michael: Expenditure information is not currently held by the Department on a constituency basis and could be provided only at disproportionate cost. However Defra is investigating whether it would be feasible to provide data on this basis readily in the future and if so, when it would be able to do so.

Electric Shock Dog Collars

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what statutory powers she has to ban the sale of electric shock dog collars; [163525]

(2) how many electric shock dog collars were sold in the last year for which figures are available; [163526]

(3) what representations she has received in the last three months regarding the *(a)* sale and *(b)* use of electric shock dog collars; [163527]

(4) what assessment her Department has made of the effect on a dog of the use of an electric shock dog collar. [163528]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra is currently reviewing the legislation relating to the welfare of captive and domestic animals with the intention of introducing an Animal Welfare Bill into Parliament in the fourth legislative session. It is intended that any new legislation should include a power for the Secretary of State to prohibit or restrict the sale and use of certain devices used on animals. Any proposal to prohibit or restrict the sale and use of any device should be based on scientific evidence. As there is currently no such evidence available in respect of electronic training devices for animal, it is not currently proposed that any restrictions should be put in place.

Figures for the sale of electronic training devices for animals are not held centrally. The Department has received occasional representations from members of the public and organisations both opposed to and in support of the use of these devices.

EU Agriculture Council

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who will represent the UK Government at the meeting of the European Agriculture Council in Luxembourg on 26 and 27 April. [167171]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* I will be representing the UK Government.

Fisheries

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what fishing restrictions apply to vessels not registered in the UK within *(a)* three mile, *(b)* six mile and *(c)* 12 mile limits from the UK coast; and what distinction is made between non UK-registered vessels with and without an historic entitlement. [167325]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Only UK fishing vessels are allowed to fish in the zero to six mile zone around UK waters. Certain member states with historical catch records in UK waters can fish in the six to 12 mile zone. No distinction is made between non UK registered vessels with and without a historical entitlement. Access is granted on the basis of member states' historic fishing activities.

Food Industry Waste

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of *(a)* the additional volume of food industry waste that is disposed of in landfill, the sewage system or otherwise as a result of the ban on swill feeding and *(b)* the change this represents in terms of the risk of spread of communicable animal diseases; and if she will make a statement. [165941]

Mr. Bradshaw: The disposal of catering waste to landfill is a longstanding practice and only 1.4 per cent. of the national pig herd was swill fed. The increase in the amount of catering waste going to landfill following the ban on 93 swill users for about 82,000 pigs was therefore very small compared to the total amount of catering waste generated from the 260,000 restaurants and other catering outlets across the UK, which as a matter of course, currently goes to landfill.

It is not possible to give a definitive picture of the disposal methods for the relatively small amount of catering waste that was formerly fed to pigs but it is not considered to be ending up down sewers as has been suggested. There are day-to-day problems with blockages to drains and sewers which are dealt with by the various authorities, but the main stream of catering waste is collectable and is not in a form that can be easily disposed of down the sewer.

In common with all methods of disposing of animal by-products disposal to landfill does carry some risks to animal health. Among the measures in place to minimise such risks landfill operators work to specific conditions of their licence or permit including covering waste with inert material and maintaining a strict pest control programme.

No comparative risk assessment has been made of the risks of swill feeding and landfill when exotic diseases are absent from the national herd. However, when a disease such as foot and mouth is present, the level of virus circulating increases the risk from swill feeding.

Home Energy Efficiency Scheme

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Liverpool, Walton have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme. [166955]

Alun Michael: Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 7,290 households in Liverpool, Walton received assistance from the Scheme, which is now marketed as Warm Front.

Pesticide Voluntary Initiative

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make an evaluation of the Pesticide Voluntary Initiative. [168082]

Alun Michael: Progress with the Voluntary Initiative on pesticides is reviewed regularly and Government report their broad conclusions in the Budget and Pre-Budget Report. In Budget 2004 the Government confirmed their view that, provided the initiative is fully implemented, the Voluntary Initiative should be the most effective way of reducing the environmental impacts of pesticide use. However, to cover the potential case that the Voluntary Initiative might fail to deliver

the required environmental benefits within a reasonable timescale, the Government continue to keep the options for a tax or economic instrument under review.

Recruitment

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost of recruitment of civil servants for the Department was in each financial year since 1996–97, broken down by *(a)* delegated or contracted out recruitment procedures and *(b)* recruitment procedures carried out by the Department. [158187]

Alun Michael: Defra was created in June 2001 so information for Defra can only be given from that date.

Given the structure of the Human Resources function within the Department prior to 1 April 2004 the information requested is available only at disproportionate cost. From 1 April this year recruitment and selection activity will be undertaken by a central HR Resource Centre.

Recruitment procedures used to bring in staff to Defra may vary depending on several factors including the number, grades and/or locations of vacancies and any specialisms involved.

Register of Interests

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the requirements are on officials in her Department to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for her departmental officials. [164711]

Alun Michael: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirements for civil servants declaring any conflicts of interest.

Arrangements in Defra for declaring conflicts of interest are set out in the interim Defra Staff Handbook which is derived from the Civil Service Management Code. Officials are required to inform Human Resources, via their line manager, of any conflicts of interest. Details are recorded centrally within Human Resources.

St. George's Day

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to mark and celebrate St. George's Day. [167864]

Alun Michael: As a Department, Defra has made no plans to mark St. George's Day.

Swill Feeding

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the farm at Heddon View was a specialised establishment equipped for the treatment of swill; and whether there were animals there. [166755]

Mr. Bradshaw: Premises at Heddon View were approved to process catering waste into swill. There were no animals on the processing premises.

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether Mr. Bobby Waugh transferred swill for processing to the farm at Heddon View. [166756]

Mr. Bradshaw: Mr. Waugh transported catering waste to the farm at Heddon View for processing into swill.

Trees

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of trees *(a)* had full crowns, *(b)* had slight defoliation, *(c)* had moderate defoliation, *(d)* had severe defoliation and *(e)* were dead in the latest survey conducted on behalf of her Department into tree health in the UK, broken down by region. [165741]

Mr. Bradshaw: The latest survey was conducted jointly by the Forestry Commission and the Department for Agriculture and Rural Development in Northern Ireland between June and September 2003. The UK data, in the format reported internationally, are given in the following table:

Class	*Percentage of trees*
Not defoliated	28.8
Slightly defoliated	46.5
Moderately defoliated	23.2
Severely defoliated	0.9
Dead	0.6

The UK does not collect or analyse these data by region.

Vital Villages Programme

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the reasons why the Vital Villages Programme is being ended. [167970]

Alun Michael: The Countryside Agency established the Vital Villages Programme in 2001 in response to the Rural White Paper. It was a time-limited programme designed to demonstrate what communities could achieve. The Countryside Agency has met its three-year target to help rural communities to help themselves and demonstrate good practice.

In 2004–05 the Countryside Agency is targeting its resources on meeting all existing grant commitments under the Vital Villages programme and helping communities benefit from the funds already committed to them. It will also work to share the lessons learnt with regional and local delivery bodies.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what evaluation she has undertaken of the effectiveness of the Vital Villages programme. [167971]

Alun Michael: The Countryside Agency's Vital Villages programme has been independently monitored and evaluated over the past three years through six-monthly monitoring and annual evaluation reports. In addition, the Countryside Agency is undertaking impact evaluations of the Parish Plan and Community Service

grant schemes, with reports due by the end of September. The Rural Transport Partnership scheme has also been evaluated and a summary note will be published shortly.

The Countryside Agency has produced several publications drawing on these reports to share the successful lessons and the effectiveness of the schemes, namely:

Get your Community Moving (transport);

Great Ways to Go (transport);

Wheels to Work (transport);

Taxi Voucher Toolkit (transport);

Parish Plan Guidance for Local Authorities; and

Parish Plan Guidance for Parish Councils.

The Agency has also published various leaflets on community buildings, case studies, and good practice (all schemes).

TREASURY

Child Benefit

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how long on average it has taken in the last 12 months for grandparents who become responsible for their grandchildren to be awarded child benefit for those grandchildren by the Child Benefit Centre once they have notified the centre of these new responsibilities. [168583]

Dawn Primarolo: The information requested is not available as we do not keep separate records for grandparents and other claimants.

Financial Ombudsman Service

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effects of the system of targets and bonuses in the Financial Ombudsman Service on the quality of its work. [168903]

Ruth Kelly: None. The Financial Ombudsman Service is an independent body. Responsibility for managing the work of the Financial Ombudsman Service is a matter for them.

I understand from the ombudsman service that quality assurance is embedded in the control processes of the service. Appropriate checks are made, in the first instance, at management level and the Board of the Financial Ombudsman Service receives monthly reports on service quality, timeliness and productivity. The most important quality check however lies in the ability of either party to a dispute to request that an ombudsman decide the outcome rather than consenting to the outcome proposed by an adjudicator. Only10 per cent. of cases are required to be decided by an ombudsman.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has received from *(a)* industry and *(b)* the public on the system of targets and bonuses in the Financial Ombudsman Service. [168901]

Ruth Kelly: None. The Financial Ombudsman Service is an independent body. The staff employed by it are not civil servants, and the arrangements for managing and paying their staff are matters for the Financial Ombudsman Service and its Board.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what research he has conducted into the system of targets and bonuses in the Financial Ombudsman Service. [168902]

Ruth Kelly: None. The Financial Ombudsman Service is an independent body. Responsibility for monitoring the level of service is a matter for the Financial Ombudsman Service itself.

I understand from the Financial Ombudsman Service that the Board of the Financial Ombudsman Service receives monthly reports on customer satisfaction research, and these have shown over the past 12 months overall satisfaction rates of between 75 per cent. and 88 per cent. The Financial Ombudsman Service also published in March 2004 research on what firms think about their service; the research showed that the vast majority of firms were satisfied with the fairness of decisions and with the process.

National Asset Register

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he expects the next version of the National Asset Register to be published. [169114]

Ruth Kelly: The Government is considering the arrangements for publishing the next version of the National Asset Register and will make an announcement shortly.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much, on average, it costs the Government to respond to a parliamentary question. [169139]

Ruth Kelly: As at April 2003, the average cost of answering a written parliamentary question and an oral parliamentary question was £138 and £322 respectively.

Tax Credits

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his forecast is of the expenditure on the childcare element of the working tax credit in 2004–05. [168366]

Dawn Primarolo: The level of childcare support provided through the childcare element of Working Tax Credit in 2003–04 is estimated to be over £700 million.

No separate forecast has been made for 2004–05.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Heywood and Middleton have received child tax credit. [168517]

James Purnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Stalybridge and Hyde have received child tax credit. [168765]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friends to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Business Taxation

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Heywood and Middleton have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [168518]

Dawn Primarolo: The information is not available.

James Purnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Stalybridge and Hyde have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computers and internet equipment. [168764]

Dawn Primarolo: The requested information is not available.

Customs and Excise (Court Cases)

Mr. John Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many defendants in cases brought by HM Customs and Excise have had to pay the costs of the criminal receivership of their assets when they have been acquitted where the case against them was withdrawn in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003. [168079]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise do not collect the information requested centrally. However, court appointed receivers in Customs cases have identified the following 14 cases where defendants have borne the fees of a receiver in circumstances in which they were acquitted or were not convicted for any reason:

	Number
	Defendants
(a) 2001	2
(b) 2002	9
(c) 2003	3

In two of the above cases liability for the receivers' fees is disputed.

Discretionary Trusts

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to change the rules regarding the setting-up of discretionary trusts; and if he will make a statement. [168048]

Dawn Primarolo: Setting up discretionary trusts is a matter for the would-be settlers. If they proceed, however, they may in due course have to notify the Inland Revenue for inheritance tax purposes and to pay any tax due. We have no plans to change these rules.

Employment Statistics

James Purnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in Stalybridge and Hyde. [168763]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. James Purnell, dated 27 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Stalybridge and Hyde Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Stalybridge and Hyde constituency for each year since 1997.

Annual average number of JSA claimants for Stalybridge and Hyde constituency

	Number
1997	2,170
1998	1,826
1999	1,855
2000	1,565
2001	1,348
2002	1,294
2003	1,309

Incinerator Tax

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reason the proposed incinerator tax was not referred to in December's pre-budget report. [167759]

John Healey: The Government announced in PBR 2002 that it would commission a study into the environmental and health effects of all waste management and disposal options. It remains the Government's intention to consider the case for using economic instruments for incineration in light of this work, taking account of the views of stakeholders.

PBR 2003 noted that the first of two stages of this work was being reviewed, with the aim of publishing the complete study in the spring.

Income Tax

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Heywood and Middleton qualified for the 10 pence rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [168516]

Dawn Primarolo: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10 pence starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 8,000 and 9,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Heywood and Middleton constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02 respectively. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

James Purnell: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Stalybridge and Hyde qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [168766]

Dawn Primarolo: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 3,000 state retirement pension

age taxpayers in the Stalybridge and Hyde constituency in 2001–02. A reliable answer cannot be given for 2000–01 because in the Survey of Personal Incomes the sample size of pensioners living in this constituency is relatively small compared to other constituencies. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

National Insurance Call Centres

Angus Robertson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the location is of each of the national insurance call centres; how many people work at each; how many complaints were received concerning each one in 2003; and if he will make a statement. [168558]

Dawn Primarolo: Longbenton Contact Centre which is located at Benton Park View, Longbenton, Newcastle upon Tyne is the only Contact Centre dedicated to handling calls concerning national insurance contributions. It is the first point of contact by telephone for most unsolicited queries relating to national insurance contributions.

Presently there are 441 staff employed in Longbenton Contact Centre. In 2003, 58 complaints were received.

New Cars (LPG)

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reason the extra cost of re-engineering a new car for LPG is entered on the P11D form for company cars in a similar way to luxury items. [167731]

John Healey: The extra cost of converting a new car to run on LPG after it is first registered does not have to be entered on the P11D form for company cars.

Overseas Aid

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to set a timetable for the UK to reach the target of spending 0.7 per cent. of gross national income on overseas aid. [166996]

John Healey: We remain committed to the UN target and will continue to make progress towards 0.7 per cent. as the fiscal climate permits. The 2004 Spending Review is an opportunity to consider plans for development spending beyond 2005–06, alongside other priorities and pressures, but at this time it is not possible to predict the outcome of the Spending Review. In his Budget 2004 speech, the Chancellor announced that this Government will not freeze or cut the international development aid budget, but rather increase it. This is part of the Government's continuing commitment to increasing development aid. By 2005–06 the UK's aid budget will have grown by 93 per cent. in real term to 0.4 per cent. the largest ever increase in UK development funding. This will be double the current (2002) G7 average of 0.2 per cent. and well above the current (2002) average of 0.23 per cent. for countries on the OECD Development Assistance Committee. As our record shows, we are serious about making progress towards 0.7 per cent.

However, there is an urgent need for additional funds now if we are to make progress on meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The reality is that we will not raise the $50 billion needed every year to meet the MDGs unless every bilateral donor reaches 0.7 per cent. immediately. If even just two or three of the biggest bilateral donors fail to reach 0.7 per cent. now, we will fail to raise the funds required. That is why the Government has proposed an International Finance Facility (IFF) in order to deliver these resources. The IFF provides a realistic and feasible way of front-loading aid to meet the immediate need.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to the letter from the hon. Member for Walsall, North of 15 March 2004 concerning a constituent, ref. PO3/15023/2004. [168886]

Dawn Primarolo: I have done so.

Sick Pay

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what advice the Inland Revenue has provided in relation to the provision of statutory sick pay for temporary workers; and what the legal basis is upon which that advice has been made. [151834]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue has published guidance on the position of temporary workers in booklet CA 30 which is also available via the internet.

Inland Revenue guidance is based on the legislative provisions surrounding the SSP scheme and specifically on Part 11 of the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992; Sections 45 and 51 of the Employment Act 2002; The Statutory Sick Pay (General) Regulations 1982; The Social Security (Categorisation of Earners) Regulations 1978 and The Fixed-term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 2002.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations have been made to the Inland Revenue in relation to its advice on the provision of statutory sick pay for temporary workers. [151835]

Dawn Primarolo: The Inland Revenue have received a number of representations on this subject from both employer representative groups and from individual employers. The Inland Revenue is always happy to enter into discussions with employers over the format, content and application of published guidance.

Tax Credits (Scotland)

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many recipients of tax credits in Scotland have been overpaid and issued with demands for lump sum repayments by *(a)* letter and *(b)* telephone. [164607]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 3 November 2003, *Official Report*, columns 394–95W. By 29 March 2004 the Inland Revenue had sent 379 letters to claimants in Scotland, of which 67 had been followed up by a telephone call.

DEFENCE

War Pensions

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people were in receipt of *(a)* war pension and *(b)* war widow's pension in 1997; and how many there are in each category now. [165379]

Mr. Caplin: As at 31 March 1997, there were 264,595 war disablement pensions and 59,025 war widows pensions in payment. As at 31 December 2003, there were 205,090 war disablement pensions and 45,755 war widow/ers pensions in payment.

Apache Helicopter

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many Apache helicopters *(a)* are based and *(b)* will be based at AAC Dishforth; [165091]

(2) what assessment he has made of the maintenance condition of the Apache helicopters based at AAC Dishforth; [165090]

(3) what funding has been allocated for the maintenance of Apache helicopters at AAC Dishforth. [165092]

Mr. Ingram: There are currently 12 WAH-64 Apache aircraft based at Dishforth Station. A further four wil' be located at Dishforth within the next few months, bringing the total to 16.

All Apache helicopters held at Dishforth are consistently maintained to a high level. Their airworthiness condition is formally assessed by Army aircraft engineers before each flight, and is constantly monitored by aircrew during flight.

The funding allocated in financial year 2004–05 for spares maintenance support for WAH-64 Apache aircraft at Dishforth Station totals some £450,000.

Armed Forces Deployments

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the positioning of the British armed forces throughout the world; what size forces are in each place; and what their operational status is. [165547]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Mid Sussex (Mr. Soames) on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 15W.

Defence Employment (Hampshire)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many local employees are forecast to be employed as a consequence of the increased concentration of Royal Naval facilities in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire over the next five years, based on current plans. [165294]

Mr. Caplin: Studies which may result in further rationalisation and concentration of Royal Navy facilities in Portsmouth and South East Hampshire over the next five years are at only the preliminary stage and it is too early to predict how this might affect local employment.

Finningley Airport

Mr. Bill O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the cost was of maintaining Finningley Airport in each of the last five years of ownership by his Department; and if he will make a statement. [165710]

Mr. Caplin: RAF Finningley was closed on 31 March 1996 and was sold in 1999. Cost information prior to closure is no longer available. However, the cost of maintaining the site during the disposal process is set out in the table.

Financial year	£
1998–99	617,797
1999–2000	185,538
2000–01	298

Medical Services

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many medical personnel are based at *(a)* AAC Dishforth, *(b)* RAF Leeming, *(c)* RAF Linton on Ouse and *(d)* Alanbrooke Barracks, broken down by service, rank and specialisation. [165094]

Mr. Caplin: The following medical personnel are based at each base:

Unit	*Service/civilian*	*Rank*	*Appointment*	*Number*
AAC Dishforth	Military Personnel	Lieutenant Colonel	Regimental Medical Officer	1
	—	Sergeant	Combat Medical Technician	1
	—	Corporal	Combat Medical Technician	2
	—	Corporal	Nurse	1
	—	Lance Corporal	Combat Medical Technician	2
	Civilian Personnel	Doctor	Civilian Medical Practitioner	2
Total	—	—	—	9
Alanbrooke Barracks	Military Personnel	Sergeant	Combat Medical Technician	1
	—	Corporal	Combat Medical Technician	1
	—	Lance Corporal	Combat Medical Technician	3
	Civilian Personnel	Doctor	Civilian Medical Practitioner	2
	—	Registered General Nurse	Nurse	1
Total	—	—	—	8
RAF Linton on Ouse	Military Personnel	Squadron Leader	Station Medical Officer	1
	—	Squadron Leader	Principal Nursing Officer	1
	—	Sergeant	Principal Nurse	1
	—	Sergeant	Medical Administrator	1

Unit	Service/civilian	Rank	Appointment	Number
	—	Corporal	Medical Administrator	3
	—	SAC	Medical Assistant	12
	—	LAC	Medical Assistant	2
	Civilian Personnel	Doctor	Deputy Station Medical Officer	1
Total	—	—	—	22
RAF Leeming	Military Personnel	Wing Commander	Station Medical Officer	1
	—	Deputy Station Medical Officer	Flight Lieutenant	1
	—	Nursing Officer	Flight Lieutenant	1
	—	Flight Sergeant	Medical Administrator	1
	—	Sergeant	Medical Administrator	1
	—	Corporal	Medical Administrator	4
	—	Corporal	Environmental Health Technician	1
	—	Corporal	Registered General Nurse	1
	—	SAC	Medical Assistant	7
	Civilian Personnel	Doctor	Civilian Medical Practitioner	2
	—	Registered General Nurse	Nurse	1
	—	MTO3	Pharmacy Technician	1
Total				22

Military Goods Transfers

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence under what circumstances a transfer of military goods is classed as eligible for Crown Immunity rather than constituting a disposal sale; and if he will make a statement. [164907]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 31 March 2004]:* Letters of Crown Immunity are sought for the export of strategically controlled goods for exhibition overseas, for demonstration to foreign Governments and in connection with the repair or modification of Crown owned equipment. It is no longer the practice of the MOD's Disposal Services Agency (DSA) to undertake the export of surplus goods it has sold in this manner. The purchasing customer will take ownership of the goods in the UK and arrange their export under licence.

Ministerial Meetings/Conversations

Mr. Lilley: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what action his Department has taken to implement the recommendation of Sir Anthony Hammond about writing notes of ministerial meetings and telephone conversations. [156376]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 26 February 2004]:* The Ministry of Defence follows the central "Guidance on the Management of Private Office Papers" which makes clear that good record management procedures are necessary not least to ensure accountability and provide an audit trail. Among the records covered by the guidance are Ministers' meetings and telephone conversations.

Nuclear Installations (Aircraft Incidents)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list each near miss incident involving RAF aircraft and United Kingdom nuclear installations reported to his Department in each year since 2000; and if he will place copies of the report on each incident in the Library. [165158]

Mr. Ingram: Restricted areas for aircraft have existed around nuclear facilities for many years. In the aftermath of 9/11 the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) revisited this policy, issuing an amendment to Article 85 of the Air Navigation Order, and now major nuclear installations have a restricted area of two nautical mile radius

The number of alleged breaches of restricted areas involving RAF aircraft and United Kingdom nuclear installations reported to the Ministry of Defence in each year since 2000 is detailed in the following table. The Ministry of Defence, Defence Flying Complaints Investigation Team carried out investigations on each occasion and concluded that five of these were found to have infringed restricted areas. I will shortly place copies of all reports of the investigations in the Library, with all personal data redacted in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.

	Total number of complaints	Total confirmed breach	Under investigation
2000	6	—	—
2001	19	—	—
2002	18	3	—
2003	11	1	—
2004 (up to 31 March 04)	3	1	1

Prisoners (Self-harm)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 25 March, *Official Report*, column 941W, on self-harm, what target he has set for the completion of the feasibility stage of the project to collate data centrally on incidents of self-harm in the services; what the targets are for completion of the project; and if he will make a statement. [165755]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence continues to look at the identification and recording of self-harm incidents, of reporting systems and of analysis within the services. A feasibility report is due by the end of the summer. Its conclusions will determine future work.

Redundancy Payments

Mr. Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how much his Department has spent in each year since 1997 on redundancy payments for *(a)* administrative staff and *(b)* industrial staff. [164217]

Mr. Caplin: Information on redundancy payments for administrative and industrial staff are not held separately The Department does not hold records centrally for redundancy payments and the information will need to be collated. I will therefore write to the hon. Member when the information is available and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Register of Interests

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the requirements are on officials in his Department to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for his departmental officials. [164703]

Mr. Caplin: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirement for civil servants declaring any conflict of interest.

The Code is amplified by further MOD policy guidance to staff on personal conduct, outside interests and appointments, and the receipt of gifts, rewards and hospitality.

Saville Inquiry (Confidentiality)

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what study he has made of the implications for former soldiers called before the Saville Inquiry of the recent judgment in the case involving the Bank of England and BCCI. [165112]

Mr. Ingram: The judgment has implications across Government and these are being given full and careful consideration.

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will resist any attempt to secure the release of confidential exchanges between former soldiers called before the Saville Inquiry and their legal advisers. [165113]

Mr. Ingram: That is a matter for the independent lawyers who advise the soldiers.

SCOTLAND

White Fish Industry

6. **Ann Winterton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has held with the First Minister about the future of the Scottish white fish industry. [167033]

Mrs. McGuire: My right hon. Friend and the First Minister discuss a wide range of issues.

Post Office Network (Scotland)

7. **Mr. Alan Reid:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has held with Royal Mail regarding postal services in Scotland. [167034]

Mrs. McGuire: The Scotland Office is in regular contact, at both official and ministerial levels, with Royal Mail and other key stakeholders involved in the delivery of postal services in Scotland.

9. **Andrew Selous:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will make a statement on the future of the Post Office network in Scotland. [167036]

Mrs. McGuire: The Government recognise the important role that Post Offices play in the lives of people throughout Scotland, and we are committed to doing all we can to ensure a viable Post Office network for the future.

Pensioner Payment

8. **Mr. Tynan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, how many pensioners in Scotland he estimates will benefit from the £100 payment announced in the Budget. [167035]

Mrs. McGuire: Around 395,000 pensioner households in Scotland will benefit from the £100 payment, for those aged over 70, announced in the Budget.

Barnett Formula

10. **Sir Nicholas Winterton:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, what recent discussions he has had with the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the future of the Barnett Formula. [167037]

Mr. Darling: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave earlier today to my hon. Friend the Member for North-West Leicestershire (David Taylor).

Economy

11. **Mr. Swire:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will make a statement on prospects for the Scottish economy. [167038]

Mr. Darling: Prospects for the Scottish economy are good. The labour market continues to perform robustly with employment close to a historic high and unemployment around its lowest level since the 1970s. Growth figures have recently been revised upwards to better reflect real changes in the economy. Interest rates and inflation are historically low. Business surveys are pointing to a continued strengthening of business activity in Scotland in both services and manufacturing and independent forecasters predict that growth will be above-trend in 2004 and 2005.

Shipbuilding

12. **Rachel Squire:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland, if he will make a statement on the most recent discussions he has held on future shipbuilding in Scotland. [167040]

Mr. Darling: I recently met representatives from BAE Systems during a tour of their shipbuilding facilities at Scotstoun and Govan.

From these discussions, there was a sense that the prospects for Scottish shipbuilding are encouraging. The yards on the Clyde have healthy order books, and the industry will continue to create and support thousands of jobs in Scotland.

Employment (Glasgow)

13. **Ann McKechin:** To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will make a statement on the level of employment in Glasgow. [167041]

Mr. Darling: There are 242,000 people in employment in Glasgow City. The labour market in Glasgow has improved markedly since 1997 as evidenced by the fall in the number of people out of work and claiming benefit. At March 2004 there were 18,000 claimants compared to 29,000 in 1997, a fall of 38 per cent. However, the Government are aware that the challenge remains to further increase employment in Glasgow. We are working hard to do so with a range of policy measures including the New Deal and the Working Tax Credit.

International Crime

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what discussions he has had with the Scottish Executive on the issue of long-term prisoners convicted of international crime. [167039]

Mrs. McGuire: My right hon. Friend has not had any such discussions. Matters concerning prisoners in Scotland are devolved.

Lyons Review

Mr. Donohoe: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland what representations he has made to other Government Departments in order to secure the movement of public sector jobs to Scotland following the publication of the Lyons Review. [167032]

Mr. Darling: I have made quite clear to other Government Departments the advantages Scotland offers as a location for public sector employers and have encouraged them to consider Scotland when reviewing location plans.

ADVOCATE-GENERAL

International Human Rights

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Advocate-General what international human rights issues she has considered since 16 March 2004. [167046]

The Advocate-General for Scotland: As Advocate-General for Scotland my main involvement with human rights issues is in relation to those enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights. My functions under the Scotland Act include considering whether Scottish Ministers and the Scottish Parliament are acting compatibly with the Convention. In my advisory capacity as Law Officer the long-standing convention in relation to Law Officers' advice means that the fact and contents of any such advice is confidential.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Central Government Support

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much central Government support per head of population was given to each local authority in each year since 1997. [168431]

Mr. Raynsford: The available information has been made available in the Library of the House.

Charity Shops

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent assessment his Department has made of the economic impact of charity shops on town centres. [165356]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not undertaken such a study.

EU Aid (Eastern Region)

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much aid has been received by the Eastern Region from EU sources in each of the last 10 years, broken down by *(a)* aid category and *(b)* area receiving aid. [167077]

Mr. Raynsford: The only EU funding source the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is responsible for is the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), one of the European Structural Funds. The Eastern region has benefited in the last 10 years from three of the Structural Funds, which are the ERDF, the European Social Fund (ESF) and the European Agricultural Guidance and Guarantee Fund (EAGGF). (The Department for Work and Pensions is responsible for the ESF and the Department for Environment Food and Rural Affairs for EAGGF.) The detailed figures are tabled as follows.

1994–99 Programmes:

Total receipts from the EU during the 1994–99 period amounts to £117.7 million.

Programme	*Purpose*	*Amount*	*Area covered*
The East Anglia 5b	Designed to help mainly rural areas adjust to anticipated changes in the traditional employment sectors such as farming.	£26.9 million ERDF £3.7 million ESF £5.5 million EAGGF	Breckland, 8 wards in Lowestoft and the areas given transitional status in the subsequent Objective 2 programme (the Fens, Rural East Suffolk and parts of Central Rural Norfolk)
The KONVER II Programme	Designed to assist economic diversification in areas heavily dependent on defence.	£5.8 million ERDF	Parts of Bedfordshire, Hertfordshire, Essex and Suffolk
The PESCA Programme	Provided support to areas, which were dependent on the declining fisheries industries.	£1 million ERDF	Southend, Lowestoft and King's Lynn

Programme	*Purpose*	*Amount*	*Area covered*
The Leader II Programme	To help local communities to develop the economies of their area, and to improve their environment and cultural life.	£1.2 million ERDF £50,000 ESF £135,000 EAGGF	Breckland, 8 wards in Lowestoft and the areas given transitional status in the subsequent Objective 2 programme (the Fens, Rural East Suffolk and parts of Central Rural Norfolk)
The Objective 3 Programme	Targeted the unemployed	£63.2 million ESF	National programme, so entire region eligible.
The Objective 4 Programme	[illegible]med at up-skilling the employed [illegible]orce	£10.2 million ESF	National programme, so entire region eligible.

2000–06 Programmes:
Allocation from EU £315 million.

Programme	*Purpose*	*Amount of ERDF allocated*	*Spend as at*	*Area covered*
The East of England Objective 2 Programme	For economic regeneration	£100 million ERDF £9 million ESF	£28.5 million (23 April 2004)[1]	Breckland, Luton, North Norfolk, Southend, Waveny and Great Yarmouth the Fens, Rural East Suffolk and parts of Central Rural Norfolk
The Urban II Programme (Peterborough)	Initiative to tackle urban deprivation.	£6.7 million ERDF	£1.024 million (31 December 2003)[1]	Seven wards in Peterborough
The Leader + Programme	To encourage new approaches to rural development	£2.85 million EAGGF	£0.307 million (23 April 2004)[1]	Broads and Rivers The Fens
The Innovative Actions Programme	To test an innovative approach leading to achievement of more balanced regional development and a stronger regional identity.	£1.6 million ERDF	£0.45 million (23 April 2004)[1]	All areas of the region are eligible.

[1] Date of last available data.

Housebuilding

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many *(a)* private and *(b)* council housing starts there were in England in (i) 1992, (ii) 1997 and (iii) 2001; and what the latest figures are. [165377]

Keith Hill: The figures for England are tabled as follows:

	(a) Private starts	*(b) Council starts*
1992	99,586	1,601
1997	136,069	310
2001	136,248	190
2003 (provisional)	147,104	324

Housing

Mr. Pike: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Burnley since 1997. [168312]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Burnley transferred its housing stock to Burnley and Padiham Community Housing in 2000 for £22.4 million. Burnley's allocation of £2.5 million for 2003–04 has been supplemented by the announcement of £68 million to be made available to the East Lancashire, Elevate, Housing Market Renewal pathfinder project between 2003–04 and 2005–06.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Heywood and Middleton since 1997. [168432]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Rochdale's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by over 450 per cent., and have been supplemented by the announcement of £53.5 million to be made available to the Oldham/Rochdale Housing Market Renewal pathfinder project between 2003–04 and 2005–06.

James Purnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997. [168774]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we

introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Tameside transferred its housing stock to New Charter Housing in 2000 for £127.5 million. Tameside's allocation for housing in 2003–04 was £3.6 million.

Housing Market

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the effect of electronic application to land searches and registration on the speed of housing market transactions; and what further improvements in the speed of these transactions will result from the introduction of sellers' packs. [168376]

Keith Hill: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to him on 23 April 2004. For electronic searches of land registers to be possible, local authorities must first have set up electronic Local Land and Property Gazetteers (LLPGs). Such gazetteers form an integral part of local e-government, and the benefits arising from them have not been separately estimated or assessed. The overall savings from local e-government, and in particular achieving the Prime Minister's target of all priority services being electronically enabled by 2005, were estimated by local authorities themselves in 2003 as being about £80 million per annum by 2005–06. As well as efficiency savings, there will be significant benefits to authorities' customers, through improvement of service delivery including quicker land charge searches.

Electronic processing of local land search inquiries offers the prospect of securing search information in minutes and hours rather than days and weeks. To maximise the benefits for housing transactions, local search and other information that is important to home buying and selling decisions needs to be available at the start of the transaction process. Home information packs will secure this. They will enable buyers and sellers to negotiate from an informed position and help them commit more quickly to the transaction. This will increase certainty, reduce failure and wasted costs, and help shorten the overall transaction timescale.

Local Government Finance

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities raised the level of council tax by 10 per cent. or more when setting the rate for 2004–05. [167236]

Mr. Raynsford: The following authorities increased their Band D council tax by 10 per cent. or more between 2003–04 and 2004–05:

Shire districts:

Bedford
Breckland
Canterbury
Christchurch
Dacorum
Daventry
East Dorset
Fenland
Fylde
Gosport
Huntingdonshire
Maldon
Runnymede
Shepway
Spelthorne

Shire police authorities:

Avon and Somerset Police
Bedfordshire Police
Cambridgeshire Police
Cheshire Police
Cleveland Police
Cumbria Police
Durham Police
Hampshire Police
Hertfordshire Police
Humberside Police
Kent Police
Lancashire Police
Leicestershire Police
Norfolk Police
Northamptonshire Police
Thames Valley Police
West Mercia Police
West Midlands Police
West Yorkshire Police
Wiltshire Police

In addition, the 2004–05 Band D council tax for each of the following combined fire authorities is 10 per cent. or more above its indicative Band D council tax for 2003–04, where the indicative council tax for 2003–04 is consistent with the alternative notional amount for the authority, as published in "The Limitation of Council Tax and Precepts (Alternative Notional Amounts) Report (England) 2004/05". Indicative council taxes for 2003–04 are available on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's local government finance website, from the 'Alternative Notional Amounts' menu at http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ct.htm.

Avon Fire Authority
Bedfordshire Fire Authority
Cambridgeshire Fire Authority
Derbyshire Fire Authority
Dorset Fire Authority
Durham Fire Authority
East Sussex Fire Authority
Essex Fire Authority
Hampshire Fire Authority
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority
Leicestershire Fire Authority
Nottinghamshire Fire Authority
Staffordshire Fire Authority

Non-domestic Rates

Mr. Curry: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the yield from uniform non-domestic rates was for each year since its introduction; and what the yield would have been for each year if the rate had been set at *(a)* RPI plus half per cent. and *(b)* RPI plus 1 per cent. [168888]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is in the following table.

£ million

	Actual NNDR yield	NNDR yield with RPI + ½ per cent.	NNDR yield with RPI + 1 per cent.
1990–91	10,590	10,600	10,700
1991–92	11,918	12,000	12,100
1992–93	11,371	11,500	11,700
1993–94	10,627	10,800	11,000
1994–95	10,308	10,600	10,800
1995–96	10,967	11,300	11,600
1996–97	12,421	12,900	13,300
1997–98	12,805	13,400	13,800
1998–99	12,896	13,500	14,100
1999–2000	13,320	14,100	14,700
2000–01	13,757	14,600	15,300
2001–02	15,312	16,300	17,200
2002–03	15,544	16,600	17,700
2003–04[1]	14,792	15,900	17,000

[1] Figures for 2003–04 give only the estimated contribution to the pool from the local list, as no estimates of the central list receipts or contributions in lieu of rates for crown properties are available.

Notes:

The national non-domestic rate (NNDR) yield is the sum of the contributions to the pool from local lists, plus central list receipts, and contributions in lieu of rates for crown properties.

Estimated yields from increasing the NNDR multiplier by more than RPI were calculated by applying the increased multiplier to the sum of the rateable values. The patterns of relief, costs of collection and amounts carried over were assumed to be the same.

Planning

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will monitor the practice of developers seeking planning permission to pull down houses in order to open up access to land that was previously undevelopable. [168097]

Keith Hill: A specific planning application to demolish a house is generally not required. This is because planning permission to carry out demolition is granted by the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. However, where access to land has been opened up by the demolition of buildings, a planning application is likely to be required to develop that land; for example, for housing. Planning applications must be determined on their merits in accordance with relevant policies in the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. It would be impractical to monitor planning applications that arise in such circumstances, and there are no plans to do so.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the average length of time taken to obtain planning permission was in *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 1997. [168277]

Keith Hill: The information available is the percentages of applications for planning permission and related consents which are decided within eight weeks; between eight and 13 weeks; and in more than 13 weeks.

For almost all applications, information on individual applications is not held centrally, so it is not possible to calculate an average time from receipt to decision.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many district planning authorities' planning decisions there were in each year since 1979; [168278]

(2) how many district planning authorities' planning applications were received in each year since 1979; [168279]

(3) how many district planning authorities' planning applications were granted in each year since 1979; [168280]

(4) how many and what percentage of district planning authorities' decisions were granted within *(a)* eight and *(b)* 13 weeks in each year since 1979. [168281]

Keith Hill: The available information is tabled as follows. Statistics on the speed of decision do not distinguish between decisions granted or refused. Figures for the years before 1986–87 are on a different basis from later years; they exclude advertisements, listed building consents and conservation area consents.

Planning decisions by district planning authorities[1,2] by speed of decision: England 1979–80 to 2002–03

Thousand/per cent.

			Applications granted			Percentage of total decisions[3]	
Financial year	Applications received	All decisions	Thousand	Percentage[4]	Number decided within 8 weeks	8 weeks	13 weeks
1979–80	582	513	446	86	312	60	86
1980–81	546	489	421	85	319	65	88
1981–82[5]	372	404	349	86	266	65	88
1982–83	411	380	334	87	268	70	93
1983–84	430	402	354	87	278	69	90
1984–85	421	397	345	86	276	69	90
1985–86	432	401	344	85	270	67	89
1986–87[5]	536	487	401	84	305	63	87
1987–88	598	542	446	84	310	57	84
1988–89	681	618	497	82	318	51	80
1989–90	627	597	465	80	274	46	75
1990–91	530	518	402	80	276	53	79
1991–92	509	482	382	83	291	60	83
1992–93[5]	462	439	361	85	278	63	85
1993–94	479	446	374	87	290	65	86
1994–95	477	451	380	88	294	65	86
1995–96	456	431	363	88	280	65	86
1996–97	473	437	367	88	279	64	85
1997–98	505	462	388	88	286	62	84
1998–99	501	466	392	88	290	62	83
1999–2000	526	479	405	88	301	63	84

Planning decisions by district planning authorities[1,2] by speed of decision: England 1979–80 to 2002–03

Thousand/per cent.

			Applications granted			Percentage of total decisions[3]	
Financial year	*Applications received*	*All decisions*	*Thousand*	*Percentage*[4]	*Number decided within 8 weeks*	*8 weeks*	*13 weeks*
2000–01	543	504	422	87	316	63	83
2001–02	582	534	444	87	347	65	83
2002–03	634	586	484	86	390	67	85

[1] Includes metropolitan and non-metropolitan districts, unitary authorities, London boroughs, national park authorities and, prior to April 1998, urban development corporations.
[2] Figures exclude decisions on 'county matters' applications. Those are shown separately in the published annual Development Control Statistics, England.
[3] The precise definitions of the time bands used are 'up to and including 56 days' and 'up to and including 91 days'.
[4] These percentages are calculated after excluding those applications (such as determinations as to whether or not planning permission is required) which cannot be granted or refused.
[5] Planning fees introduced on 1 April 1981. Prior to 1986–87 figures were only collected on applications decided under section 29 of the Town & Country Planning Act 1971. This excluded advertisements, listed building and conservation area consents. The present system of Lawful Development Certificates commenced on 27 July 1992.
Source:
Development Control Statistics, England particularly the 1989–90, 1995–96 and the 2002–03 (ODPM website edition).

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what criteria in the planning system are used to ascertain whether an environmental impact assessment is necessary. [168326]

Keith Hill: Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is required for development which is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of factors such as its nature, size or location. All development listed in Schedule 1 to The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 1999 is assumed to have such effects, and EIA is mandatory for such development. For development listed in Schedule 2 to the Regulations, local planning authorities have to determine whether EIA will be required. In doing so they must take account of prescribed selection criteria relating to the characteristics, location and potential impact of the development. As an aid to determining whether Schedule 2 development is likely to have significant environmental effects, indicative thresholds and criteria are included in DETR Circular 02/99 which gives guidance on the operation of the 1999 Regulations.

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether an accumulation of a large number of different planning applications in the same location necessitates an environmental impact assessment. [168365]

Keith Hill: The need for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) has to be assessed for every planning application, on the basis of whether the proposed development is likely to have significant effects on the environment. The Government's published advice on multiple applications, based on existing case law, is at paragraph 46 of DETR Circular 02/99. This states that, for the purposes of determining whether EIA is required, a particular planning application should not be considered in isolation if, in reality, it is properly to be considered as an integral part of an inevitably more substantial development.

Property Consultative Group

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the remit is of the Property Consultative Group; and if he will make a statement on its planned work load for the next four years. [167843]

Keith Hill: The terms of reference of the Property Consultative Group are to:

provide an opportunity for dialogue with the property industries about delivery of the range of policies of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) and to provide the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister with creative solutions to issue of common interest;

initiate discussion of issues where the property industries are aware of potential improvements to Government policy and its delivery;

secure in the public interest the industries' assistance in promoting the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's policies, and in particular their role in providing development to underpin the Sustainable Communities Plan;

assist the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister to fulfil its role as lead Government Department for the property/development industries, and in particular its specific responsibilities for policy and legislation on commercial property leases; and

provide advice (through its working groups) on specific, detailed issues.

The Agenda for the main Group at present comprises ad hoc issues raised by members and the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. So far, we have established working groups on commercial property issues and on funding and delivery mechanisms, and they will be reporting back to the main Group within the next year.

Starter Homes Initiative

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how *(a)* the Starter Homes Initiative and *(b)* the Abandoned Homes Initiative have benefited the residents of Heywood and Middleton. [168433]

Keith Hill: Between September 2001 and 31 March 2004, the Starter Home Initiative (SHI) helped key workers into home ownership in areas where the high cost of housing serves to undermine recruitment and retention of skilled staff in our key public services. The SHI was available in London and the South East region and in some housing hotspots in the East, South West and West Midlands regions. It was not available to key workers in the North West region.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is not aware of an Abandoned Homes Initiative. However, our Market Renewal Pathfinders are a comprehensive programme to tackle low demand and abandonment in nine English areas. The Oldham and Rochdale pathfinder, which includes Middleton but not Heywood, received £53.5 million to April 2006, which will fund a large-scale programme of capital works to revive the housing market and improve the environment. The boundaries of this scheme were drawn up following an analysis of local housing markets to identify those areas most acutely affected by low demand and abandonment.

Tesco (Shrewsbury)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will make a decision on the Tesco planning application in Shrewsbury. [168009]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister aims to make a decision as soon as possible.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Plain English Campaign

35. **Peter Bradley:** To ask the Leader of the House what representations he has received from the Plain English Campaign on the language used in parliamentary proceedings. [168419]

36. **Mr. Mole:** To ask the Leader of the House what representations he has received from the Plain English Campaign on the language used in parliamentary publications. [168420]

Mr. Hain: The Modernisation Committee met with the Plain English Campaign in March in the course of its inquiry into connecting Parliament with the public. I hope that the Committee will report its findings to the House before Whitsun.

Departmental Select Committees

37. **Mr. Llwyd:** To ask the Leader of the House if he will make a statement on the representation of minority parties on departmental select committees. [168421]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend is fully aware that the minority parties have concerns about their representation on select committees. The Government have taken action to address this in a number of ways, by accommodating their interests in the nomination of recent Joint Committees for pre-legislative scrutiny and Standing Committees on Delegated Legislation, for example.

Parliamentary Questions

39. **Mr. Burns:** To ask the Leader of the House what plans he has to bring forward proposals for changes to provisions for questions for written answer on a named day. [168423]

Mr. Woolas: My right hon. Friend has no such plans at present.

TRANSPORT

Aviation

Mr. Tyler: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether the investigation by the Civil Aviation Authority into cabin air quality considered the presence of *(a)* mono-ortho, *(b)* di-ortho and *(c)* other toxic isomers of tricresyl phosphate other than the ortho isomer in engine oil; and whether it considered evidence for a link between repeated low-level exposure to organophosphates and chronic neurotoxicity; [168647]

(2) whether the investigation by the Civil Aviation Authority into cabin air quality took evidence from *(a)* doctors and *(b)* other medical experts who have studied the cases of crews and passengers affected by contaminated air exposure on commercial jet aircraft; [168648]

(3) whether unions representing cabin crew members were consulted during the preparation of the recently published Civil Aviation Authority Report on cabin air quality. [168649]

Mr. McNulty: The investigation carried out by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) into cabin air quality focused only on substances found in air conditioning ducts of a certain type of aircraft. The study was commissioned to investigate the safety implications arising from potential incapacitation in flight crew as a result of contaminated cabin air. As such the CAA did not consider the presence of other substances and effects on low-level exposure. This was a specific piece of scientific research; therefore it was not appropriate for the CAA to seek views, either from medical experts or other stakeholders. The Aviation Health Unit is currently considering the extent to which further research should be commissioned into the presence in the cabin air of organophosphates and their effect on passengers and crew.

Bicycle Journeys

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many journeys were made by bicycle in each of the last 10 years. [168302]

Mr. McNulty: Figures for Great Britain from the National Travel Survey are as follows:

	Number of bicycle stages (billion)
1993	1.0
1994	1.0
1995	1.0
1996	0.9
1997	1.0
1998	0.9
1999	1.0
2000	0.9
2001	0.8
2002	0.9

Figures for 2003 are not yet available. Figures for single years are volatile because of the relatively small sample sizes. Cycling patterns over individual years are also dependent on the weather.

Departmental Vehicles

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many of his departmental vehicles run on *(a)* fuel cells, *(b)* liquefied petroleum gas, *(c)* petrol, *(d)* diesel, *(e)* hybrid fuel and *(f)* other fuel. [168006]

Mr. Jamieson: The Government as a whole have signed up to various targets for improving the performance of their own vehicle fleet, details of which, together with reports on each Department's progress towards these targets, is available at: www.sustainable-development.gov.uk

The Department for Transport is one of 15 Government Departments which owns or leases alternatively fuelled vehicles. In 2003, 9 per cent. of all Government fleet vehicles (excluding those from the Ministry of Defence) were alternatively fuelled.

The Department for Transport Headquarters has very few departmental vehicles. The Government Car Service (GCS) provides our ministerial cars, one of which is a petrol-electric hybrid vehicle and one of which runs on liquefied petroleum gas (LPG). Of the GCS's total ministerial car fleet, 13 per cent. are alternatively fuelled, the majority of which are LPG vehicles.

Over 1,000 vehicles are currently used by the Department for Transport's various agencies, including a number of specialist vehicles. Precise information is not readily available on the fuels used by all these vehicles, but in 2003, approximately 11 per cent. of the vehicles for which this information was available were LPG vehicles.

European Rail Directives

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what cost assessment has been carried out by his Department of the implementation of the European Rail Directives package proposed by the EU Commission; and what consultations he has had with *(a)* the rail industry, *(b)* the trade unions in the rail sector and *(c)* elected representatives on their implementation. [168094]

Mr. Darling: An initial assessment of the financial implications of the EC Third Railways Package was included with the Explanatory Memorandum submitted to Parliament on 30 March 2004. This assessment concluded that implementation of certain aspects of the package as proposed by the European Commission could have significant adverse financial implications for sections of the UK rail industry.

My Department has had a number of discussions with rail industry parties about this package both before, and after, its publication. In particular, around 30 industry and user representatives attended a seminar held on 2 April. These discussions are continuing. A formal consultation document is being prepared. Comments will be sought from a wide range of parties including trade unions in the rail sector.

The Government's negotiating position on this package is subject to scrutiny clearance by both Houses. The Scrutiny Committees are currently considering the Department's Explanatory Memorandum. The Department has not received any other representations from elected members on this package.

M62 Widening

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on his plans for widening the M62 between junctions 25 and 32 in West Yorkshire; what the planned timetable is for the work; and what the estimated total cost is. [167053]

Mr. Jamieson: In July 2003 the Secretary of State asked the Highways Agency to examine new ways of delivering additional capacity on suitable sections of the motorway network in South and West Yorkshire, which includes the M62. Their study is under way and is due to report to the Secretary of State in autumn 2004 with detailed proposals for levels of provision, timetables for delivery and estimated costs.

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what alternatives to carriageway widening schemes are being considered to address congestion on the M62 in West Yorkshire. [167054]

Mr. Jamieson: In July 2003 the Secretary of State asked the Highways Agency to examine new ways of delivering additional capacity on suitable sections of the motorway network in South and West Yorkshire, including the M62. They are currently looking at a wide range of alternatives to widening. These include:

Use of narrower lanes

Use of the hard shoulder to provide an extra running lane

Provision of Emergency Refuges

Controlled access to the motorway

Better information for travellers.

The agency is due to report to the Secretary of State with the results of the study in autumn 2004.

National Rail Enquiries

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what assessment he has made of the quality of service given by the National Rail Enquiries Service *(a)* before and *(b)* after part of the service was outsourced overseas; [167729]

(2) if he will make a statement on the decision of train operating companies to off-shore part of the National Rail Enquiries Service. [168661]

Mr. McNulty: The contracting of call centre suppliers to operate the National Rail Enquiry Service is a matter for National Rail Enquiry Services Ltd.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) whether he has held talks with the Strategic Rail Authority about the relocation of the National Rail Enquiry Bureau to India; how many jobs have been lost in the United Kingdom as a result; what the cost has been to the taxpayer of any benefits or grants to staff made redundant from the Bureau; and if he will make a statement; [168092]

(2) what calculations have been made of the sum of money to be returned to his Department by the train operating companies following the relocation of the National Train Enquiry Bureau to India. [168165]

Dr. Howells: The Government do not make subsidy payments to National Rail Enquiry Service Ltd., the company which contracts with call centre suppliers to operate the NRES service. NRES have said that any

cost savings would be ploughed back into improving passenger services. With the flexibility of the call centre industry, the Government hope that any redundancies brought about by the recent contract changes would be kept to a minimum. I have held no talks with the Strategic Rail Authority about this matter.

Offshore Wind Farms

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport whether his Department has been asked to fund navigational aids to prevent vessels colliding with wind turbines. [168265]

Mr. Darling: The costs of providing aids to navigation to prevent vessels colliding with offshore installations are to be met by the developers. The General Lighthouse Authorities set the standard for such marking and will monitor its provision. Developers may also expect to meet the reasonable costs of altering existing aids to navigation if required as a result of their installations.

Rail Services Review

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects the Treasury's review of rail services to be complete; and if he will make a statement. [167514]

Mr. Darling: The current review of the railway industry being undertaken by the Department for Transport will publish its conclusions in the summer.

Railways

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will estimate the cost per mile of railway line maintenance for each contractor. [168007]

Mr. McNulty: This is an operational matter for Network Rail. However, Network Rail advises that expenditure on the maintenance of any mile of track will depend on the type of track, its age, and the underlying ground conditions, the types of trains that that run on the route, their speed and frequency.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much of the subsidy to train operators is used to finance the leasing of rolling stock. [168177]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Franchise agreements with train operating companies specify franchise payments, whether subsidy or premium, but do not break the figures down into individual components such as rolling stock costs.

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what the average payment is per year to lease a unit of rolling stock; [168178]

(2) what the average cost is of a unit of rolling stock. [168180]

Mr. McNulty *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Rolling stock building and leasing costs vary widely. A two car Pacer, for example, will have cost about £500,000 to build at present prices and is likely to cost an operator in the region of £50,000 per year to lease. A more modern two car train, such as a Class 170, would command an annual rent of around £170,000 per year, reflecting substantially higher build costs.

Shipping (Security)

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if the Government will meet the compliance deadline of 1 July for implementation of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code; what steps his Department is taking to meet this deadline; how many UK ships and ports have reached the required standard to date; and if he will make a statement. [167637]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department for Transport's Transport Security Directorate (TRANSEC) has the policy lead and is responsible for introducing the ISPS Code requirements to approximately 600 UK port facilities and over 600 UK flagged ships by the deadline of the 1 July 2004. Operationally TRANSEC is responsible for UK ports and passenger shipping, and the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has been delegated responsibility for non-passenger shipping, under a policy framework set by TRANSEC.

The UK has made excellent progress towards implementation and there is every expectation that all UK flagged ships and port facilities that submit acceptable security plans by the deadlines set by TRANSEC and MCA, will be ISPS compliant by the 1 July deadline.

TRANSEC have carried out port facility security assessments at facilities which fall within the scope of the Code and have categorised them by traffic type. Both TRANSEC and MCA have issued security instructions and standards for different categories of port and ship facilities, and have provided port and ship security plan templates to assist industry with the preparation of their security plans. Liaison with the port and shipping industries has played a fundamental part in developing effective and proportionate policies and this communication is on-going.

It is not our policy to comment in detail on security measures. Therefore, I cannot set out in detail the number of ships or port facilities that already have approved Security Plans. However, all of the major UK ports including the passenger operations have been assessed and Port Facility Security Plans are currently being submitted for approval. Passenger and non-passenger ship security plans are currently being submitted to TRANSEC and MCA for approval and verification visits are being undertaken by inspectors to ensure that the plans developed are operating effectively.

Transport Infrastructure

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Heywood and Middleton since 1997. [168549]

Mr. McNulty: Two priority bus lanes have been created in the Heywood and Middleton constituency since 1997, with a total length of 0.225 kms, on Rochdale Road, Middleton and South Parade, Rochdale.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided in Heywood and Middleton using public funds since 1997. [168547]

Mr. McNulty: A total of 19 km of cycle lanes have been introduced on various roads in Heywood and Middleton.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167307]

Mr. Darling: 1.3 km of cycle lanes on Ashton New Road have been introduced in Gorton since 1997, as well as 4 km of dedicated pathways along the Fallowfield Loop disused railway line and a further 2 km along the Ashton canal towpath.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167308]

Mr. Darling: An 875 m long city-bound bus lane, starting from the junction with Redgate Lane, was introduced as part of the Hyde Road/Devonshire Street junction improvement scheme, completed in May 2003. £23 million has also been awarded for a Quality Bus Corridor along the A57 from Hyde to Manchester.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997. [168730]

Mr. McNulty: A 2.5 km section of the Transpennine Trail, which provides facilities for cyclists and other users, has been created in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997. A number of footpaths throughout Stalybridge and Hyde have also been upgraded to bridleways thus providing additional cycle facilities.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Court Administrative Boundaries

25. **Jim Knight:** What plans there are to align court administrative boundaries with Government Office regional boundaries. [168408]

Mr. Leslie: With the introduction of the new unified courts agency, court administrative boundaries will be aligned with the Government Office boundaries and Wales, with two exceptions: Cheshire, and the Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. We will re-examine these arrangements as part of a post-implementation review in the financial year 2006–07.

Judiciary

27. **Keith Vaz:** What plans the Lord Chancellor has to ensure greater diversity in the judiciary. [168410]

Mr. Leslie: The new, independent Judicial Appointments Commission will inspire a more diverse range of applicants through a more open, transparent and accessible system. The Department is also examining whether other barriers exist to deter applicants from minority groups, while continuing to run its comprehensive outreach programme.

Queen's Counsel

29. **Dr. Cable:** When the Lord Chancellor intends to present proposals to continue or replace the system of Queen's Counsel. [168413]

Mr. Leslie: We hope to make an announcement soon.

Social Security Commissioners (Welsh Language)

30. **Mr. Llwyd:** What action the Secretary of State takes to ensure that an appellant who is resident in Wales is able to conduct his case before the Social Security Commissioners through the medium of the Welsh language wherever that tribunal sits. [168414]

Mr. Lammy: All cases from Wales received by the Social Security Commissioners are processed by Commissioners who are familiar with the Welsh language. Where appropriate bilingual directions are forwarded to the appellant giving them the opportunity to request a hearing to be conducted in the Welsh language.

Local Authority Records (Public Access)

31. **Mr. Gordon Marsden:** To ask the Parliamentary Secretary of State, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on access by the public to local authority records under freedom of information legislation. [168415]

Mr. Lammy: All public authorities, are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. When access rights come into force on 1 January 2005 anybody may request information from a local authority. The applicant has the right:

To be told whether or not the public authority holds that information; and if so,

To have that information communicated to him or her.

Data Protection

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what data protection safeguards are available to UK citizens whose detailed private information is made available to private companies in the US. [168250]

Mr. Lammy: The general rule established by the Data Protection Act 1998 is that, subject to exemptions, personal data may only be transferred to countries outside the European Economic Area if they provide an adequate level of data protection. Adequacy of protection is determined on a case by case basis having regard to all the circumstances. The US Department of Commerce have established a set of data protection rules (generally known as the "safe harbour") to which certain organisations receiving personal data from the EU may subscribe. The European Commission have made a formal finding that the "safe harbour" provides adequate data protection for the purposes of the EC Data Protection Directive (95/46/EC) to which the Data Protection Act 1998 gives effect. About 450 organisations currently subscribe to the "safe harbour".

Immigration

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the

legal aid costs have been, to date, of representing *(a)* detainees and *(b)* those appealing against removal of nationality (i) before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission and (ii) in any subsequent appeals; and if he will make a statement. [168224]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission cannot provide the requested information. Bills for most of the cases before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission have yet to be submitted to the Commission.

Legal Aid

Mr. Drew: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the legal aid budget. [168364]

Mr. Lammy: Legal aid expenditure for the year 2002–03 was £1,908 million in cash. Final figures for 2003–04 are not currently available; however, legal aid expenditure is expected to be £2,084 million in cash, and £1,819 million in resource. From 2003–04 legal aid is accounted for in both cash and resource terms, but no equivalent figure for resource is available for 2002–03.

Bob Spink: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs on how many occasions legal aid has been withdrawn because of fraudulent applications in each of the last three years. [167075]

Mr. Lammy: It is difficult to classify particular applications as deliberately fraudulent. The Commission has powers to investigate where doubts arise about whether a funded client is financially eligible for civil legal aid. Opponents or third parties can make representations about the merits of the case, the means of the applicant or both (mixed representations). Figures are provided in the table showing outcomes for these categories in each of the last three financial years for which it has finalised data:

	Total representations closed out	*Cases where investigation led to refusal/withdrawal/ amendment to certificate*
2000–01		
Means	2,871	1,010
Mixed	416	128
2001–02		
Means	2,282	716
Mixed	306	80
2002–03		
Means	1,984	676
Mixed	214	70

The Commission's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) deals with means assessments for individual applicants for legal aid which are difficult or contentious including cases of misrepresentation by applicants for publicly funded legal services. Figures on the number of cases in each year where investigation resulted in the refusal or withdrawal of funding or an increase in the contributions payable are set out as follows:

2000–01—319

2001–02—128

2002–03—152

For criminal legal aid, means assessment was used prior to 2001–02. The Court Service referred cases to the Commission's SIU where applicants had complex financial affairs. In 2000–01 98 investigation into criminal cases were concluded, following 181 referrals from the Court Service. 95 per cent. of investigations in criminal cases led to the refusal or withdrawal of funding. 47 investigations were concluded in 2001–02 relating to applications for criminal legal aid made prior to April 2001. In 85 per cent. of these cases, investigations resulted in a change to the decision regarding funding.

Legal Services Commission

Mr. Drew: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when he will make an evaluation of the performance of the Legal Services Commission with specific reference to the provision of franchise arrangements with agencies providing legal advice. [168310]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission (LSC) has reported regularly to my Department on measures they have taken to improve quality in publicly funded legal services since it replaced the Legal Aid Board in April 2000.

The Specialist Quality Mark replaced franchise arrangements in April 2002 and became a requirement for all organisations wanting to provide specialist legal services within the Criminal Legal Service (CLS) and Criminal Defence Service (CDS). The Quality Mark is a set of quality assurance standards for legal information, general advice and specialist legal services.

The LSC is aware that some of the requirements of the Quality Mark are viewed by suppliers as overly bureaucratic. In response, a revised audit process was introduced in April 2003 that will mean that the Commission can undertake less exhaustive, less frequent audits for the best performing solicitors' firms and advice agencies. The LSC is consulting on further measures to ease the burden on firms and will continue to work with the profession to improve the position.

Members of Parliament

Andrew George: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs, what plans the Department has to review the number of hon. Members elected to the House. [168403]

Mr. Leslie: The independent Parliamentary Boundary commissions of England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland are required by the Parliamentary Constitution Act 1986 to undertake periodic General Reviews every eight to 12 years of the number, boundaries and names of parliamentary constituencies. A review is currently under way.

Special Immigration Appeals Commission Hearings

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will place in the Library the public parts of the transcripts of Special Immigration Appeals Commission hearings relating to appeals against detention under the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001; and if he will make a statement. [167090]

Mr. Lammy: The transcripts from the open sessions of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission still contain sensitive material relating to the appellants' details. It would therefore be inappropriate to release this information into the public domain pursuant to Rule 39(5)(h) of The Special Immigration Appeals Commission (Procedure) Rules 2003.

Supreme Court

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs, what recent representations the Lord Chancellor has received on the location of the Supreme Court. [168409]

Mr. Leslie: We have received a number of comments on the location of the Supreme Court, both during and after consultation. Only a small proportion of these have related to specific buildings or locations.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Freeview Digital Television

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of the population of *(a)* Newtownabbey, *(b)* Carrickfergus and *(c)* Larne are able to receive Freeview digital television services. [168197]

Estelle Morris: According to BBC Freeview prediction figures, access to Freeview in Newtonabbey is approximately 10 per cent., Carrickfergus, around 80 per cent. and in Larne, very little, if any coverage is currently predicted.

For mainly technical reasons, it will not be possible to significantly increase digital terrestrial television coverage prior to digital switchover. However, the Government are committed to ensuring that everyone who can currently receive the main public service broadcasting channels in analogue form will receive them on digital systems at switchover.

2012 Olympics

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what discussions she has had with *(a)* hon. Members and *(b)* political parties from Northern Ireland in relation to promoting Northern Ireland for games events for the 2012 London Olympic bid. [168640]

Mr. Caborn: My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State has discussed the London 2012 bid with her ministerial colleagues from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland at the Sports Cabinet meetings on 23 October 2003 and 20 April 2004.

A Parliamentary All Party Olympics Group which included political parties in Northern Ireland was also formed and had its first meeting on 30 June 2003. London 2012 are responsible for selecting the venues for the bid and have announced that Windsor Park will host preliminary games of the football competition. They will also work to maximise the benefits for the whole of the UK through the Nations and Regions Group.

Gaming Industry

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the likely impact of the draft Gambling Bill on the gaming industry. [168899]

Mr. Caborn: The Government published their assessment of the impact of the draft Gambling Bill on the casino market on 5 February 2004, and on the bingo market on 8 April 2004.

The Joint Committee, which examined our draft Bill, made a number of recommendations for the casino and bingo markets and these are being considered.

Kinetika Arts Link International

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much funding was made available by her Department and its agencies to Kinetika Arts Link International and associated companies for each of the last five years broken down by project; what the intended outcome of each project was; what the agreed assessment criteria for each project were; and what the outcome of each project was. [168849]

Estelle Morris *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The information is as follows:

Direct and Indirect Awards to Kinetika Arts Link International

Arts Council England (ACE) is the national development agency for the arts in England. It is responsible for distributing public money from DCMS and the National Lottery to artists and art organisations. ACE received £336.8 million from DCMS in 2003–04 and this will increase to £410.4 million by 2005–06.

Following is the full list of awards Kinetika received either directly or indirectly since April 1999. Kinetika is also coming on stream as a Regularly Funded Organisation of ACE in 2004–05 and will receive £15,000 in the first year, increasing to £30,000 in 2005–06.

Date awarded	*Award recipient*	*Funding strand*	*Purpose of grant/intended outcome*	*Outcomes*	*Amount approved (£)*
2001	Kinetika	Strategic relations development funds	To carry out research in Salvador Carnival in Brazil	Performances in South London schools, Thames Festival and Netting Hill Carnival	550
2001	Isle of Wight Council	Regional Arts Lottery Programme	Community Arts and Carnival Project	Six professional artists, organised through Kinetika, worked in Ryde over a three month period with community groups, schools youth clubs and Isle of Wight artists to develop skills	22,000

Date awarded	Award recipient	Funding strand	Purpose of grant/intended outcome	Outcomes	Amount approved (£)
2002	Isle of Wight Council	Regional Arts Lottery Programme	Carnival Arts Development	Kinetika, Ryde High School and the Adult and Community Learning services worked in partnership to pursue the wider development of carnival across the island over two carnival seasons	59,100
2002	Canterbury Festival	Regional Arts Lottery Programme 2	Canterbury Festival Street Publicity and Profile	The award financed the finale of Kinetika's Yemanja project, in partnership with Strange Cargo. Yemanja combines elements from three carnival traditions (UK, Trinidad, Salvador, Brazil) and includes a performance that includes large visuals/characters (puppets/costumes/ float), live music., choreography, text and ritual	29,754
2002	Kinetika	National Touring Programme	Tour of Yemanja	Yemanja toured major festivals in England including the Ryde Carnival on the Isle of Wight, the Thames Festival and the Canterbury Festival	47,900
2003	Kinetika	National Touring Programme	Tour of Bollywood Carnival (Din Shuru—Daybreak)	The tour enabled a wider audience to enjoy the Bollywood Carnivals at Carnivals across England including the Leicester Belgrave Mela and the Thames Festival	48,000
2003	Canterbury Festival	Grants for the Arts-Organisations	Din Shuru: An Indian Carnival	Kinetika worked with a number of contributors including the Vayu Naidu Company to undertake the Din Shuru project, tracing the impact of the Indian population in shaping Carnival on this island of Trinidad	63,544
2003	Kinetika	Regional Arts Lottery Programme	For organisational development to develop a strategic five year artistic plan, including a review of activities to date, exploration of partnership working opportunities, development of a marketing strategy and new promotional material.	Project due to complete October 2004	29,400
2003	Kinetika	Regional Arts Lottery Programme	To purchase a pool of multimedia equipment including a digital camera, a camcorder, office based and portable video editing facilities (hardware and software), a projector and screen.	Equipment purchased, total value of grant = £10,023	11,137
2004	Kinetika	Grants for the Arts	Towards the costs of a feasibility exercise to review the potential of touring 'Din Shuru—A Bollywood Carnival' to regional Melas, Festivals and Diwali events in 2004.	Project due to complete August2004	5,000
2004	Kinetika	Grants for the Arts	Towards the development of young people's involvement in Carnival Arts in London	Project due to complete March 2005	66,500

New Opportunities Fund

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Heywood and Middleton in each year since 1997. [168526]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Heywood and Middleton are shown in the table.

Financial year	Amount (£)
1999–2000	28,908
2000–01	114,626
2001–02	177,650
2002–03	985,250
2003–04	1,303,133

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at

www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Stalybridge and Hyde in each year since 1997. [168748]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Stalybridge and Hyde are shown in the following table.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
2000–01	50,000
2001–02	5,500
2002–03	1,860,007
2003–04	139,689

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Regional Development Agencies (Tourism)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Burnley. [167903]

Mr. Caborn: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board, the nominated Destination Management Organisation (DMO), for Lancashire. The new DMOs are, in effect, smaller versions of tourist boards. They aim to ensure a strong visitor and market focus to all that is done within the region and strengthen the connection between businesses and other organisations in the tourism sector.

During 2003–04 the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board received £275,000 from the agency's tourism budget for a variety of tourism marketing and development projects.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Preston. [168141]

Mr. Caborn: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board, the nominated Destination Management Organisation (DMO), for Lancashire. The new DMOs are, in effect, smaller versions of tourist boards. They aim to ensure a strong visitor and market focus to all that is done within the region and strengthen the connection between businesses and other organisations in the tourism sector.

During 2003–04 the Lancashire and Blackpool Tourist Board received £275,000 from the agency's tourism budget for a variety of tourism marketing and development projects. Of this figure £50,000 was targeted towards a marketing campaign for the National Football Museum in Preston.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Heywood and Middleton. [168527]

Mr. Caborn: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with Marketing Manchester, the nominated Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Manchester. The new DMOs are, in effect, smaller versions of tourist boards. They aim to ensure a strong visitor and market focus to all that is done within the region and strengthen the connection between businesses and other organisations in the tourism sector.

During 2003–04 Marketing Manchester received £695,000 from the NWDA's Marketing Image Budget for tourism and investment campaigns to promote Manchester. £203,000 was also provided from the agency's tourism budget for a variety of tourism development projects.

Tourism

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the tourism industry's balance of trade was in each year since 1992. [168588]

Mr. Caborn: The table shows the UK tourism industry's balance of trade from 1992 to 2003.

Balance of payments for UK tourism

£ million

	Expenditure by overseas residents in the UK	*Expenditure by UK residents overseas*	*Balance of payments deficit*
1992	7,891	11,243	3,352
1993	9,487	12,972	3,485
1994	9,786	14,365	4,579
1995	11,763	15,386	3,623
1996	12,290	16,223	3,933
1997	12,244	16,931	4,687
1998	12,671	19,489	6,818
1999	12,498	22,020	9,522
2000	12,805	24,251	11,446
2001	11,306	25,332	14,026
2002	11,737	26,962	15,225
2003[1]	11,902	28,940	17,038

[1] Figures for 2003 are provisional estimates.

Source:
International Passenger Survey

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport (1) what contribution the tourism industry made to gross domestic product in *(a)* absolute terms and *(b)* as a percentage in each year since 1992; [168589]

(2) what the annual growth rate of the UK tourism industry was in each year since 1992. [168590]

Mr. Caborn: Consistent estimates of the gross domestic product (GDP) of the tourism industry are only available since 1998[1]. The table shows *(a)* the GDP, *(b)* the percentage of total UK GDP, and *(c)* the growth rate in each year.

[1] Data prior to 1998 are not comparable due to changes in surveys of domestic tourists.

Tourism industry GDP, contribution to the economy and growth rate

	Estimated tourism GDP		
	(a) Absolute terms (£ billion)	*(b) Contribution to UK economy (percentage)*	*(c) Growth rate (percentage change on previous year)*
1998	42.0	4.9	n/a
1999	44.0	4.9	4.8
2000	45.0	4.7	2.3
2001	443	4.5	-1.6
2002	45.4	4.4	2.5

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many people were employed directly in the UK tourism industry in each year since 1992. [168591]

Mr. Caborn: Employment estimates for the tourism industry are only available for Great Britain rather than for the UK. These are shown in the table.

Employment in the tourism related industries[1] in Great Britain

	Number of jobs[2] in Great Britain[3] (million)
1992	1.86
1993	1.81
1994	1.82
1995	1.93
1996	1.92
1997	1.98
1998	1.99
1999	2.07
2000	2.14
2001	2.16
2002	2.18
2003	2.17

[1] The tourism-related industries are comprised of hospitality, travel agencies, tour operators, and cultural, recreation and sporting activities.

[2] Includes both employees and the self-employed. All figures are as at June in the relevant year.

[3] Figures given for self-employment in the tourism industry are derived from the Labour Force Survey. The results of this survey are due to be revised shortly.

Source:

DCMS analysis of National Statistics Sources

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many overseas visitors came to the UK in each year since 1992. [168592]

Mr. Caborn: The table shows the number of visits by overseas residents to the United Kingdom from 1992 to 2003.

Visits by overseas residents to the UK

	Number (million)
1992	18.5
1993	19.9
1994	20.8
1995	23.5
1996	25.2
1997	25.5
1998	25.7
1999	25.4
2000	25.2
2001	22.8
2002	24.2
2003[1]	24.8

[1] Figure for 2003 is a provisional estimate.

Source:

International Passenger Survey.

Mr. Moss: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport when she will publish her Department's Prospectus for Tourism; and when it was first announced that a provisional timescale for the publication of the Prospectus for Tourism had been set. [168593]

Mr. Caborn: The Prospectus will be published in the summer. The first round of consultation last year produced a number of valuable contributions. A new draft, reflecting these, is expected to be sent out for final consultation in May. This process reflects the importance of the Prospectus as a statement of actions and responsibilities, agreed by all the major players in tourism in the public and private sectors.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State agreed with industry leaders that a new framework document for tourism should be produced, at the third Hartwell seminar in February 2003. This was to follow the Government's major reforms of April 2003, which created VisitBritain and passed strategic responsibility for tourism in the English regions to the Regional Development Agencies. I outlined the likely timescale for publication to the All Party Parliamentary Group on Tourism on 5 November 2003. At that time, I anticipated the publication of the Prospectus in early 2004.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Maternity Leave Discrimination

Dr. Cable: To ask the Minister for Women (1) if she will make a statement on the extent of discrimination against women in the workplace who have returned to work after maternity leave; and if she will estimate how many women have been dismissed in each of the last five years on their return from maternity leave; [167848]

(2) what action she plans to take to penalise companies which discriminate against women returning from maternity leave. [167849]

Ms Hewitt: Women are protected under legislation from discrimination, detriment and dismissal for reasons related to pregnancy or maternity leave. Employers who discriminate against women returning from maternity leave are breaking the law and could be liable to pay compensation. They are harming their own businesses by excluding talented women from the workforce.

Unfortunately there are still cases where women are discriminated against. The following table sets out the outcome of applications made to employment tribunals by women who believe they have been unfairly dismissed on grounds of pregnancy maternity or childbirth and women who believe they have been prevented from returning to work following maternity leave.

The Government welcome any new research in this area and looks forward to the results of the Equal Opportunities Commission's Formal Investigation into pregnancy discrimination.

Outcome of applications to employment tribunals 1998–99 to 2002–03. Unfair dismissal on grounds of pregnancy, maternity or childbirth

	Acas conciliated settlement	*Withdrawn or private settlement*	*Successful at tribunal*	*Dismissed at hearing (other reasons)*	*Dismissed at hearing (out of scope)*	*Disposed of otherwise*	*Total disposed in period*
2002–03	369	133	82	73	11	30	698
2001–02	401	165	64	88	9	19	746
2000–01	402	130	91	105	14	17	759
1999–2000	498	197	92	148	16	10	961
1998–99	524	208	125	170	19	25	1,071

Failure to allow a return to work following maternity leave

	Acas conciliated settlement	*Withdrawn or private settlement*	*Successful at tribunal*	*Dismissed at hearing (other reasons)*	*Dismissed at hearing (out of scope)*	*Disposed of otherwise*	*Total disposed in period*
2002–03	44	21	7	7	1	0	80
2001–02	52	29	8	7	2	3	101
2000–01	57	16	9	13	1	3	99
1999–2000	64	32	13	15	2	1	127
1998–99	51	27	10	17	2	5	112

Note:
Figures provided by Employment Tribunals Service.

HOUSE OF COMMONS

Fair Trade Tea and Coffee

Norman Baker: To ask the Chairman of the Catering Committee whether the *(a)* tea and *(b)* coffee available from dispensers in food outlets in the House is of a Fair Trade origin. [167787]

Mr. Dennis Turner: The Refreshment Department was one of the first organisations to support the Fairtrade movement and has done so for many years. All fresh coffee served by the Department is made from beans approved by the Fairtrade organisation, and fairly traded "Clipper" teas are stocked. In February 2004 the Refreshment Department installed new triple brew vending machines in various locations throughout the Parliamentary Estate. The fresh coffee dispensed by these new machines is fairly traded.

GM Food

Norman Baker To ask the Chairman of the Catering Committee what the Committee's policy is on the purchase of GM food. [167786]

Mr. Dennis Turner: The Refreshment Department remains aware of consumer concern about the presence of GMOs in food and in response to this concern continues to pursue a policy of avoiding, wherever identifiable, the procurement of foods that contain genetically modified organisms. The Refreshment Department will be in contact with its food suppliers once the consultation exercise on the GMO Traceability and Labelling Regulations has been concluded and guidance has been finalised.

Organic Food

Norman Baker: To ask the Chairman of the Catering Committee what steps he is taking to promote the consumption of organic food in House outlets. [167785]

Mr. Dennis Turner: The Refreshment Department is a member of the Soil Association and recognises the significant demand for organic produce. The Department pursues a policy of purchasing organic produce or ingredients wherever consistent availability and quality can be guaranteed by suppliers, and where it is judged that the price to be passed on to the Department's customers is affordable.

The Refreshment Department sells a range of organic foods; the Terrace and 'Debate' cafeterias offer an extensive range of organic yoghurts, sandwiches, muffins, biscuits and drinks. All the coffee served in Portcullis House is organically grown and fairly traded. From time to time, promotions are run to promote organic awareness, sometimes in conjunction with regional promotions.

Parliamentary Passes

Jim Dowd: To ask the Chairman of the Administration Committee if she will list all the classes of pass to the Parliamentary estate, describe each category covered and give the number of each that are currently valid. [164657]

Mrs. Roe: The classes and descriptions of pass categories are set out in the table. This information is already in the public domain. However, for security reasons I am sure the hon. Gentleman will understand, I am not prepared to give the numbers of passes in each category.

Class	*Description*
M	Member of Parliament
MEP	Member of European Parliament
P	Peer
X	Former Member of Parliament
XP	Non Sitting Hereditary Peer
RO	Retired Officer (both Houses)
1	Officers of Commons
1A	Specialist Adviser
2	Speaker's Office
3	Clerk of House Department
3A (Temp)	Clerk of House Department
4	Serjeant at Arms Department
4A (Temp)	Serjeant at Arms Department
5	Commons Library
5A (Temp)	Commons Library
6	Commons Hansard

Class	Description
6A (Temp)	Commons Hansard
7	Finance and Administration
7A (Temp)	Finance and Administration
8	Commons Refreshment
8A (Temp)	Commons Refreshment
9A	Members' Secretary
9B	Members' Research Assistant
9C (Temp)	Members' Secretary
9D (Temp)	Members' Research Assistant
9E (Temp)	Members' Chauffeur
9G (Temp)	Overseas Research Assistant
10	Spouses/Partners
11	Overseas Visitors
12	Officers of House of Lords
12A (Temp)	Specialist Advisers (HoL)
13	Lords Staff
13A (Temp)	Lords Staff
14	Lord Chancellor's Dept
14A (Temp)	Lord Chancellor's Dept
15A	Peers' Secretary
15B	Peers' Research Assistant
15C (Temp)	Peers' Secretary
15D (Temp)	Peers' Research Assistant
15E (Temp)	Peers' Chauffeur
16	IPU, CPA
16A (Temp)	IPU, CPA
17 (Temp)	Government Departmental Staff
17A (Temp)	Government Despatch Service
17B (Temp)	Government Press Officers
17C (Temp)	Foreign and Commonwealth Office Escort Officers
18 (Temp)	Government Messengers
19	Parliamentary Works Services Directorate Specialist Contractors
20	Security Force
20A (Temp)	Security Force
21	Post Office
21A (Temp)	Post Office
22	Parliamentary Communications Directorate Contractors (Telephonists)
22A (Temp)	Parliamentary Communications Directorate Contractors
23	Parliamentary Counsel/Agents
23A (Temp)	Parliamentary Counsel/Agents
24	Various Support Services
24A (Temp)	Various Support Services
25 (Temp)	Conservative Central Office/PLP etc
26 (Temp)	Parliamentary Works Services Directorate Contractor
26A (Temp)	Parliamentary Works Services Directorate Contractor
26B (Temp)	Parliamentary Works Services Directorate Contractor
26C (Temp)	Parliamentary Works Services Directorate Contractor
26D (Temp)	Parliamentary Works Services Directorate Contractor
26E (Temp)	Parliamentary Works Services Directorate Contractor
27 (Temp)	Non Parliamentary Works Services Directorate Contractor
28	Commons Press
28A	Commons Press Gallery/Lobby
28B	Commons Press Gallery
28C (Temp)	Commons Press Sound Box
26D (Temp)	Commons Overseas Press
28E (Temp)	Commons Press Premises
29A	Lords Press Gallery
29B	Lords Lobby and Press Gallery
30 (Temp)	Specially Authorised Holders
32	Whips' Offices (both Houses)
33	Stationery Office
33a (Temp)	Stationery Office
34	Gymnasium
35	Parliamentary Broadcasting
35a (Temp)	Parliamentary Broadcasting
36 (Temp)	Commons Media Positions
V (Temp)	Delivery Drivers
TG (Temp)	Tour Guides

Note:

The Lord Chancellor's Department passes are being changed to Category 17 on renewal.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Company Accounts

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the number of public limited companies which failed to disclose details of their payment records in annual accounts as required by company law in the last year for which figures are available; and what steps she is taking to tackle this. [167506]

Mr. Sutcliffe: This information is not collated centrally and, as there are over 12,000 public limited companies, it could be gathered only at disproportionate cost.

Where Companies House receives a complaint that a public company has not disclosed its policy and practice as required by the Companies Act 1985, then it will take enforcement action.

Consumer Codes Approval Scheme

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what steps the Office of Fair Trading have taken to inform consumers of the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme; how much the scheme has cost; and how much of the costs have been spent on advertising and information campaigns; [165496]

(2) which organisations the Office of Fair Trading has granted Stage One approval to in the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme; and from which organisations Stage 1 approval was withheld; [165497]

(3) what evidence the *(a)* Ombudsman for Estate Agents, *(b)* Direct Selling Association, *(c)* Association of British Travel Agents and *(d)* Vehicle Builders and Repairers Association supplied in support of their application to the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme; and if she will make a statement on the Stage 2 award to each organisation; [165498]

(4) what proportion of their respective industries the membership of the *(a)* Ombudsman for Estate Agents, *(b)* Direct Selling Association, *(c)* Association of British Travel Agents and *(d)* Vehicle Builders and Repairers Association represent; and what assessment she made of these proportions before granting Consumer Codes Approval Scheme Stage 2 approval. [165499]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Office of Fair Trading is responsible for the day-to-day administration of the Consumer Codes Approval Scheme. I will ask the Chairman to write to the hon. Member.

Employment Rights

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Heywood and Middleton qualify for paid leave entitlements. [168532]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Heywood and Middleton qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Heywood and Middleton who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Heywood and Middleton have benefited from a reduction of the maximum working week to 48 hours. [168533]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Heywood and Middleton are not available. However, it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect on residents of Stalybridge and Hyde of new rights for night-shift workers. [168743]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working night and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Stalybridge and Hyde.

Estate Agents

Mr. Bailey: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how her Department plans to respond to the Office of Fair Trading report on estate agents. [165907]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department is now considering the report's findings and recommendations and we aim to publish our response by 18 June 2004.

In the interim, my officials will be meeting estate agents groups, consumer groups and other interested parties during the 90-day period to help inform our response.

Funeral Directors

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many funeral directors are practising in the United Kingdom. [168663]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Malcolm Bruce, dated 27 April 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question concerning the number of businesses which are classified as funeral directors and related services. (168663)

The latest available information is published in the National Statistics bulletin "PA1003—Size Analysis of United Kingdom Businesses for 2003" which shows that there were 525 businesses in the UK in the category of funeral directors and related services in March 2003.

The bulletin is available free of change on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/pal 003.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the number of young people in Leeds who will benefit from the introduction of the minimum wage for 16 to 18-year-olds. [167778]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government recently accepted the Low Pay Commission's recommendation that 16 and 17-year-olds should be covered by a new National Minimum Wage of £3.00 per hour, from October 2004.

It is not possible to provide an estimate specifically for Leeds because of small sample size. However, the number of people in the UK who stand to benefit from the new rate is likely to be in the low 10s of thousands.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Burnley have benefited from the national minimum wage. [167895]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Burnley. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 up-rating of the National Minimum Wage.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the *(a)* name, *(b)* industry, *(c)* number of employees and *(d)* geographical locations of those employers formally issued with enforcement notices for not complying with the national minimum wage provisions. [166751]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Inland Revenue have issued 495 enforcement notices against employers, since the minimum wage was introduced in April 1999.

A breakdown of information is not available in the format you have requested. For reasons of confidentiality, the Inland Revenue does not reveal the identity of the names of employers.

We will be writing to the hon. Member with further details.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Warrington South have benefited from the national minimum wage. [168704]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Warrington South. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the National Minimum Wage.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Stalybridge and Hyde have benefited from the national minimum wage. [168745]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Stalybridge and Hyde. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 up-rating of the National Minimum Wage.

Regional Development Agencies

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry by what mechanism her Department monitors the effectiveness of the Regional Development Agencies' core indicators beyond the end of year results. [168657]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of England's Regional Development Agencies (RDAs) sits with the Government Office (GO) in each region. The GO reports provide Ministers with the information required to measure the effectiveness of RDAs, both in terms of their role as a strategic catalyst in the region and in the delivery of specific outputs.

For the first two years of the RDAs' Single Pot (2002–03 and 2003–04), GOs reported to Ministers on RDA performance on a quarterly basis and, from April 2004, the frequency has been reduced to every six months, following the National Audit Office's recommendation in its November 2003 report, "Success in the Regions".

Performance data are published every six months. Mid year data for 2003–04 were published on 4 February 2004 and the end year data will be published before the summer recess.

Royal Mail

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the cost was of withdrawing, reprinting and distributing the RMUK 530 AS leaflet, Mail Made Easy, containing the new postal rates; and if she will make a statement. [168429]

Mr. Timms: This is an operational matter for Royal Mail Group and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Small Businesses (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in Burnley since 1997. [167893]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for East Lancashire has provided assistance to 927 companies in the Burnley constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium-sized enterprises form April 2001. Before this date, Government Support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to these data.

325 of the 927 companies were starts assisted, those companies who began trading between 1 April 2001 and 31 March 2004.

Companies have received offers of grant from the Research and Development Grant Scheme with a total value of £193,604 since 1997.

Under the Enterprise Grant Scheme, which has recently closed (31 March 2004), 11 companies have received offers of grant with a total value of £314,000 since 1997.

Overall 5,970 companies were assisted in the East Lancashire area, of which 1,666 were business start-ups.

In addition, the Chancellor has taken a number of means to assist SMEs.

Utility Companies

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what plans she has to prohibit cold calling and door-to-door selling by utility companies; [167774]

(2) what measures she is able to take to regulate the selling practices of utility companies. [167775]

Mr. Timms: Utility companies are subject to the range of consumer legislation governing the sale of goods and services. The specific regulation of utility companies is a matter for the individual sectoral regulators. The Government have no plans to prohibit cold-calling or door-to-door sales. In respect of gas and electricity, during 2002, the industry agreed both the EnergySure scheme, to improve the training and oversight of sales staff, and a Code of Practice on doorstep selling. In that year, we also provided OFGEM with the power to levy financial penalties on companies that breached their operating licences. OFGEM subsequently used that power to fine London Electricity £2 million for mis-selling under its own brand and that of Virgin Energy. Complaints about energy mis-selling have significantly declined since 2002.

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will introduce legislation to prevent the disconnection of utility supplies due to debt. [167777]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Government will not introduce legislation to prevent the disconnection of utility supplies because of non-payment of bills. Gas and electricity suppliers have, as a matter of last resort and

subject to a range of safeguards, the right to disconnect customers who have not paid their bills and have ignored repeated requests to do so. The Office of Gas and Electricity Markets (OFGEM), has been in discussion with the energy industry about measures to improve arrangements surrounding disconnections, particularly as they affect vulnerable customers, and will shortly issue an industry consultation paper on the revised arrangements. In electronic communications, disconnection is a matter for the regulator, the Office of Communications (OFCOM). All communications providers must have disconnection procedures that are proportionate and not unduly discriminatory. In water, companies cannot disconnect a domestic customer's supply for debt.

HOUSE OF COMMMONS COMMISSION

Environmental Impact

34. **Norman Baker:** To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what steps the Commission is taking to lessen the House's environmental impact. [168418]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Serjeant at Arms commissioned a review of the Parliamentary Estate's environmental performance last year and the final report and recommendations will be available in May. I expect they will cover education and training, further work on energy efficiency consumption, and further development of green purchasing.

Security Arrangements

38. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make a statement on security arrangements in the Palace of Westminster. [168422]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The aim of the security arrangements is the protection of Members and staff of both Houses, of all those who visit the Parliamentary Estate, and of our buildings and facilities. In order to achieve this, the authorities of both Houses make every effort to react promptly to the advice of the Security Service and of the Metropolitan Police on any potential threat.

Car Parking Charges

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what recent assessment has been made of the implications of introducing workplace charging for vehicles parked in the House car park. [167793]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The House has never had a policy of charging for the use of the car park, which is provided for security reasons as well as for the convenience of Members and staff. There has therefore been no specific recent assessment of the implications of charging for use of the car park, but the Greater London Authority Act 1999 contains provisions which would allow the authority or Westminster city council to introduce a licensing scheme for parking in the Palace of Westminster, under which they may levy a charge on the two Houses. The Commission will consider the matter if and when either authority makes proposals for a licensing scheme.

Environmental Audit

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission when the activities of the House were last subject to an environmental audit. [167792]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The environmental performance of the Parliamentary Estate was reviewed by external consultants earlier this year. Areas of specific examination were general waste management, recycling schemes, energy and water use. The final report and recommendations will be available in May.

Lighting

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what plans the Commission has to increase the provision of *(a)* low-energy lighting and *(b)* lighting activated by movement within the House. [167783]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: We have a budget each year for investment in tactical energy saving measures. These are implemented in order of pay-back priority. Many motion activated lights have already been installed and there is budgetary provision for more.

For all major projects, the initial project brief requires the project manager to consider methods of providing 'energy efficient lighting' as part of the overall design.

Water

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what volume of water was used within the House in each year from 1997 to date. [167791]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The volume of mains water used on the Parliamentary Estate during each accounting year from 1997 to date is as follows, in cubic metres. It is not possible to provide figures for the House of Commons alone.

Cubic metres

Accounting year	*Volume of mains water*
1997–98	120,000
1998–99	100,000
1999–2000	150,000
2000–01	120,000
2001–02	140,000
2002–03	180,000
2003–04	190,000

WALES

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the

accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department. [166084]

Mr. Touhig: Since 2000 the Wales Office has not had any dealings with the named companies.

Road Maintenance

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how much money was allocated for local authorities in Wales to be used for road repairs and improvements in each year since 1997; and how much of these amounts was spent on settling legal disputes arising from poor road maintenance. [168013]

Mr. Touhig: In determining the amount of block grant that local authorities receive, the length of roads within their area is taken into account by the National Assembly.

However, the local authority Revenue Support Grant is not hypothecated and it is for individual local authorities to determine how much to spend on road repairs and improvements within their own area. Legal disputes are also a matter for individual authorities.

School and Hospital Closures

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales how many *(a)* schools and *(b)* hospitals have been closed in Wales since 1997. [163134]

Mr. Touhig: I will answer this question in two parts:

(a) Local Education Authorities are responsible for the provision of suitable education within their locality. The Assembly has set them the target that all school buildings are to be in good physical shape and well maintained by 2010, and to that end, the Assembly has already invested over £300 million in over 3,000 school buildings. In addition, the number of pupils in schools across Wales has dropped by over 3,000 between 1997–98 and 2002–03 and in reflecting the LEAs need to provide access to high quality education for pupils, 52 schools have closed in Wales[1] since 1997.

(b) In relation to part *(b)* of this question, I refer the hon. Gentleman to my earlier answer given on 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 608W.

[1] Where the proposal was to close two schools and to re-open a new school on the site of one of these, this has been counted as one closure.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Accident and Emergency Departments

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the average monthly waiting times in accident and emergency departments in each Northern Ireland hospital were in each of the last three years. [168270]

Angela Smith: This information is not collected centrally. Provisional data for the quarter ending 31 December 2003 indicates that 71 per cent. of patients admitted to wards from accident and emergency departments were admitted within two hours of the clinician's decision to admit.

Agriculture Courses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress he has made towards a decision on the future location for the teaching of agriculture at university level in Northern Ireland. [167715]

Mr. Pearson: I announced on Friday 23 April that The Queen's University of Belfast would be responsible for higher-level agri-food education provision from September 2005.

Animal Transportation

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the maximum journey limit is for the transportation of live animals from Northern Ireland. [156115]

Mr. Pearson: In accordance with EU requirements journey limits are set in terms of time periods rather than distance and these are set at different levels for different ages and species of animals and birds in line with their differing physiological needs.

For horses, cattle, sheep, goats and pigs, journey times may not normally exceed eight hours but this may be extended if the vehicle meets a range of additional welfare standards relating to feed, bedding, ventilation, inspection and water supply. In such circumstances:

(a) Horses (except registered horses) may be transported for a maximum of 24 hours provided that they are given water and, if necessary, fed every eight hours;

(b) Pigs may be transported for a maximum of 24 hours provided that they have continuous access to water;

(c) Unweaned calves, lambs, kids, piglets and foals which are still on a milk diet may be transported for a maximum of nine hours after which they must be given a rest period of one hour in which they are given liquid and, if necessary, fed. After this rest period they may be transported again for another nine hours; and

(d) Cattle, sheep and goats may be transported for a maximum of 14 hours after which they must be given a rest period of one hour in which they are fed and watered. After this rest period they may be transported again for another 14 hours.

Poultry, domestic birds and domestic rabbits may not be transported for more than 12 hours and newly hatched chicks for not more than 24 hours unless after such time food and water are provided.

Area Plans

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what costs have so far been incurred in the preparation of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan. [168216]

Angela Smith: The cost to date of the production of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan is £2,800,000.00.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many area plans are in place in Northern Ireland; and how many are under preparation. [168217]

Angela Smith: There are currently 19 existing area plans in place and 10 area plans under preparation in Northern Ireland.

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what recent changes have been made in accessing multi-agency multi-disciplinary diagnosis and assessment services at an earlier stage in relation to autistic spectrum disorder. [167719]

Angela Smith: The Department's Priorities for Action 2004–05 requires boards and trusts to establish multidisciplinary diagnostic, assessment and early intervention teams to provide for improved life outcomes for around 200 children and young people with autism per year. An additional £0.5 million has been allocated for this purpose.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what changes have been made in *(a)* school-based and *(b)* home-based educational and therapeutic provision since the report of the task group on autism. [167720]

Mr. Gardiner: The Department of Education and the five Education and Library Boards have responded positively to the Report of the Task Group on Autism.

The Department of Education has actively sought additional resources. In relation to school-based provision, in 2003–04, £500,000 was invested to provide an eclectic mix of training and awareness-raising programmes in the pre-school sector. £550,000 per annum will be provided from 2004–05 to allow each Board to put in place an ASD Team dedicated to the educational needs of children with Autism and to form an Inter Board ASD Group. This will enhance local provision and enable school-based support to be put in place.

In relation to home-based provision the Boards have sanctioned and are funding a number of home-based programmes for children with ASD. Consequently the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) has designed a strategic pathway to enable it to evaluate and identify effective practice in this area.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the TEACCH educational programme for young people with autistic spectrum disorders. [167723]

Mr. Gardiner: No overall assessment has been made of the TEACCH educational programme for young people with autistic spectrum disorders. This is because during the course of school inspections the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) inspect the quality of the teaching and learning as it meets the individual needs of the child in the school setting. This may involve a range of programmes but the specific interventions are not inspected in isolation. Between 1998 and 2000 the ETI undertook "A Survey of Provision for Pupils with Severe and Profound Learning Difficulties in NI". This included a section on provision for pupils with autism, which commented favourably on the use of TEACCH in the classroom by the teachers surveyed.

For the Education and Library Boards, the ongoing assessment of TEACCH, as with other programmes, is a natural element of the work of school-based staff who are experienced and/or trained in this approach.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the effects of applied behaviour analysis in the education of children with autistic spectrum disorders. [167724]

Mr. Gardiner: To date no overall assessment of the effects of commercially available home-based ABA programmes has been undertaken at service level by the Department of Education. This is because, during the course of school inspections, the Education and Training Inspectorate (ETI) inspect the quality of the teaching and learning as it meets the child's individual needs in the school setting. This may involve a range of strategies but the specific programmes are not inspected in isolation.

Several Education and Library Boards (ELBs) are currently making ABA provision for children on the basis of individual need. They will be carefully considering the progress made by pupils on these programmes and the Department will be interested in the outcomes. As a contribution to the development of ABA, the ETI is evaluating a pilot ABA programme in a pre-school setting in one ELB area. Consequently the ETI has designed a strategic pathway to enable it to evaluate and identify effective practice in home-based programmes for children with Autism.

On an on-going basis, ELBs review children with statements of special educational needs through the statutory annual review procedures.

Civil Partnership Bill

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) when the decision was made to include Northern Ireland in the Civil Partnership Bill; [168476]

(2) what assessment he has made of the results of the consultation on civil partnerships in Northern Ireland; [168477]

(3) when he will publish his response to the consultation in Northern Ireland on civil partnerships; and if he will make a statement. [168478]

Mr. Pearson: The consultation paper 'Civil Partnership: A Legal Status for Committed Same-Sex Couples in Northern Ireland' was published on 19 December 2003 with responses invited up to 5 March 2004. The views expressed in response to the consultation reflect the diversity of opinion in our society. All responses have been examined carefully and the points made, both points of principle and detailed comments, have been properly taken into account. Having considered the responses and reflected upon the issues raised, it was concluded that the reasons why we put forward these proposals in the first place still held good. That decision was confirmed publicly in the Press Release issued on 31 March 2004 and the Civil Partnership Bill published on that date included Northern Ireland provisions.

Officials have compiled a report analysing the responses and outlining the Government's approach to the issues raised by respondents. This report will be published within the next few weeks.

Civil Service

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost was of the recent industrial action by staff of the Northern Ireland Civil Service. [168200]

Mr. Pearson: The information requested is not readily available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many civil servants there were in Northern Ireland in each year since 1996, broken down by *(a)* grade and *(b)* department. [156975]

Mr. Pearson: I have placed tables in the Library which detail the number of Northern Ireland civil servants, by grade and department, there were in each year since 1996 in the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration, the Northern Ireland Office, the Police Service of Northern Ireland (formerly the Police Authority for Northern Ireland/RUC Civilian), Northern Ireland Assembly and Invest Northern Ireland.

Community Children's Services

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what measures are in place to *(a)* develop community children's services in Northern Ireland and *(b)* encourage the recruitment of more community children's nurses. [168273]

Angela Smith: All HSS Trusts now provide a community children's nursing service. There are now approximately 44 community children's nurses in post across Northern Ireland with a small number working in the voluntary sector. Boards and trusts have supported the development of the service by commissioning the training of nurses in this field over a number of years. Children's nurses working in the hospital setting have been attracted to community practice and to undertake further training required in community children's nursing. Workforce planning remains the responsibility of the HSS boards and trusts who identify their needs and request the training of additional staff through the established education commissioning process. It is anticipated that a further 10 nurses will commence training provided by the University of Ulster in September 2004.

Councillors (Allowances)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the terms are of the offer made by the Department of the Environment in relation to allowances which are to be payable to councillors in Northern Ireland for carrying out their duties. [168298]

Angela Smith: The terms offered to representatives of the National Association of Councillors, to modernise the system for the remuneration of councillors, involves two-stages.

Stage 1 is a package, which would include the abolition of attendance allowance; a basic allowance of £7,500, to reflect the loss in income from attendance allowance; and a substantial increase in the level of special responsibility allowance to between £15,000 and £70,000, available to councils to distribute.

Stage 2 would introduce primary legislation to enable regulations to be made. These regulations could be introduced depending on the outcome of the Review of Public Administration.

Employment Agencies

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the employment agencies which his Department has used to supply temporary staff in each financial year since 1996–97 to the most recent date for which figures are available. [163818]

Mr. Pearson: The employment agencies used by the 11 Departments of the Northern Ireland Administration and the Northern Ireland Office to supply temporary staff are detailed as follows:

Department	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*
Northern Ireland Office	None	None	None	None
Department of Education	None	None	None	None
Department of Culture Arts and Leisure	Department did not exist prior to Devolution			None
Department of Finance and Personnel	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available
Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available
Department of Social Development	Department did not exist prior to Devolution			Premiere People, Grafton Recruitment
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	None	None	None	None
Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available	Information not available
Department of the Environment	None	None	None	None

Department	*1996–97*	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*
Department of Regional Development	Grafton Recruitment	Grafton Recruitment	Grafton Recruitment	Grafton Recruitment, Hayes Montrose, Select Recruitment, Helm Corporation Ltd.
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	None	None	None	None
Department of Employment and Learning	None	None	None	None

Department	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Northern Ireland Office	Excel Recruitment, Josephine Sammons Ltd., Diamond Recruitment	Diamond Recruitment, Badenoch & Clark, Josephine Sammons Ltd., The Agency, Excel Recruitment	Lisburn Security Services, Tim Lewis Recruitment, Badenoch & Clark, Hays Accountancy Personnel, Excel Recruitment, The Agency, Josephine Sammons Ltd., Diamond Recruitment
Department of Education	None	None	None
Department of Culture Arts and Leisure	Grafton Recruitment, Reed Employment Agency	Grafton Recruitment	Grafton Recruitment
Department of Finance and Personnel	Select Recruitment, Reed Employment Agency, Kennedy Recruitment, Grafton Recruitment, Diamond Recruitment	Select Recruitment Reed Employment Agency, Kennedy Recruitment, Grafton Recruitment, Diamond Recruitment, Blue Print, Blythe Grace	Select Recruitment, Reed Employment Agency, Kennedy Recruitment, Blue Print, Blythe Grace
Office of First Minister and Deputy First Minister	Select Recruitment, Reed Employment Agency, Kennedy Recruitment, Grafton Recruitment, Diamond Recruitment	Select Recruitment, Reed Employment Agency, Kennedy Recruitment, Grafton Recruitment, Diamond Recruitment	Select Recruitment, Reed Employment Agency, Kennedy Recruitment
Department of Social Development	Premiere People, Grafton Recruitment	Premiere People, Grafton Recruitment	Premiere People, Grafton Recruitment
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development	None	None	None
Department of Health, Social Services & Public Safety	Premier Employment Ltd., Select Recruitment	Premier Employment Ltd., Flexiskills Recruitment, Lisburn Security Services, Select Recruitment	Premier Employment Ltd., Flexiskills Recruitment, Lisburn Security Services, Select Recruitment
Department of the Environment	None	Reed Employment Agency	Reed Employment Agency
Department of Regional Development	Grafton Recruitment, Hayes Montrose, Blueprint Engineering, Diamond Recruitment, Prof & Tech Placements, Select Recruitment, Helm Corporation Ltd., Reed Accountancy	Grafton Recruitment, Hayes Montrose, Tim Lewis Recruitment, Prof & Tech Placements, Blueprint Engineering, Select Recruitment, Diamond Recruitment, Helm Corporation Ltd., Hays Accountancy	Grafton Recruitment, Hayes Montrose, Blueprint Engineering, Select Recruitment, Diamond Recruitment, Helm Corporation Ltd., Hays Accountancy, Kennedy Recruitment
Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment	Kennedy Recruitment	Kennedy Recruitment	None
Department of Employment and Learning	None	None	Select Recruitment

Health Services (Newtownards and North Down)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the equity of resource allocation studies by the Eastern Health and Social Services Board and what conclusions he has drawn, in relation to the provision of services for those residing in the Newtownards and North Down Region; and if he will make a statement. [167725]

Angela Smith: In line with departmental policy, the Eastern Board is responsible for the equitable distribution among its local populations of the resources provided to it by the Department. In doing so, the Board has developed a locality equity strategy which has, and will continue to, skew additional resources towards those local populations assessed as being underfunded in relation to their target share of resources determined by an evidence based formula. Resources skewed towards the North Down and Ards locality in 2004–05 have resulted in a reduction of the relative under investment position by £0.329 million. In addition, a further £0.6 million has been provided to support Family and Child Care services in North Down and Ards. The locality equity assessment will be revised next year as the latest research into needs-based allocations becomes available.

Hospital Admission Procedures

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will appoint an experienced individual or group *(a)* to conduct a Province-wide appraisal of the course of hospital admissions and *(b)* to suggest means of enhancing efficiency from the primary care assessment stage through to ward discharge; and if he will make a statement. [167605]

Angela Smith: Improving the flow of emergency hospital admissions is a key priority for my Department. A target has been set to reduce by a third the number of patients waiting more than two hours in an accident and emergency department between the decision to admit and admission to a ward, by 31 March 2005 compared to 2003–04 levels. Boards and trusts are required to submit proposals to streamline processes relating to emergency patients flows to the Department by 31 August 2004.

The Department plans to take forward a regional initiative during 2004–05 to improve the flow of emergency patients through hospital. This regional programme, which will ensure that recognised best practice is implemented across all hospitals, will be overseen and directed by a Regional Steering Group comprising people with a wide range of experience in this area. It will build on work undertaken in the Eastern Board area over the past year which examined the way hospitals admitted emergency patients, how those patients moved through the hospital system and how they were discharged, and the experiences of similar programmes developed by the Modernisation Agency in England.

Housing

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the availability of properties for first-time buyers in Northern Ireland. [168190]

Mr. Spellar: While there are no specific properties made available for first time buyers, price being the main factor in determining whether or not a specific property is appropriate for a first time buyer, the vast majority of new houses constructed in Northern Ireland are affordable to first time buyers.

The Housing Executive's house sales scheme and my Department's Co-ownership scheme also make a vital contribution in providing a stock of suitable properties for first time buyers.

The Housing Executive's house sales scheme has enabled over 105,000 tenants to become home owners while the Co-ownership scheme has, since its inception in 1978, helped over 17,500 participants to become homeowners on an equity sharing basis, with over 13,000 of these eventually moving to full home ownership.

According to lending sources 13,000 mortgages were advanced to first time buyers in 2003, and DSD and NIHE statistics indicate that almost half of these applied to NIHE house sales and Co-ownership transactions.

Nurses

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to encourage the recruitment and retention of nurses in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [168266]

Angela Smith: Recruitment and retention of nursing staff is a matter for individual employers. In recognition of recruitment difficulties the annual number of pre-registration nurse training places was increased from 580 to 680 in 2001 and 750 in 2002 and these increases have been maintained. There are currently around 2,300 nursing students undergoing training.

Local employers attend annual "Job Fairs" arranged by Queen's University and University of Ulster and these provide additional opportunities to recruit staff and promote nursing as a career.

Existing employees have opportunities to participate in post-registration training to meet service needs and enhance career progression.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many school *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time nurses are employed within each Northern Ireland Education and Library Board area. [168274]

Mr. Gardiner: The information available in respect of the number of *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time nurses employed by each Northern Ireland Education and Library Board is detailed follows.

Number of nurses

	Full-time	*Part-time*
BELB	0	0
NEELB	0	[1]3
SEELB	0	[2]5
SELB	[3]4	[3]7
WELB	0	0

[1] Two share one post.
[2] Four nurses and one matron.
[3] Staff are engaged by the board as nurses, matrons and pupil welfare auxiliaries.

Police Stations

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what funding has been made available for the maintenance and renovation of police stations in Northern Ireland in each of the past five years; and what steps he is taking to improve *(a)* security and *(b)* working conditions in police stations. [144348]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The question of optimising resources made available for policing, including the maintenance and renovation of properties in the police estate, is a matter for the Chief Constable, in consultation with the Policing Board.

I have been advised that a total of £35.1 million was made available for maintenance works in the last five years. This is broken down as follows:

	£ million
2003–04	8.1
2002–03	8
2001–02	7
2000–01	7
1999–2000	5

With regard to the security of police stations, the relevant District Commanders keep the security measures at PSNI stations under constant review, with additional expert advice and guidance available, when required, from specialists at PSNI Headquarters.

In relation to improving working conditions, the maintenance funding delivers a programme of works specifically designed to achieve uniformity of working conditions at all stations to Home Office/PSNI accommodation standards. Considerable emphasis is being placed on improving environmental management, heating and ventilation, upgrading lighting and compliance with Disability Discrimination Act requirements.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when each police station in Northern Ireland was last substantially refurbished. [144349]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The police have advised that all major District Command Unit Headquarter stations are refurbished on a five year cycle, although maintenance required to address Health and Safety concerns is expedited on an annual basis. All Sector stations are subject to Condition Surveys every three years with resulting maintenance works expedited within the following twelve months.

Stolen Cars

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cars were reported stolen in each police district in Northern Ireland in the last five years for which figures are available; how many of these cars were later recovered; and what steps he is taking to tackle car crime in Northern Ireland. [156937]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The following tables set out the numbers of vehicles stolen in each police District Command Unit, over the past five years, together with the number of vehicles recovered.

	1999		*2000*		*2001*	
	Stolen	*Recovered*	*Stolen*	*Recovered*	*Stolen*	*Recovered*
Antrim	233	200	225	191	229	186
Ards	189	158	202	177	258	233
Armagh	85	66	117	79	93	77
Ballymena	123	113	110	93	129	105
Ballymoney	18	16	45	41	23	16
Banbridge	65	56	95	69	89	68
Belfast East	338	301	440	379	488	430
Belfast North	658	576	766	682	968	838
Belfast South	1,026	867	1,378	1,180	1,786	1,579
Belfast West	1,102	992	1,361	1,230	885	801
Carrickfergus	81	74	89	83	101	90
Castlereagh	272	243	295	256	389	331
Coleraine	146	136	134	117	123	105
Cookstown	69	48	57	38	70	55
Craigavon	281	248	302	250	342	291
Down	252	233	293	257	339	296
Dungannon and South Tyrone	108	79	130	103	148	118
Fermanagh	99	89	88	76	86	73
Foyle	293	271	245	221	243	212
Larne	57	52	42	40	68	59
Limavady	29	25	43	38	54	46
Lisburn	733	667	782	672	817	712
Magherafelt	73	58	61	47	65	52
Moyle	18	17	25	25	41	36
Newry and Mourne	292	216	285	211	291	214
Newtownabbey	365	317	328	270	399	330
North Down	271	241	288	266	342	312
Omagh	137	122	134	119	89	78
Strabane	45	35	77	68	63	54
Total	7,458	6,516	8,437	7,278	9,018	7,797

	2002		*2003*	
	Stolen	*Recovered*	*Stolen*	*Recovered*
Antrim	236	190	193	157
Ards	274	227	149	120
Armagh	80	59	76	43
Ballymena	115	91	105	73
Ballymoney	31	24	31	24
Banbridge	64	52	82	56
Belfast East	537	465	299	248
Belfast North	751	666	472	389
Belfast South	1,349	1,198	709	592
Belfast West	615	563	392	338
Carrickfergus	102	95	64	58
Castlereagh	301	268	211	168
Coleraine	102	91	83	72
Cookstown	46	37	42	32
Craigavon	188	139	228	195
Down	307	267	203	153
Dungannon and South Tyrone	124	104	93	69
Fermanagh	78	65	74	64
Foyle	203	176	196	166
Larne	44	32	29	24
Limavady	37	34	31	30
Lisburn	694	581	559	454
Magherafelt	37	24	32	21
Moyle	38	34	23	22
Newry and Mourne	459	359	257	169

	2002		2003	
	Stolen	Recovered	Stolen	Recovered
Newtownabbey	376	324	260	208
North Down	242	209	142	123
Omagh	75	61	55	46
Strabane	54	50	59	52
Total	7,559	6,485	5,149	4,166

In March 2003 the Government published a Community Safety Strategy—Creating a Safer Northern Ireland through Partnership. One of the nine key issues specified in the strategy related to car crime. The Strategy has an aim of reducing car crime by 10 per cent. by 2007, using 2001–02 as a baseline year. A number of activities were defined in the Strategy document and many of these have commenced.

During the period March to May 2002 the PSNI implemented Operation Clean Up in the Greater Belfast area, an operation that removed unlicensed vehicles from public roads. In that period 940 vehicles were removed with 83 per cent. of them being destroyed. This operation had a major impact on crime with the reported crimes of domestic burglary, theft of vehicles and "drive offs" from petrol stations significantly reduced; road traffic accidents were also down by 13 per cent., vehicle arsons were down by 23 per cent. and the number of vehicles removed by Councils down by 32 per cent.

Since then further similar exercises have been completed in Londonderry, Tyrone, Ballymena and Larne.

Funds have now been secured to deliver an extended car crime project, based upon Operation Clean Up, and discussions are currently on going with the PSNI, DVLNI and Belfast city council.

In a partnership of organisations led by the Probation Board and funded by the NIO the IMPACT project was established in West Belfast. The aim of the project is to reduce the level of car crime related incidents by targeting those involved and those who are vulnerable to involvement to such activity, through the provision of structured preventative, diversionary and interventionist programmes. This project has recently been given funding for the period up to March 2006.

The PSNI have undertaken a number of specific initiatives to tackle offenders. A special Auto Crime Team has been established which operates mainly in the West Belfast area, to tackle the problems associated with "joy riding". This has proved to be very successful with a significant number of arrests being made and individuals prosecuted.

In addition a number of local initiatives have been undertaken throughout Northern Ireland which are supported by advice and leaflets from local crime prevention officers.

Since 2003 the Government have introduced legislation which brought in some new offences and tougher penalties for offences such as aggravated vehicle taking, dangerous driving, causing death by dangerous driving, causing death by careless driving while under the influence of alcohol or drugs and causing death or grievous bodily injury by aggravated vehicle taking. The PSNI will have powers of arrest for drivers who drive while disqualified. Many of these legislative proposals are currently published for consultations. It is anticipated that any new offences and changes to the maximum sentences available will be in place and operational by autumn 2004.

Teaching Assistants

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time teaching assistants there were in each Northern Ireland Education and Library Board area in each of the last three years. [168198]

Mr. Gardiner: The available information in respect of the number of *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time teaching assistants employed in each of the last three years in each Education and Library Board area across the school sectors is detailed as follows:

Full/part-time classroom and nursery assistants in controlled and maintained schools

	2001	2002	2003	Total
BELB				
Full-time	294	306	329	929
Part-time	125	175	489	789
NEELB				
Full-time	206	142	147	495
Part-time	713	684	820	2,217
SEELB				
Full-time	270	287	294	851
Part-time	979	1,085	1,193	3,257
SELB				
Full-time	82	71	1	154
Part-time	1,104	1,243	1,566	3,913
WELB				
Full-time	322	337	324	983
Part-time	605	702	697	2004

Full/part-time classroom and nursery assistants in voluntary grammar schools

	2002	2003	Total
BELB			
Full-time	16	18	34
Part-time	11	13	24
NEELB			
Full-time	11	12	23
Part-time	9	11	20
SEELB			
Full-time	23	25	48
Part-time	8	8	16
SELB			
Full-time	15	17	32
Part-time	8	10	18
WELB			
Full-time	13	18	31
Part-time	2	2	4

Full/part-time classroom and nursery assistants in grant-maintained integrated schools

	2002	2003	Total
BELB			
Full-time	13	20	33
Part-time	16	24	40
NEELB			
Full-time	15	16	31
Part-time	22	29	51
SEELB			
Full-time	25	28	53
Part-time	26	35	61
SELB			
Full-time	33	36	69
Part-time	20	26	46
WELB			
Full-time	28	31	59
Part-time	21	22	43

The information for 2001 in respect of voluntary grammar schools and grant-maintained schools is not readily available.

Truancy

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to tackle truancy from schools in Northern Ireland. [148770]

Jane Kennedy: The responsibility to ensure regular attendance at school rests primarily with parents. Where a school has concerns about a pupil's attendance, a referral can be made to the Education Welfare Service. An officer will normally visit the home to assess the situation and then determine appropriate follow up action based on the underlying reasons for poor attendance.

The Department of Education has recently made funds available to the Education and Library Boards for a computerised database for the Education Welfare Service aimed, among other things, at tracking and monitoring pupils whose attendance is a cause for concern. In addition a pilot project aimed at promoting the habit of regular attendance at an early age is currently under way in a number of primary schools. Following a full evaluation of this project the Department will consider if it could usefully be extended to other schools.

Ulster Hospital

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to ensure adequate capacity at the Ulster Hospital; and if he will make a statement. [167726]

Angela Smith: The Ulster Community and Hospitals Trust has taken a number of steps to increase capacity at the Ulster Hospital and improve access to key hospital services. These steps have included the introduction of additional hospital beds, increased provision of services in the community, and a number of projects to improve the flow of patients through the hospital.

In the longer term, a major capital redevelopment programme is underway that will further increase capacity at the Ulster and ensure that patients have ready access to high quality hospital services in a state-of-the-art environment.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Animal Experiments

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what cost/benefit analysis has been conducted regarding animal experimentation. [165891]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office has not itself conducted a general cost/benefit analysis regarding animal experimentation. Various competent bodies have considered whether animal experimentation is valid and justified, including the Animal Procedures Committee and the House of Lords Select Committee on Animals in Scientific Procedures. They have concluded, in line with the consensus within the scientific community, that there is a continuing need for animal research and testing.

A form of cost benefit assessment of individual programmes of work has to be undertaken before the Home Office grants licences under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 to authorise the use of animals. Such licences can accordingly only be granted where, among other considerations, the likely benefits of the work are expected to outweigh the welfare costs to the animals involved. No animal procedures are therefore lawfully carried out which have not been fully justified.

More information about the statutory cost benefit assessment used in particular cases can be found at Appendix I of Guidance on the Operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (HC321).

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what research has been conducted into the effects on animals of heterotopic transplants. [165892]

Caroline Flint: Heterotopic transplants of organs are those in which the transplanted organ is not located at the same anatomical position as the animal's own organ, for example, where a third kidney is implanted into the abdomen. We are not aware of any research carried out in the United Kingdom, or elsewhere, exclusively to study the effects of such transplants on the welfare of the animals concerned.

Such transplants have been carried out under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 to investigate aspects of the performance of the transplanted organs, and causes of transplant rejection and methods of overcoming this problem. Significant scientific findings have been published in peer-reviewed scientific journals. The effects on the welfare of the animals would be reported in records maintained by the researchers.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the openness of the *(a)* regulation and *(b)* licensing procedures in relation to animal experimentation. [165893]

Caroline Flint: For some time now the Government has taken the view that greater openness and transparency regarding the regulation and use of animals in scientific procedures is desirable, providing it does not jeopardise the safety of individual scientists and their establishments, or their legitimate commercial and intellectual interests.

We have undertaken to review all statutory bars to the disclosure of information as part of our commitment to freedom of information, including section 24 of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, the so-called 'confidentiality clause'. Section 24 makes the unauthorised disclosure of confidential information relating to the use of animals in scientific procedures by Home Office Ministers and officials, members of the Animal Procedures Committee, and others appointed for specific purposes under the Act, a criminal offence. I hope to announce the outcome of the review of section 24 shortly.

Separately, in our response to the report of the House of Lords Select Committee on Animals in Scientific Procedures, published in January 2003 (Cm 5729), we announced plans to publish summary information relating to project licences issued under the 1986 Act as part of the Home Office publication scheme under the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Home Office officials are working out the practical arrangements with licensees now and we plan to publish the first summaries in the autumn 2004.

At the same time, we have concluded that there would be value in the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Inspectorate publishing an annual report on its work. The Inspectorate's first annual report will also be published in the autumn of 2004. In addition, the Inspectorate has an active outreach and education programme to inform stakeholders about the regulatory system and the Home Office web-site includes a range of material relating to the implementation of the 1986 Act.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the classification of animal experiments is decided. [165894]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office issues project licences under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 for the use of protected animals for experimental and other scientific purposes.

Project licences are assigned severity bands reflecting the average overall level of suffering likely to be experienced by the animals used on authorised programmes of work. Each protocol within a programme of work is assigned a severity limit which sets the maximum permissible level of suffering which could be experienced by any single animal used on that protocol.

There are four severity bands and four severity limits: unclassified, mild, moderate and substantial. Definitions of these categories are provided in paragraph 5.42 of the published Home Office Guidance on the Operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act1986(HC321).

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what official Home Office classification was approved for experiments on primates by Imutran Ltd. [166357]

Caroline Flint: The Imutran Limited research licensed by the Home Office under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 involving pig to non-human primate xenotransplantation studies was carried out between 1994 and 2000 under three project licences all of which were allocated an overall severity band of 'moderate'. In addition, of the 28 separate protocols of regulated procedures authorised under these licences, two were allocated substantial severity limits, 16 were classified as moderate, seven were classified as mild, and three were unclassified.

The administrative system under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 distinguishes between the 'severity limit' of a protocol and the 'severity band' of a project. The severity limit of a protocol is determined by the upper limit of the expected adverse effects that may be encountered by the animal involved, taking into account the measures specified in the licence for avoiding and controlling adverse effects. It represents the worse potential outcome for any animal subjected to the series of regulated procedures in the protocol, even if it may only be experienced by a small number of the animals to be used. Severity limits are categorised as unclassified, mild, moderate and substantial. Definitions of these categories are provided in paragraph 5.42 of the published Guidance on the Operation of the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986 (HC321).

The allocation of a severity band to a project reflects the number of animals used on each protocol and the actual suffering likely to be caused as a result. It is based on the overall level of cumulative suffering to be experienced by each animal, not just the worst possible case. It takes into account the proportion of animals expected to reach the severity limit of the protocol and the duration of the exposure to that severity limit, the nature and intensity of the adverse effects, and the actions to be taken to relieve the suffering.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 8 March 2004, with regard to Mohammed Riaz. [167262]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 26 April 2004.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 8 March, with regard to Miss Tornish; [167263]

(2) when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton.

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 27 April 2004.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 8 March 2004, with regard to Mr. Abdul Hussain Talash. [167264]

Mr. Blunkett: I wrote to my right hon. Friend on 20 April 2004.

Crime (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Birkenhead has been since 1997. [166485]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Birkenhead comes within the Wirral Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Birkenhead since 1997. [166487]

Ms Blears: As part of the Crime Reduction Programme, £358,000 was provided in 2001 to the Wirral metropolitan borough council for an extension of their CCTV network covering various locations in Birkenhead, New Ferry and Liscard.

A further £187,000 was allocated to a CCTV project in New Brighton, in a neighbouring constituency.

No separate figure is available specifically for Birkenhead.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drug misuse in Birkenhead in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [166488]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available in the form requested as funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) area (Wirral DAT).

In 1997–98 funding available to the two main local drug treatment providers in the area totalled £610,452.

	Fund	*Treatment provider*	*Budget headings*	*Amount*	*Source of information*
Wirral health authority	AID/HIV moneys	Wirral West Cheshire partnership Trust	Aids /HIV	39,137	PCT records
			Needle and Syringe Exchange	152,411	
			Infection control nurse	12,304	
			Drug Service budget	109,852	
			Total	313,704	
Wirral MBC Social Services Department	Social Services Grant	ARCH Initiatives	SS Grant for counselling and support and residential services	296,748	Wirral MBC and Arch Initiatives
			Total	296,748	

In 2003–04 the total drugs allocation was £5,265,567. This figure includes new funding streams as part of the National Drug Strategy (please see table). The two years are therefore not directly comparable.

2003–04	*£*
Partnership Capacity (DAT CAD and DAT DEV and Strategic grant)	80,328
Treatment Pooled Budget	4,299,273
Through Care After Care Pump Priming	35,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	362,745
Young people	488,221
Total	5,265,567

[1] Contains non drug elements

Crime (Wirral, South)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicles thefts in Wirral South has been since 1997. [166630]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Wirral South comes within the Wirral Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Wirral South since 1997. [166631]

Ms Blears: As part of the Crime Reduction Programme, £358,000 was provided in 2001 to Wirral metropolitan borough council for an extension of their CCTV network covering various locations in Birkenhead, New Ferry and Liscard.

A further £187,000 was allocated to a CCTV project in New Brighton, in a neighbouring constituency.

Cyclists

Mr. Redwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what guidance the Government have issued to *(a)* the police and *(b)* transport authorities concerning handling cases of cyclists ignoring red traffic lights. [165963]

Caroline Flint: None. It is an offence for a cyclist not to comply with light signals controlling traffic. Only the police have the power to enforce this offence.

The enforcement of cycling offences is an operational matter for chief officers.

Detention and Training Orders

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many detention and training orders have been made in each year since their introduction; and if he will make a statement. [167076]

Paul Goggins: The information requested is contained in the table.

Juveniles sentenced to detention and training orders, England and Wales, April 2000 to December 2002

	Number of juveniles sentenced to detention and training orders
2000[1]	5,074
2001	7,069
2002	6,684

[1] From 1 April.

Statistics for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Drug Consumption Rooms

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction's recent report on drug consumption rooms; and if he will make an assessment of the case for introduction of such schemes in the United Kingdom. [166822]

Caroline Flint: The Home Office and the Department of Health are currently reviewing the European Monitoring Centre for Drugs and Drug Addiction's (EMCDDA) report.

The supervision of prescribed drugs in front of trained staff is a well-established practice. The UK will not contravene or undermine UN Conventions or the Misuse of Drugs Act and facilities for supervising the consumption of illegal drugs would fall foul of these. Therefore no authority could be given to the piloting of initiatives to supervise the consumption of illegal drugs.

Drug Treatment and Testing Orders

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many drug treatment and testing orders were issued in 2003. [168481]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Between 1 January 2003 and 31 December 2003 7,866 drug treatment and testing orders were made in England and Wales.

Drugs Misuse (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Manchester Gorton in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [167470]

Caroline Flint: Figures are not available for 1997–8.

Figures for 2003–04 are available for Manchester as a whole only. In 2003–04 the following amounts were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Manchester City Council area.

	£
Adult Pooled Treatment Budget:	3,390,000
Young People's Pooled Budget	996,485
Building Safer Communities	1,082,189
Criminal Justice Interventions Programme (Capacity Building and Throughcare and Aftercare)	800,000
Drug Testing (within Greater Manchester Police Force area)	1,198,491.65
Total	7,467,165.65

Gamekeepers

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department How many gamekeepers have been convicted in the last 10 years of the illegal killing of hen harriers. [167197]

Caroline Flint *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Information collected centrally by the Home Office on court proceedings in relation to wildlife does not enable the type of bird involved to be identified, nor the status of the person convicted.

Justice and Home Affairs Council

Mr. Connarty: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the outcome was of the Justice and Home Affairs Council held on 30 March; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if he will make a statement. [165594]

Caroline Flint: I wrote to the European Scrutiny Committee on 5 April reporting the outcome of the Justice and Home Affairs Council.

Parole

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many life sentence prisoners have been released on parole during each of the last 48 months. [168020]

Paul Goggins: The requested information is shown in the table.

Releases on life licence April 2000-March 2004

Month	*Year*	*Number of releases*
April	[1]2000	8
May	2000	13
June	2000	19
July	2000	13
August	2000	4
September	2000	7
October	2000	8
November	2000	6
December	2000	4
January	2001	16
February	2001	14
March	2001	13
April	2001	25
May	2001	12
June	2001	14
July	2001	11
August	2001	17
September	2001	9
October	2001	18
November	2001	15
December	2001	10
January	2002	10
February	2002	13
March	2002	10
April	2002	12
May	2002	17
June	2002	12
July	2002	22
August	2002	26
September	2002	14
October	2002	26
November	2002	14
December	2002	18
January	2003	18
February	2003	28

Releases on life licence April 2000-March 2004

Month	*Year*	*Number of releases*
March	2003	29
April	2003	18
May	2003	30
June	2003	22
July	2003	38
August	2003	32
September	2003	22
October	2003	40
November	2003	15
December	2003	30
January	2004	15
February	2004	31
March	2004	38

[1] Information for April 2000-March 2001 relates to first time release cases only. Subsequent data also include cases where prisoners have been re-released following recall from life licence.

Part 1 Warrant

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the information required to be provided on the face of a part 1 warrant, including a European Arrest Warrant, is specified in legislation. [165887]

Caroline Flint: The information required to be provided on the face of a part 1 warrant is specified in section 2 of the Extradition Act 2003.

Prison Drug Treatments

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost per offender was of each drug treatment and testing order in 2003 in *(a)* Nottinghamshire and *(b)* England. [168209]

Paul Goggins: This information is not held centrally but the recent report by the National Audit Office, "The Drug Treatment and Testing Order (DTTO): early lessons" reported that the unit cost of an order in 2002–03 in the areas they visited varied from £5,258 to £7,592. Nottingham Probation Area has advised us that the approximate average cost of a DTTO in Nottinghamshire was £5,363.

Prisoners

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners in 2003 began training, education or offender behaviour programmes but were unable to complete these courses due to *(a)* transfer to another establishment and *(b)* release from custody. [168028]

Paul Goggins: In 2003 approximately 8,300 prisoners began accredited offending behaviour programmes. Of the 6,946 commencements of general offending behaviour programmes—Enhanced Thinking Skills and Reasoning and Rehabilitation—95 prisoners (1.4 per cent.) did not complete because they were transferred and 16 (0.2 per cent.) did not complete because they were released. The percentage of prisoners not completing other accredited programmes for these reasons would have been similar or lower.

Equivalent information on non-completion is not collected centrally for prisoners' training and education.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were assessed as having drug-related problems on *(a)* entry to and *(b)* exit from each (i) HM Prison Service establishment and (ii) privately run prison establishment since January 2003. [168206]

Paul Goggins: Figures on the number of prisoners assessed on entry as having a drug-related problem are not recorded centrally, but epidemiological studies show around 54 per cent. of new receptions to be problematic drug misusers and that around 80 per cent. of prisoners had used drugs at some point before coming into custody. All prisoners receive a healthcare assessment on reception. This resulted in detoxification being provided to 50,701 prisoners in 2002–03, 4,085 of whom were in the contracted estate.

All prisons employ drug counselling, assessment, referral and throughcare (CARATs) teams, who, among other tasks, are responsible for putting problematic drug using prisoners in touch with community support on leaving prison. CARATs teams dealt with 52,000 prisoners in 2002–03 at all stages in their sentence.

No separate assessment of drug-related problems is made at the point offenders leave prisons. There will always be a heightened risk of relapse on return to the community and a key aim of the Criminal Justice Interventions Programme is to strengthen continuity of treatment and reduce that risk.

Prisons

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether, under future market tests of publicly run prisons, staff transferred to a private sector operator will be protected by the two tier workforce provisions applicable to local government employees in a similar position. [161960]

Paul Goggins: The Home Office complies with policy for Central Government Departments and Agencies on the handling of staff transfers. The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 1981 ("TUPE") govern the majority of such staff transfers and contractors are normally also required to apply the principles set out in the Cabinet Office Statement of Practice "Staff Transfers in the Public Sector" and its annex "A Fair Deal for Staff Pensions". The Home Office does not propose to extend this further to mirror the two-tier workforce provisions contained in the Local Government Code of Practice on Workforce Matters.

Young Offenders

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young offenders were held in secure accommodation by each local authority social services department on the latest date for which figures are available. [164203]

Paul Goggins: The number of young offenders held under sentence in local authority secure children's homes on 29 March 2004, by Youth Offending Team, is given in the table.

Young offenders held in LASCHs under sentence, by Youth 29 March 2004

	Number
Barking and Dagenham	1
Barnsley	2
Basingstoke	2
Bath and North East Somerset	1
Bexley	1
Birmingham (Central)	1
Birmingham (East)	3
Birmingham (North)	1
Birmingham (South)	4
Blackburn with Darwen	2
Bolton	5
Bournemouth and Poole	1
Bracknell Forest	1
Bradford	3
Brent	1
Bristol	1
Bury MBC	1
Caerphilly and Blaunau Gwent	1
Calderdale	3
Cambridgeshire	1
Camden	2
Canterbury and Swale	1
Cardiff	5
Cheshire (Central)	1
Chesterfield	1
Coventry	1
Croydon	1
Cumbria	2
Darlington borough council	1
Derby city council	3
Derbyshire county council	1
Dudley	4
Durham (South)	2
Enfield	2
Flintshireand Wrexham	5
Gloucestershire	1
Gwynedd and Ynys Mon	1
Hackney	4
Halton and Warrington	1
Hammersmith and Fulham	2
Haringey	1
Hertfordshire East	1
Hertfordshire North	2
Kent county council	3
Kingston Upon Hull city council	5
Kirklees	2
Lancashire	8
Leeds	10
Leicester	1
Lewisham	2
Liverpool	8
Manchester Central	7
Merthyr Tydfil	2
Milton Keynes	1
Monmouthshire and Torfaen	1
Neath Port Talbot	1
Newark and Bassetlaw	1
Newcastle upon Tyne	2
Newham	4
Newport	3
Norfolk	1
North East Lincolnshire	2
North Lincolnshire	2
North Tyneside	4
North Yorkshire	1
Nottingham City	7
Oxfordshire	2
Peterborough	3
Richmond-upon-Thames	1
Rochdale	3
Rotherham	2
Salford City	3

Young offenders held in LASCHs under sentence, by Youth 29 March 2004

	Number
Sandwell	3
Sheffield	2
Somerset	1
South Durham	1
South Tyneside	1
Southwark	3
St. Helens	1
Staffordshire	1
Stockport	2
Stoke on Trent	2
Sunderland	4
Surrey	1
Sutton	1
Swansea	1
Tameside	1
Trafford	4
Wakefield	1
Waltham Forest	3
Wandsworth	3
Wessex	8
West Sussex	3
Wigan	1
Wiltshire	3
Windsor and Maidenhead	1
Wirral	2
Wolverhampton	1
Worcestershire and Herefordshire	2
York	1

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HIV/AIDS

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what research he has commissioned on microbicide creams to prevent the spread of HIV. [166839]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has been an early and leading bilateral supporter of work on microbicides, spending nearly £18 million to date. DFID has committed a grant of £16 million over five years (2001–06) for the Microbicide Development Programme, which is coordinated by the Clinical Trials Unit of the UK Medical Research Council (MRC), and Imperial College London. The programme is implementing research studies to investigate the effectiveness of promising microbicide products, involving research centres in five African countries. DFID also provides support to the International Partnership for Microbicides (IPM) to accelerate the discovery, development and accessibility of microbicides, and International Family Health (IFH) and the Population Council to develop policy dialogue, advocacy and networking around microbicides development and access.

DFID supported and jointly chaired the international Microbicides 2004 conference, which was held in London, 28 March to 1 April 2004. It was an important opportunity for scientists and advocates to share information on the progress of microbicide development. We will launch our new HIV/AIDS Strategy later this year. In it we will set how we will work together with partners in developed and

developing countries to drive forward research into new technologies to prevent HIV/AIDS, including microbicides and vaccines.

Consultancy Fees

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much has been spent on consultancy fees by his Department in each of the last three years. [167648]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Expenditure on consultancy services in each of the last five years is recorded in the "Statistics on International Development", Table 12. A copy of this publication is available in the Library of the House.

Democratic Republic of Congo

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps are being taken to determine the number of unexploded land mines in the Democratic Republic of Congo. [167815]

Hilary Benn: In 2003, the United Nations Mine Action Service established the United Nations Mine Action Co-ordination Centre (UNMACC) in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The UNMACC is now undertaking local surveys to determine the extent of the land mine problem in the Congo and providing expertise for the coordination of assistance to tackle the problem. In 2003, DFID provided a sum of £65,333 via its global grant to UNMAS to help fund these activities.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the humanitarian requirements of those Congolese nationals expelled from Angola and living in the Bandundu and Kasai-Occidental provinces of Democratic Republic of Congo; and if he will make a statement. [167820]

Hilary Benn: The humanitarian needs of Congolese expelled from Angola continue to be of concern. As of 20 April, some 67,000 Congolese have been registered by local crisis committees in Bandundu and Western Kasai Provinces. The Office for the Co-Ordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) led an inter-agency mission on 19 April to Tshikapa in Western Kasai Province. Mission participants included the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Office Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), OCHA, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Caritas and representatives from the Congolese Ministries of Solidarity and Humanitarian Affairs and of the Interior. A number of Humanitarian NGO and United Nations partners are currently responding and DFID is monitoring the situation.

Demography

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the implications for global development assistance of current UN projections for world population in *(a)* 2100 and *(b)* 2150. [167206]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Many assessments of world population only stretch as far as 2050, and DFID's development assistance policy is largely geared towards 2015, the target for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). However, the UN's Population Division has carried out a series of long-range population projections at regional level with a time horizon of 2150. These projections include assessments of possible future fertility, mortality and migration scenarios.

It is difficult to state the implications of these projections on global development assistance because the high, medium and low scenarios result in projections of very different sizes. According to the medium scenario, the world population will have stabilised at 9.7 billion by 2050. The low scenario indicates that population will drop to 3.2 billion by 2150 and the high scenario indicates a rise to 24.8 billion by the same year.

The substantial differences in these scenarios make it very difficult to base any firm development assistance plans on long-range population projections. In the meantime DFID will focus our efforts on achieving the MDGs by 2015 and will then continue to consider the scale of poverty and population projections before setting targets for future milestones.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assumptions about population inform his Department's country plan for Ethiopia. [167207]

Hilary Benn: DFID Ethiopia's country assistance plan is based on the Government of Ethiopia's Sustainable Development and Poverty Reduction Programme (SDPRP). On the basis of current population growth rates, Ethiopia's population will reach 73 million by 2005.

The SDPRP recognizes that population plays a decisive role in national development. Through the National Population Policy (1993), the Government seeks to maintain a balance between population size and the resource base through, in part, heightened availability and use of contraceptives. A key focus to achieve this is through increasing girls' access to education.

While DFID does not provide specific sector support to the population programme, in 2003–04 we provided £3 million to the education sector specifically and £30 million for the implementation of the SDPRP.

EU Development Assistance

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the non-governmental organisations involved in the delivery of the 2002 EU development assistance projects to *(a)* Cuba, *(b)* the Dominican Republic and *(c)* Haiti. [167213]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The following is a list of the non-governmental organisations with active contracts for development assistance projects with the EU in Cuba, the Dominican Republic and Haiti during 2002.

(a) Cuba

Gruppo Di Volontariato Civile

Brot Fuer Die Welt

Deutsche Welthungerhilfe eV

Monimbo-Verein Zur Foerderung Deutsch-Nicaraguanischen Beziehungen
Handicap International (BE)
Werkhof, Verein Zur Foerderung Der Selbsthilfe
Cooperazione Internazionale Sud-sud
Asociacion Navarra Nuevo Futuro
Fundación CODESPA Futuro en Marcha
Solidaridad para el Desarrollo y la Paz
Associazionen per la Partecipazione Allo Sviluppo
Comitato Internazionale per lo Sviluppo Dei Popoli
Oxfam Solidarité
Hirugarren Munda Ta Bake—Paz y Tercer Mundo
Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad
Oikos—Cooperacao e Desenvolvimento
Electricians sans Frontieres
Frères des Hommes
CARE France
Deutsches Rotes Kreuz

(b) Dominican Republic

Oxfam Solidarité (Belgium)
Trade Union Solidarity Centre of Finland
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe eV (Germany)
Unity and Cooperation for Development of People (Italy)
Movimiento por la Paz, el Desarme y la Libertad (Spain)
Madreselva (Spain)
Cruz Roja Espanola (Spain)
Catholic Institute for International Relations (UK)
Fundación CODESPA—Futuro en Marcha (Spain)
Intermon Oxfam (Spain)
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe eV (Germany)

(c) Haiti

Lateinamerika-Zentrum E.V. (Germany)
PROTOS—Projectgroep Voor Technische Ontwikkelingssamenwerking (Belgium)
Aide et Action (Consortium)
Objectif Tiers Mond (Luxembourg)
Inter Aide (France)
Movimento Sviluppo E Pace (Italy)
Partage (Consortium)
Inter Aide (Consortium)
Stichting Interkerkelijke Organisatie Voor Onttwikkelingssamenwerking (Netherlands)
Groupe Developpement (France)
Oxfam (Consortium)
Deutsche Welthungerhilfe eV (Germany)
Médecins du Monde (France)
Initiative Developpement (Consortium)

Global Fund

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on the use of money from the Global Fund to fight *(a)* malaria, *(b)* HIV/AIDS and *(c)* tuberculosis. [167816]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Since its inception in January 2002, the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria has approved proposals amounting to US$2.1 billion and disbursed funds to 227 programmes in 122 countries.

This funding has been allocated as follows:

By diseases: 60 per cent. on HIV/AIDS, 24 per cent. on Malaria and 16 per cent. on Tuberculosis.

By region: 60 per cent. to Africa, 20 per cent. to Asia, Middle East and North Africa, 20 per cent. to Latin America, Caribbean and Eastern Europe.

By country income: 67 per cent. to low income, 30 per cent. to lower middle income and 3 per cent. to upper middle-income countries.

The following outcomes (from the first three funding rounds) are expected after five years:

700,000 people on antiretrovirals, tripling current coverage in developing countries;

35 million people reached with HIV voluntary counselling and testing services for prevention;

over one million orphans supported through medical services, education and community care;

over three million additional tuberculosis cases treated with Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course (DOTS) successfully after diagnosis, tripling the treatment of multi-drug resistant TB globally, with over 8,000 new treatments;

22 million combination drug treatments for resistant malaria delivered;

64 million bed nets financed to protect African families from transmission of malaria.

The Fund is committed to using recipient countries' existing financial management, monitoring and reporting systems wherever possible to increase harmonisation in country-led processes. There is increasing evidence that the Fund is able to bring other donors, government departments and civil society together for joint planning to fight the world's three most devastating diseases.

Mauritania

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on water shortages in Mauritania. [167827]

Hilary Benn: Mauritania is a low-income food deficit country which is vulnerable to drought and desertification. A large proportion of the population relies on agricultural production to satisfy its food and income needs. During drought periods, people have severe difficulties in meeting their food requirements, either through direct production or through recourse to alternative sources of income.

DFID has provided significant humanitarian assistance to Mauritania in recent years in response to the severe drought and resultant food shortages. In 2002–03 DFID contributed £1 million to the World Food Programme's regional appeal, which covered five countries in the region, but was mainly focused on Mauritania where the drought situation was most severe. DFID also contributed £0.5 million to an Oxfam appeal focused on the most badly affected areas in the South of the country.

According to the latest FAO reports the overall food security situation in the country remains satisfactory. However there is a desert locust outbreak currently under way in northern Mauritania which may mean that crop production figures will have to be revised downwards to take account of the impact of possible pest damage.

Overseas Representation

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development in which countries the Department is represented; how many staff are employed in each location, broken down by *(a)* UK nationals and *(b)* locally employed; what the annual cost of maintaining representation in each of the countries was in 2003–04; and what the total expenditure by his Department on overseas representation was in (i) 2001, (ii) 2002 and (iii) 2003. [166210]

Mr. Gareth Thomas *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Details of DFID staff, by each location, broken down by *(a)* non-locally employed (those staff who are not locally employed are not solely UK nationals) and *(b)* locally employed, are listed in the following table. These figures include secondments to other organisations or projects. Data are not available centrally by country for DFID representation only.

The table also includes cost figures by country; these are limited to the cost of representation and hence exclude costs associated with external secondments and projects. Where we have been unable to provide an individual country breakdown of expenditure we have included information for the region. These figures represent planned expenditure for 2003–04 and are subject to final outturn revisions.

Comparable expenditure figures for 2001 and 2002 are not available because in 2003–04 DFID introduced a new definition of administration costs to include costs for staff, travel and allowances that were previously paid from the programme budget. The change in definition will increase transparency and enable DFID to manage its administrative costs more effectively, but it precludes providing comparable figures for earlier years.

Location	*Non-locally employed staff*	*Locally employed staff*	*Total*	*Cost of maintaining overseas representation 2003–04 (£ million)*
Afghanistan[1]	9	6	15	0.915
Angola	1	0	1	2.510
Anguilla	2	0	2	(See Barbados)
Bangladesh	25	130	155	7.272
Barbados	10	21	31	2.730
Belgium	1	0	1	0.083
Belize	1	2	3	0.233
Bolivia	2	10	12	0.596
Botswana	1	0	1	0.060
Brazil	4	9	13	1.114
Bulgaria	1	0	1	0.213
Burundi	1	2	3	(See Angola)
Cambodia	2	3	5	1.042
China	20	18	38	3.898
Congo	5	0	5	(See Angola)
DFID Pacific Region	1	0	1	0.490
Thailand (including Burma and Thailand)	15	17	32	2.228
Egypt	1	0	1	0.065
Ethiopia	13	31	44	1.826
France	4	0	4	0.422
Gambia	1	0	1	0.160
Ghana	12	36	48	2.517
Guyana	3	4	7	0.452
Honduras	1	5	6	0.363
India	28	140	168	7.530
Indonesia	5	4	9	0.706
Iraq[2]	7	0	7	0.165
Italy	5	3	8	0.388
Jamaica	2	0	2	0.489
Kazakhstan	1	0	1	0.119
Kenya	16	34	50	3.167
Kosovo	1	5	6	0.384
Kyrgyzstan	1	3	4	0.210
Lesotho	1	0	1	0.180
Malawi	15	51	66	2.392
Moldova	0	3	3	0.133
Montserrat	2	4	6	0.270
Mozambique	14	16	30	2.400
Nepal	16	53	69	2.087
Nigeria	21	61	82	3.691
Nicaragua	3	12	15	0.580
Pakistan[2]	7	17	24	1.509
Palestinian Territories	1	1	2	0.310
Peru	2	6	8	0.564
Romania	1	0	1	0.268
Russia	4	14	18	1.748
Rwanda	8	17	25	(See Angola)
Serbia	1	4	5	0.248
Sierra Leone	7	0	7	1.172

Location	Non-locally employed staff	Locally employed staff	Total	Cost of maintaining overseas representation 2003–04 (£ million)
South Africa (including Namibia)	17	54	71	3.924
Sri Lanka	2	3	5	0.562
Sudan	2	0	2	(See Angola)
Switzerland	3	0	3	0.302
Tanzania	15	29	44	3.141
Uganda	21	35	56	3.588
Ukraine	2	8	10	0.657
USA	6	0	6	0.088
Vietnam	11	18	29	1.380
Yemen	1	1	2	0.078
Zambia	13	20	33	2.500
Zimbabwe	7	19	26	1.707
Grand Totals	405	929	1,334	77.824

[1] West Asia records figures for Afghanistan and Pakistan together, the estimate of separate office costs is therefore an estimate for 2003–04
[2] UK presence in Iraq since November 2003. DFID staff costs recorded only, support costs were met by the US Military for 2003–04.

Pakistan

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of *(a)* current and *(b)* projected trends in the availability, measured in hectares per person, of farmland in Pakistan. [167205]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: None. However, according to the Food and Agricultural Organisation statistics[1] in 2001 the agricultural area in Pakistan was 27.1 million hectares and the agricultural area per capita was 0.19 hectares.

[1] *Source:*
faostat.fao.org

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of *(a)* current and *(b)* projected trends in the availability of fresh water in Pakistan. [167208]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: According to a World Health Organisation and the United Nations Children's Fund assessment, data on the percentage of availability of improved water supplies in Pakistan is as follows:

Percentage

	Urban	Rural	Total
1990	96	77	83
2000	95	87	90

Source:
WHO-UNICEF http://unstats.un.org

The Millennium Development Goal target for Pakistan for total availability of improved water supplies by 2,015 corresponds to 92 per cent.[1].

To assist the Government of Pakistan improve access to water and sanitation, DFID is undertaking a £6.5 million five year Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project in North West Frontier Province in support of the devolved government process, which will benefit a total of 1 million persons. Water is also one of the key sectors in which DFID is engaged in Faisalabad in Punjab province as part of a programme of support to the decentralised government system for the delivery of basic services.

[1] World Bank Development Indicators

Southern Africa

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what estimate his Department has made of the future food aid requirements in Southern Africa. [167824]

Hilary Benn: UN Crop and Food Supply Assessment teams arrive in Mozambique, Malawi, Swaziland and Zimbabwe this week to analyse the food supply situation with a view to establishing future food aid requirements in these countries in the coming year. A team will arrive in Lesotho in mid-May to undertake similar work. Final reports are expected in early June.

The Southern African Development Community's (SADC) Vulnerability Assessment Committees, supported by DFID, have already started fieldwork in these countries. Their results will also feed into the UN analyses. Linking these two assessments of food insecurity will provide a clearer picture of supply and demand for food in affected countries, and a more accurate assessment of household food shortages and the levels of food aid needed to respond to acute needs.

DFID is also working at both country and regional levels to address the longer-term causes of regional food insecurity in Southern Africa. These programmes take a developmental approach to food insecurity, and aim to improve information on vulnerability and response, coupled with measures that enhance poor people's access to food in the longer-term.

St. Helena

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will assess the advantages and disadvantages of using the private finance initiative process to secure *(a)* air access for St. Helena and *(b)* safe docking facilities for ships calling at St. Helena. [168383]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Government's position on maintaining access for St. Helena was set out in my Written Statement to the House on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1WS. As part of planned feasibility and other investigatory work, the possibility of a private finance initiative will be included among options that will be considered.

The position regarding docking facilities for ships in St. Helena is different. At present, as the hon. Member will know from his own visit to the island last year, visiting ships anchor in Jamestown Bay and all passengers and cargo are transferred in smaller craft to and from the wharf. In recognition of St. Helena's continuing concern over these arrangements, we have agreed to support further investigatory work to review the options for improving them. The St. Helena Government is preparing terms of reference. We cannot yet speculate on whether a private finance initiative might or might not have a role in any solution that eventually may prove to be technically and financially acceptable.

Sudan

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment he has made of the security and humanitarian situation in Sudan since the signing of the peace agreement; and if he will make a statement. [167814]

Hilary Benn: A Humanitarian Ceasefire Agreement between the Government of Sudan, the Sudan Liberation Movement and the Justice and Equality Movement was signed on 8 April. Humanitarian and Security Assessments in Darfur are being carried out at present by our UN and non-governmental organisation (NGO) partners. However, access is still limited in Darfur due to general insecurity and travel restrictions. It is therefore still too early to be able to give precise humanitarian indicators, as agencies have not yet been able to access large parts of the population. However the situation is clearly extremely serious.

In response to the crisis in Darfur DFID has committed about £9.5 million, through United Nations (UN) agencies and international NGOs. DFID has also provided four humanitarian affairs officers to assist the UN response for three months. Three of these are based in Darfur and will, among other things, undertake assessments of humanitarian needs.

Zimbabwe

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) if he will make a statement on the latest humanitarian situation in Zimbabwe; [167818]

(2) what progress is being made to ensure that humanitarian aid in Zimbabwe goes to those in most need; [167822]

(3) if he will make a statement on levels of *(a)* cholera and *(b)* dysentery in Zimbabwe. [167823]

Hilary Benn: Large numbers of Zimbabweans continue to be in humanitarian need. This is largely the result of the Government of Zimbabwe's misguided economic policies, including the poorly implemented fast track land programme, exacerbated by the HIV/AIDS epidemic and erratic rainfall. At least eight million Zimbabweans, over half the population, have been receiving donor-funded food aid in recent months, in advance of the imminent harvest, which should improve food security for the majority of Zimbabweans.

The crop forecast is not yet finalised, but the harvest may cover less than half of the country's food needs over the next 12 months. The Government of Zimbabwe has stated its intention to import grain to meet the national food deficit. Given, the Government's economic difficulties, this may be unrealistic. In the meantime, the Government say that they will not decide for some months whether to ask for further international food aid after June. Households most likely to be in need of assistance, either food or other resources, will be those with no access to land or income that are also affected by HIV/AIDS or include orphans, disabled children and the elderly.

DFID Zimbabwe provides financial support to the UN system for rigorous monitoring and evaluation of donor-funded humanitarian programmes, including both the effective targeting of those in the most need, and ensuring that there is no political interference in the process. Monitoring and evaluation reports are regularly provided to donors and discussed at meetings with the United Nations, non-governmental organisations, civil society and other donors. DFID remains confident that the humanitarian relief provided by the UK reaches those members of society who are most in need of assistance.

According to the latest figures from the Ministry of Health, there have been 77 cases of cholera and 9,860 cases of dysentery since January. However, the number could be much higher due to the decline in surveillance. Many cases are not reported as people cannot afford to go to hospitals or hospitals are failing to report reasons for death.

DFID has provided funds to Save the Children UK to respond to cholera outbreaks. The aim is to ensure that the disease does not spread further and that the communities at risk are assisted with soap and other hygiene items, as well as water purification tablets and oral dehydration supplies to treat diarrhoea.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Child Support Agency

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much money due to clients of the Child Support Agency is held by the Agency owing to computer errors; and how much money has been held in each of the last six months in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the Angus constituency. [168654]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Michael Weir, dated 27 April 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked, how much money due to clients of the Child Support Agency is held by the Agency owing to computer errors; and how much money has been held in each of the last six months in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the Angus constituency.

I do not have the information that you seek. I can say that at 31 March 2004 we were holding a total of £368,341 representing monies received from the non-resident parent that had not yet been paid out to the parent with care. Some will reflect computer errors but a significant element will represent payments received that are awaiting clearance by our bankers.

Mr. Weir: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much compensation has been paid to clients of the Child Support Agency owing to delays caused by computer errors in each of the last 12 months in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the Angus constituency. [168655]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. Michael Weir, dated 27 April 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary questions about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked, how much compensation has been paid to clients of the Child Support Agency owing to delays caused by computer errors in each of the last 12 months in *(a)* the UK, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the Angus constituency.

I do not have the information you seek. I can say that in the year to 31 March 2004 a total of around £2 million was paid to clients of the Agency by way of financial redress for maladministration. This will include maladministration resulting from computer errors outside our direct control.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's Executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166395]

Maria Eagle: The information showing the position as at 29 February 2004 is in the tables. The numbers shown are expressed in headcount not whole-time equivalent terms.

(a) Department for Work and Pensions excluding agencies (excluding Jobcentre Plus, the Pension Service, Child Support Agency and Appeals Service):

	SCS	G6	G7	SEO	HEO	EO	AO	AA	Total
(i) Gender									
Male	92	128	392	547	1,055	1,957	2,107	1,119	7,397
Female	51	85	278	469	1,222	3,422	4,807	1,737	12,071
(ii) Ethnic group									
Asian	<5	<5	13	18	32	191	308	164	727
Black	<5	<5	<5	5	25	87	137	54	314
Chinese	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	10	8	<5	28
Mixed/ Other	<5	<5	5	6	23	70	96	43	248
White	109	162	530	833	1,862	4,218	5,158	2,018	14,890
No/ Unclear Response	30	46	118	152	332	803	1,207	573	3,261
(iii) Disability									
Disabled	8	6	17	31	85	261	288	92	788
Non Disabled	132	207	648	974	2,169	5,082	6,602	2,759	18,573
Unknown	<5	<5	5	11	23	36	24	5	107
(iv) Age group									
<20	—	—	—	—	—	—	53	136	189
20<25	—	—	—	<5	48	233	666	480	1,429
25<30	—	—	46	26	135	502	885	278	1,872
30<35	5	18	65	71	237	831	953	259	2,439
35<40	19	26	103	189	452	1,013	1,061	260	3,123
40<45	26	34	120	244	486	989	968	333	3,200
45<50	33	52	131	197	426	799	812	286	2,736
50<55	36	54	133	183	313	590	663	341	2,313
55<60	22	25	71	89	160	342	649	314	1,672
60<65	<5	<5	—	15	20	77	200	165	483
65+	—	—	<5	—	—	<5	<5	<5	12

(b) Department's Executive agencies (Jobcentre Plus, the Pension Service, Child Support Agency and Appeals Service):

	SCS	G6	G7	SEO	HEO	EO	AO	AA	Total
(i) Gender									
Male	61	151	307	824	2,320	12,344	16,238	2,751	34,996
Female	28	100	246	938	3,693	27,444	44,946	5,386	82,781

	SCS	G6	G7	SEO	HEO	EO	AO	AA	Total
(ii) Ethnic group									
Asian	<5	<5	<5	25	97	1,252	2,817	433	4,629
Black	<5	<5	<5	9	68	870	1,426	172	2,548
Chinese	<5	<5	<5	<5	<5	48	99	16	165
Mixed/ Other	<5	<5	5	14	74	514	919	132	1,660
White	71	219	474	1,463	4,862	29,777	44,210	6,258	87,334
No/ Unclear Response	16	29	69	250	911	7,327	11,713	1,126	21,441
(iii) Disability									
Disabled	<5	13	19	88	366	2,593	2,799	429	6,310
Non Disabled	82	228	506	1,605	5,466	34,944	55,008	7,595	105,434
Unknown	<5	10	28	69	181	2251	3377	113	6,033
(iv) Age group									
<20	—	—	—	—	—	7	619	303	929
20<25	—	—	—	—	14	723	6,523	1,188	8,448
25<30	—	—	<5	17	90	2,537	7,317	713	10,675
30<35	<5	<5	23	78	475	4,820	7,989	690	14,080
35<40	8	16	57	253	1,128	7,754	10,055	872	20,143
40<45	17	33	136	438	1,522	8,412	9,373	935	20,866
45<50	21	70	133	468	1,334	7,201	7,422	922	17,571
50<55	25	88	121	326	852	4,763	5,909	1,042	13,126
55<60	16	36	76	156	528	2,936	4,659	984	9,391
60<65	—	5	6	26	69	619	1,291	476	2,492
65+	—	—	—	—	<5	16	27	12	56

Source:
DWP payroll.

Information on ethnicity and disability relates to data provided by staff on a voluntary basis only.

Departmental Relocation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what aspects of the work in his Department's offices in *(a)* Portsmouth, *(b)* Southampton and *(c)* the Isle of Wight have been (i) relocated and (ii) centralised in each of the last three years; [151633]

(2) how many of his Department's offices have been closed in *(a)* Portsmouth, *(b)* Southampton and *(c)* the Isle of Wight in each of the last three years. [151634]

Jane Kennedy: Jobcentre Plus and the Pension Service are modernising the services we provide to our customers. This modernisation is increasing the number of places where people can get information about work and benefits. All decisions made about the centralisation or relocation of work are informed by the particular needs of their customers; nationally, regionally and at district level. For example, the Pension Service have centralised and relocated benefit processing based on customer feedback that pensioners prefer to make contact by phone rather than calling at an office.

In Portsmouth, no Jobcentre Plus offices, Jobcentres or Social Security offices have been relocated, centralised or closed.

In Southampton, the processing of incapacity benefit and jobseekers allowance claims has been relocated from Southampton Social Security office to Totton Customer Service Centre. No other Jobcentre Plus offices, Jobcentres or Social Security offices in Southampton have been relocated, centralised or closed.

In the Isle of Wight, the processing of incapacity benefit and jobseekers allowance claims has been relocated from Fareham Social Security office to Isle of Wight offices. The processing of Income Support claims has been relocated from the Isle of Wight to Fareham Jobcentre Plus. All Jobseeker Direct work has been relocated to the Dundee Contact Centre. No other Jobcentre Plus offices, Jobcentres or Social Security offices on the Isle of Wight have been relocated, centralised or closed.

All pensions processing and inquiries for Portsmouth, Southampton and the Isle of Wight have been relocated to the Wrexham Pensions Centre. Local Pension Service teams are based in Portsmouth, Southampton' and Newport.

Disability Appeal Tribunal

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average administrative cost was in 2003–04 of an appeal to a disability appeal tribunal on a disability living allowance decision. [168017]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* This is a matter for Christina Townsend, Chief Executive of the Appeals Service. She will reply to the hon. Member.

Letter from Christina Townsend to Mr. Hywel Williams, dated 27 April 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your question regarding the average administrative cost of an appeal to an appeal tribunal on a disability living allowance decision in 2003–04.

We estimate that the average cost of processing a disability appeal during the year 2003–04 was £233.

I hope this reply is helpful.

Health and Safety Executive

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the total cost is of *(a)* building and *(b)* moving into the new Health and Safety Executive (HSE) building at Bootle; and what the total income from HSE priced publications was in 2003–04. [166861]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* HSE's new building at Bootle, Merseyside is being procured under the Private Finance Initiative. Once it is available for occupation in 2005 HSE will pay an annual unitary charge for fully serviced office space of £7 million (2003 prices). The purchase of the site from Sefton MBC cost £1.3 million and removal plus IT transitional costs are likely to cost £1 million. The total income from HSE priced publications was £5.7 million in 2003–04.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the hon. Member for Walsall, North will receive a reply to his letter of 15 March 2004 regarding a DWP branch of the PCS Union. [168887]

Maria Eagle: I replied to the hon. Member today.

Safety Representatives and Safety Committees

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what income was received in each year between 2000 and 2003 from the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees publication. [166863]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The income received from the Safety Representatives and Safety Committees Regulations publication is as follows, by calendar year.

	Income received (£)
2000	53,676.00
2001	46,951.20
2002	49,140.00
2003	42,109.20

Secondments

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what secondments *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte and Touche, *(c)* Ernst and Young and *(d)* KPMG have made to his Department since 2001; for what (i) periods and (ii) tasks the secondments were made; whether secondments of staff from his Department have been made to those firms; and for what (A) periods and (B) tasks. [156919]

Maria Eagle: Secondments are part of the Interchange Initiative which promotes the exchange of people and good practice between the Civil Service and other organisations. Before an Interchange can occur all parties must be satisfied that no conflict of interest arises.

The available information is in the tables. Information for 2003–04 is not yet available.

Secondments to DWP

Company	*Number*	*Period*	*Tasks*
PricewaterhouseCoopers	0	—	—
Deloitte and Touche	0	—	—
Ernst and Young	0	—	—
KPMG	1	3 October 2002 to 6 June 2003	Head of the National Employment Panel's Performance Committee Team

Secondments from DWP

Company	*Number*	*Period*	*Tasks*
PricewaterhouseCoopers	0	—	—
Deloitte and Touche	165	2001–02	Piloting welfare to work reform options for clients of working age, as part of the One project.
Deloitte and Touche	1	1 April 2002–10 May 2002	Piloting welfare to work reform options for clients of working age, as part of the One project.
Ernst and Young	0	—	—
KPMG	0	—	—

Temporary Staff

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many staff the Department employs on a temporary basis through employment agencies; what percentage this is of total staff employed; and how much the Department paid employment agencies to supply temporary staff in *(a)* 2001–02, *(b)* 2002–03 and *(c)* 2003–04 to the most recent date for which figures are available. [158249]

Maria Eagle: The information requested could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

HEALTH

Local Government Finance

Mr. Betts: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what additional financial resources have been made available to local authorities in *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 to enable them to perform their role of scrutinising health trusts. [166316]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Government have given powers to local authorities to review and scrutinise health services as part of their wider responsibilities to promote the economic, environmental and social well-being of local people. The Department believes it is right that local authorities prioritise their resources and indeed activities to fit locally identified needs. Health scrutiny is no different.

Central Government funding to support local authorities in 2003–04 was approximately £70 billion. For 2004–05, this amount will increase by six per cent. Funding to support overview and scrutiny committees should be seen in this wider context.

The Department is conscious of the need to enable local authorities to undertake their new powers as effectively as possible. It is for this reason that a one-off payment of £2.25 billion has been made to the Centre for

Public Scrutiny to develop and support health scrutiny, and to ensure that lessons from good practice are learned and disseminated.

Cancelled Operations (Weston Area)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many operations were cancelled by the Weston Area Health NHS Trust in each year since 1997. [167528]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information on cancelled operations for each national health service trust is available for each quarter from 2001–02. Prior to this, information was collected for each health authority. Both are available in the Library.

Children's Continence

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what assessment has been made of how children with bladder and bowel problems impact on family life; [169052]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the financial cost to families with children who have nocturnal enuresis. [169053]

Dr. Ladyman: It is estimated that continence conditions affect over 500,000 children and young people over the age of five years and it is well established that these conditions reduce children's social opportunities and impact upon family life. Information on the financial cost to families with children who have nocturnal enuresis is not collected centrally.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what extra funding is planned to be devoted to the implementation of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence guidelines on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. [168825]

Dr. Ladyman: Funding to implement the guidance and recommendations of the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is not separately identified in primary care trust (PCT) allocations.

The national health service is currently receiving the largest sustained increase in funding in its history, so the question of affordability of NICE recommendations should not be an issue. The total of PCT allocations is £45 billion for 2003–04, £49.3 billion for 2004–05 and £53.9 billion for 2005–06. This represents an increase of £12.7 billion, or an average of 30.8 per cent. over the three years 2003–04 to 2005–06.

EU Enlargement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to ensure the adequacy of training of health *(a)* professionals and *(b)* other workers originating from the EU accession countries, who wish to work in the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [167202]

Mr. Hutton: We are in regular contact with the European Commission and the other member states on this issue. The Commission's assessment is that training in all acceding countries will meet minimum requirements after 1 May 2004. If the qualifications awarded by the acceding countries do not meet minimum requirements, the regulatory bodies are entitled to require proof of recent and substantial practice experience as a condition of recognition. Where such proof is not available, they are entitled to assess applicants on a case-by-case basis.

We have provided advice to the national health service on European enlargement and the implications for health professions. Copies have been placed in the Library and are also available on the Department's website at www.dh.gov.uk/PolicyAndGuidance/International/EuropeanUnion. Employers must ensure that applicants have suitable qualifications, skills and experience for the particular post they are applying for (including language skills), and can take into account references, evidence of good standing and criminal record checks where appropriate.

Internet Medical Companies

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what controls the General Medical Council has introduced to ensure that doctors who service internet medical companies provide patient consultations. [167802]

Mr. Hutton: The General Medical Council (GMC) published guidance entitled, "Providing advice and medical services on-line or by telephone", in November 1998. This can be found on the GMC website at www.gmc-uk.org/standards and this information has been placed in the Library.

Maternity Services (Buckinghamshire)

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how the risk assessment carried out by clinicians in relation to the transfer of maternity services from Wycombe Hospital to Stoke Mandeville proposed in the Shaping Health Services document published by the Mid and South Bucks Health Community was carried out. [167487]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* In line with our policy on "Shifting the Balance of Power", the responsibility for the provision of local services now rest with local trusts. It is now for primary care trusts, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services, based on the specialised knowledge they have of the local community.

However, I have been informed that a range of activities have been undertaken to date to evaluate the risks associated with a range of options for configuring paediatric and maternity services within the Buckinghamshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust.

These include:

A review of a range of literature and evidence including the guidance from the relevant Royal Colleges.

The establishment of a women and children's project group as a sub group of the "Shaping Health Services" project board,

which involves a wider range of stakeholders including the National Childbirth Trust and patient/public representatives, and has met on a regular basis since December 2003.

A range of meetings with the senior staff, consultants, nurses and midwives, since September 2003.

A half-day workshop with consultants, nurses, midwives and managers.

External expert support from Mr. Nick Naftelin, obstetrics and gynaecology consultant, who works for the Modernisation Agency and has advised throughout the process.

Visits to other units to learn about other models of care.

Minor Injuries Treatment (Dorset)

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the current capacity is of minor injury units in Dorset. [168821]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Information on the current capacity of minor injury units in Dorset is not collected centrally. However, the number of attendances in accident and emergency departments in Dorset between October and December 2003 are shown in the table.

Total attendances at accident and emergency departments, minor injury units (MUIs) and walk in centres (WICs) by type, NHS organisations in Dorset—2003–04

Quarter 3 *Organisation*	*Type 1* *Major A&E*	*Type 2* *Speciality A&E*	*Type 3* *Other A&E/MUIs*	*Type 3* *WICs*	*Total* *All types*
South and East Dorset PCT	0	0	1,378	0	1,378
South West Dorset PCT	0	0	1,342	0	1,342
West Dorset General Hospitals Trust	7,369	0	2,828	0	10,197
Poole Hospitals NHS Trust	12,470	0	0	0	12,470
Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Trust	19,740	3,976	0	0	23,716

Source:
Department of Health dataset QMAE

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans there are for improving the current provision of treatment for minor injuries in the Poole and Wimborne area. [168823]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* In line with our policy on "Shifting the Balance of Power", the responsibility for the provision of local services now rest with local trusts. It is now for primary care trusts (PCTs), in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services, based on the specialised knowledge they have of the local community.

However, I understand that there was recently a consultation exercise relating to the future of minor injury provision in Wimborne, Dorset. Consultation is now officially over and this will be discussed at the South and East Dorset PCT board meeting on 19 May 2004.

NHS Professionals

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what percentage of NHS trusts are using NHS Professionals; and if he will make a statement; [167405]

(2) what progress has been made towards the target of all NHS trusts using NHS Professionals by April 2005; and if he will make a statement. [167427]

Mr. Hutton: At the current time, NHS Professionals provide services to 91, or 34 per cent. of national health service trusts and 37, or 12 per cent. of primary care trusts (PCTs). NHS bodies have been encouraged by the Department to engage with the special health authority to understand the benefits it can offer for the cost effective management of temporary staffing. It is hoped and anticipated therefore, that the number of NHS trusts and PCTs using NHS Professionals will steadily expand.

Occupational Health

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of companies in England he estimates have an occupational health department; and if he will make a statement. [167407]

Jane Kennedy: I have been asked to reply.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) commissioned research by the Institute of Occupational Medicine (IOM) 'Survey of Use of Occupational Health Support' published in June 2002 which showed that 3 per cent. of all companies throughout the country provided OH support. The definition of occupational health support used for this purpose is one which includes hazard identification, risk management, provision of information, modifying work activities, training on occupational health-related issues, measuring workplace hazards, monitoring trends in health.

Paediatric Staff

Mr. Goodman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many paediatric staff, broken down by medical category, were *(a)* recruited and *(b)* employed by hospital trusts in the south-east region of England in (i) 2001, (ii) 2002 and (iii) 2003. [167485]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Information on the number of medical staff working in trusts in the south-east region of England in the specified years, by staff group and by the paediatric group of specialties has been placed in the Library.

Poole Hospital (A&E Unit)

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest average waiting time is for patients with minor injuries at Poole Hospital's Accident and Emergency Unit. [168822]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The average waiting times for patients with minor injuries at Poole Hospital's accident and emergency department is not collected centrally.

However, the latest figures for Poole Hospitals national health service trust are shown in the table for the number of patients spending over four hours in accident and emergency. These include all patients, and not just those with minor injuries.

Total time spent in accident and emergency from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge—Poole Hospitals NHS Trust, 2003–04, October to December (quarter 3)—all accident and emergency/minor injury units/walk-in centres (type 1,2,3)

	Quarter	Total attendances	Percentage of patients who spent less than four hours in accident and emergency
2003–04	3	12,470	90.6

Source:
Department of Health dataset QMAE. Published 11 March 2004.

Prison Health Service

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 8 April 2004, ref. 164612, on the Prison Health Service, for what purposes the joint letter was issued; and for what reasons the decision was taken to issue the joint letter at that time. [167941]

Dr. Ladyman: The joint letter was issued as part of a continuing programme of partnership work between the Department and the Prison Service to improve the full range of health services for prisoners. Ambulance and paramedic access had been identified as an area on which further guidance could be helpful to local services. The letter was issued to encourage the strengthening of local protocols between prisons and their local ambulance trusts and the sharing of any existing good practice.

Prison Hospital Places

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many high security prison hospital places have been established since June 2001. [167704]

Dr. Ladyman: There were 159 in-patient beds in health care centres in high security prisons in June 2001 and 183 in December 2003. The figures are not directly comparable because an additional establishment was brought within the high security prison estate between those two dates. The number of in-patient beds in the health care centres of the eight prisons that constituted the high security estate in June 2001 had fallen to 145 by December 2003.

Residential Care/Nursing Beds

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* residential care beds and *(b)* nursing beds have been lost since 1997 in (i) the south west region, (ii) the area served by the Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority and (iii) the area served by the Weston Primary Care Trust. [167527]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The number of residential and nursing places in the south west region and Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority is shown in the table as at 31 March for 1997 to 2001.

Figures for later years have been collected by the National Care Standards Commission, but comparable details broken by region are not available.

Information on the number of care home places in the area served by the Weston Primary Care Trust is not centrally available.

Number of residential and nursing places in the south west region and Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority, 1997 to 2001

At 31 March	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*
Residential places					
South west region	47,610	47,920	[1]46,240	45,760	44,790
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority	15,510	15,230	[1]15,200	15,640	15,570
Nursing places					
South west region	26,080	26,360	25,930	24,660	24,070
Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire Strategic Health Authority	11,110	11,500	11,300	10,620	10,250

[1] Includes estimated data.
Source:
RA and RH(N) form A.

Waiting Lists/Times

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times for the residents of Weston-super-Mare in the last seven years. [167529]

Ms Rosie Winterton: This Government are committed to reducing waiting times.

In 1997, the maximum waiting time for inpatient treatment was 18 months. The maximum waiting time for patients waiting for their first outpatient appointment with a consultant was over six months.

From 1 April 2004, these inpatient and outpatient maximum waiting times have been reduced to nine months and 17 weeks respectively.

These improvements apply nationally and benefit the residents of Weston-super-Mare.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the evidential basis is for his statement that about only 20 or 30 people in England are waiting more than nine months for an NHS procedure. [167244]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The priorities and planning framework for 2003 to 2006 includes the target of achieving a maximum wait of nine months for all inpatient waiters by March 2004. The Department asked strategic health authorities for their estimate of the end-March position and it is this information that was used for the statement. The final figures will be published shortly in the chief executive's report.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what co-ordination took place with the United Kingdom senior representative on the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq concerning the closure of all roads out of Iraq. [167371]

Mr. Rammell: Not all roads out of Iraq have been closed. Any road closures are on the basis of operational decisions taken by Coalition commanders in Iraq. The UK Special Representative to Iraq routinely engages in discussions with the Coalition Provisional Authority about security and other policy issues.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the ownership of the Iraq Central Bank. [167372]

Mr. Rammell: The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) issued in March 2004 a new law governing the Central Bank of Iraq (CBI). A copy of this law, and the Order to which it is attached, has been placed in the Library of the House. The new law provides for an independent central bank whose objectives are to achieve and maintain domestic price stability, foster and maintain a market-based financial system and promote sustainable growth, employment and prosperity. The CBI is required to maintain its independence from the Government of Iraq and, except for the provisions set out in the law, will not take instructions from any other persons or entity, including government entities.

The Governor, Deputy Governors, and other members of the board of the CBI are nominated by the Appointing Authority (which until the transfer of sovereignty on 30 June is the CPA in consultation with the Iraqi Governing Council) and their appointments confirmed in the legislature. The CBI is required to report to the Appointing Authority, the Ministry of Finance and the legislature on its operations.

The new CBI law has been reviewed by the Iraqi Governing Council, acting on the recommendation of its Economic and Finance Committee. The law has also been reviewed by the International Monetary Fund and was promulgated pursuant to United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483, which calls upon the CPA to promote economic reconstruction and the conditions for sustainable development in Iraq.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the implementation of a unified legal system in Iraq. [166928]

Mr. Rammell: The Kurdistan Regional Government Administered Areas (KRG Administered Areas) currently have a separate court system from the rest of Iraq. However, the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL), produced by the Iraqi Governing Council, establishes a Federal Supreme Court. The Court will consist of nine members, chosen from individuals nominated by the Higher Judicial Council which under the TAL will supervise the judiciary outside the KRG Administered Areas, in consultation with the regional Judicial Councils in the KRG Administered Areas. The Federal Supreme Court will have original and exclusive jurisdiction in legal proceedings between the Iraqi Transitional Government and the regional governments and governorate and municipal administrations. It will also have jurisdiction to review and declare as inconsistent with the TAL any law, regulation or directive issued by the federal or regional governments, the governorate or municipal administrations, or local administrations. This is of course an Iraqi led process although the UK is providing assistance for the training of judges, prosecutors and lawyers and will continue to consider requests for assistance in building the capacity of the Iraqi justice sector.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the *(a)* fate and *(b)* whereabouts of everyone held in custody in Iraq. [166930]

Mr. Rammell: The Coalition is holding around 9,000 detainees. (Precise figures vary as people are released and arrested daily). They include prisoners of war, security detainees and criminal detainees (held under Iraqi court order). Detainees are held at a number of locations throughout Iraq. The main US administered facility is at Abu Ghraib prison in Baghdad. The Coalition Provisional Authority is working to ensure a better flow of information to the relatives of detainees through recently established information centres. The Detainee Review and Appeal Board reviewed the cases of more than 3,000 detainees in February and March and released more than 2,000. This process is continuing. POWs and security detainees are visited regularly by the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) in accordance with the Geneva Conventions.

As of 1 April the UK was responsible for 85 detainees at an internment facility near Basra. UK forces inform the families of interned persons within 24 hours of an arrest. The case of each security detainee is reviewed after 10, 28 and thereafter every 90 days to determine whether they continue to pose an imperative threat to security. The UK internment facility near Basra is subject to regular inspection by the ICRC who are given full and unrestricted access to the detainees.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs to whom the Coalition will hand over powers in Iraq on 30 June 2004; and how members of the successor authority will be chosen. [167211]

Mr. Rammell: As envisaged in the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) and the Iraqi Governing Council (IGC) will be replaced on 30 June with an Iraqi Interim Government. The structures and powers of the Interim Government are currently the focus of consultations by Lakhdar Brahimi (UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Iraq) with Iraqis. Mr. Brahimi has outlined his initial proposals to appoint, after thorough consultations with Iraqis and the CPA, a tripartite Presidency, a technocratic Cabinet of Ministers headed by a Prime Minister and after 30 June to hold a national conference to elect an advisory council. He is due to return to Iraq in coming weeks to continue his consultations and to develop his proposals. We welcome these proposals and look forward to working with the

UN and the IGC to forge a consensus on the structures and powers of the Interim Government, which can then be enshrined in an annexe to the TAL.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what powers will be handed over by the Coalition in Iraq on 30 June 2004; and what powers will be retained. [167216]

Mr. Rammell: The Iraqi Interim Government established on 30 June will be an internationally recognised sovereign government, which will replace the Coalition Provisional Authority and the Iraqi Governing Council. Its powers will be circumscribed by the Transitional Administrative Law (TAL) agreed by the Iraqi Governing Council on 8 March and by an annexe to the TAL, specifying the structures and powers of the institutions of the Interim Government, which is currently being discussed by Iraqis in consultation with Lakhdar Brahimi, the UN Secretary-General's Special Adviser on Iraq.

We anticipate a continued need for a Multinational Force (MNF) after 30 June to work with the Iraqi Security Forces to ensure stability in Iraq. Most Iraqis continue to recognise the necessity of this. Discussions are underway between Iraqis and the coalition on the arrangements under which the MNF will operate after 30 June.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether it is intended that the political administration that takes over the governance of Iraq on 1 July 2004 will be empowered to ensure the removal of foreign troops on Iraqi territory. [167368]

Mr. Rammell: Discussions are continuing on arrangements for the Multinational Force after the transfer of power on 30 June.

Brazil

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the refusal of Brazil to allow access for inspectors from the International Atomic Energy Agency to its uranium enrichment plant. [166880]

Mr. MacShane: The Government understand that negotiations are continuing between the Government of Brazil and the International Atomic Energy Agency regarding the appropriate safeguards to be applied to Brazil's uranium enrichment facilities. We are not aware of access having been denied to inspectors.

Departmental Employment Policy

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many locally-engaged employees his Department has employed in overseas countries in each year since 1997. [166920]

Mr. Rammell: The number of locally engaged staff employed by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in overseas countries in each year since 2000 is as follows.

	Number of staff
2000	8,794
2001	8,771
2002	9,156
2003	9,471

The above information is based on the authorised establishment i.e. jobs not headcount expressed as full time equivalents

Numbers for the years 1997 to 1999 could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Dominican Republic

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many UK citizens are in prison in the Dominican Republic. [167284]
Date answered 27 April 2004

Mr. Mullin: At present, there is one British Citizen and two British Overseas Territories Citizens (both from Bermuda) in prison in the Dominican Republic.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of the Dominican Republic to seek the release from prison of Miss Marianne Telfer, of Colchester; and if he will make a statement. [167285]

Mr. Mullin: Since Miss Telfer's arrest in February, both she and her family have been receiving all appropriate consular assistance from our Consular Directorate in London and our Embassy in Santo Domingo.

Our Ambassador in Santo Domingo called on the Attorney General on 13 April to register our continuing interest in Miss Telfer's case and sought clarification of the next steps. Our Ambassador also met officials from Fair Trials Abroad during their recent visit to the Dominican Republic in connection with her arrest.

Miss Telfer's lawyers have requested a re-hearing of her Habeus Corpus appeal. We will continue to monitor the case at the highest levels and provide the Telfer family with all possible consular assistance.

European Constitution

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the proposed European constitution takes into consideration cultural and religious diversity. [168287]

Mr. MacShane: Yes.

Gibraltar

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will undertake to give the people of Gibraltar the opportunity to vote in the proposed referendum on the EU constitution. [168824]

Mr. MacShane *[holding answer 26 April 2004]*: The Government are currently considering this matter.

Middle East

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to his Israeli counterparts in respect of the killing

of Abdel-Aziz Al-Rantissi in Gaza City on 17 April 2004 as a result of a missile fired by an Israeli military helicopter. [167369]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has repeatedly said that the Israeli policy of targeted assassinations is illegal, unjustified and counter-productive. He reiterated this after the killing of Abdul Aziz al-Rantissi. Both parties must refrain from actions that may further escalate tensions, including any more such killings.

Money Laundering (Gulf States)

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what support the Government give to efforts to tackle money laundering in the Gulf States. [168571]

Mr. Rammell: The Government support international efforts to counter money laundering, in the Gulf as elsewhere, through our membership of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF). The FATF sets the international standards on anti-money laundering measures and monitors members' progress in implementing the necessary measures through a process of mutual evaluation.

We welcome the positive steps taken recently by the Gulf States, and others in the region, to establish a FATF-style regional body. If approved by political leaders, this will include all Gulf States in a FATF-style process and will allow for greater regional ownership of anti-money laundering efforts.

The Government also provide financial and technical assistance on a bilateral basis. In March this year, we provided an independent expert to take part in a joint IMF-World Bank financial sector report on the UAE.

Under-12 Concession

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when information on the decision to withdraw the concession for under-12s to join a parent in the UK was posted on the Foreign Office website. [167968]

Mr. Mullin: UK visas do not keep a log of each change that is made to their website. However, the webpage containing procedures for settlement entry of children, and the concession for under-12s, was last updated on 12 February 2004. The information was therefore posted before 12 February 2004.

Western Sahara

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will discuss with the Spanish Government their policy on the Western Sahara. [168248]

Mr. Rammell: The Government have consistently supported the efforts of the UN Secretary-General and James Baker, his Personal Envoy, to find a solution to the dispute over Western Sahara. We are awaiting the Secretary-General's next report on the Western Sahara, due for release this month. There are currently no plans to discuss with the Spanish Government their policy on the Western Sahara.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Literacy/Numeracy (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last five years. [167457]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the following table:

£ thousand

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	8,925	2,598
August 2001 to July 2002	15,369	3,586
August 2002 to July 2003	27,258	4,210

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Advanced Vocational Certificate

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils *(a)* were enrolled to take, *(b)* were awarded a pass in and *(c)* have dropped out from the advanced vocational certificate of education course, in each subject in each year since 2002. [165863]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The figures in Table 1 and Table 2 are derived from data collected annually for the Secondary School and College Performance Tables.

Table 1: Entries and passes at the Vocational Certificate of Education (advanced level) by students of all ages.

	2002		*2003*	
Subject	*Entries*	*Passes*	*Entries*	*Passes*
Art and Design	1,496	1,230	1,165	970
Business	7,623	6,166	9,000	7,049
Health and Social Care	4,029	3,478	5,335	4,547
Manufacturing	53	30	40	26
Construction	166	145	156	104
Hospitality and Catering	241	218	171	141
Science	565	440	511	381
Engineering	477	366	425	340
Information Technology	8,419	6,858	11,788	9,624
Media: Communication and Production	665	548	841	674
Retail and Distribution	263	196	213	164
Performing Arts	557	488	650	588
Leisure and Recreation	1,787	1,496	1,923	1,558
Travel and Tourism	3,331	2,877	3,872	3,146
Total	29,672	24,536	36,090	29,312

Table 2: Entries and passes at the Vocational Certificate of Education (advanced level) double award by students of all ages.

	2002		2003	
Subject	*Entries*	*Passes*	*Entries*	*Passes*
Art and Design	3,981	3,466	3,337	3,064
Business	11,660	9,304	10,042	8,259
Health and Social Care	6,013	5,078	6,086	5,463
Manufacturing	38	33	25	21
Construction	425	332	460	337
Hospitality and Catering	577	514	560	496
Science	1,137	897	1,067	896
Engineering	1,004	646	998	731
Information Technology	7,267	5,800	8,515	7,167
Media: Communication and Production	1,470	1,210	1,378	1,186
Performing Arts	595	543	582	523
Leisure and Recreation	2,684	2,109	2,436	2,057
Travel and Tourism	5,040	4,140	4,894	4,171
Total	41,891	34,072	40,380	34,371

The DfES does not have statistics on enrolments or drop out rates for individual subjects. The figures supplied count only those students that were entered for the examination.

Apprenticeships (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Preston have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [168115]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Lancashire LSC area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1996 to March 2001 in the two TECs that amalgamated into Lancashire LSC—ELTEC and LAWTEC.

Time period[1] and TEC/LSC	*Advanced MA*	*Foundation MA*
April 1998 to March 1999		
ELTEC	1,000	400
LAWTEC	1,600	100
April 1999 to March 2000		
ELTEC	800	1,100
LAWTEC	1,900	1,800
April 2000 to March 2001		
ELTEC	900	1,300
LAWTEC	1,800	2,100
April 2001 to July 2002		
Lancashire LSC	1,900	4,100
August 2002 to July 2003		
Lancashire LSC	1,500	3,300

[1] TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.

Sources:
TEC Management Information
LSC Individualised Learner Record

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's Executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166398]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The total number of staff employed in my Department, broken down into the requested equality categories are:

(i) Gender

	AA	*AO*	*EO*	*HEO*	*SEO*	*Grade 7/6*	*SCS*	*Total*
Male	105	319	375	471	287	316	82	1,955
Female	108	646	751	687	328	298	51	2,869
All staff	213	965	1,126	1,158	615	614	133	4,824

(ii) Ethnic group

	AA	*AO*	*EO*	*HEO*	*SEO*	*Grade 7/6*	*SCS*[1]
White	137	592	745	827	482	478	*
Ethnic Minority	26	161	180	133	36	28	*
Not known	50	212	201	198	97	108	*
All staff	213	965	1126	1158	615	614	133

(iii) Recorded disability

	AA	*AO*	*EO*	*HEO*	*SEO*	*Grade 7/6*	*SOS*[2]
Recorded disability	17	46	51	75	17	19	*
Others	196	919	1075	1083	598	595	*
All staff	213	965	1126	1158	615	614	133

[1]* In accord with civil service guidelines for disclosing equality data SCS numbers deleted out because numbers in one category fall below six.

[2]* SCS as for ethnic group.

(iv) Age group

	AA	*AO*	*EO*	*HEO*	*SEO*	*Grade 7/6 and SCS*	*Total*
Under 29	48	259	279	239	36	25	886
30–39	44	282	377	361	186	160	1,410
40–49	36	236	309	379	245	311	1,516
50+	85	188	161	179	148	251	1,012
All staff	213	965	1,126	1,158	615	747	4,824

SCS and Grade 7/6 numbers amalgamated and age categories under 24 and 60+ amalgamated with next age band as some numbers fall below six.

My Department has no Executive agencies.

Departmental Consultations

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list each consultation that his Department has held in each year since 1997; and what the cost was of these consultations. [167559]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: A list of the initiatives my Department has consulted on can be found at www.dfes.gov.uk/consultations/

It is not possible to provide the cost of consultations undertaken since 1997 as the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) was established after the general election in 2001. Prior to this date the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE) conducted consultations dating back to 1997. The DfEE operated under different accounting standards to the DfES, making it difficult to provide a consistent cost breakdown for the period in question. In 2001 and 2002 Cabinet Office's monitoring of compliance with the Code of Practice on Consultation included the cost of consultation exercises. The total cost of DfES consultation exercises identified was £514,921.04 in 2001 and £2,508,687.60 in 2002.

Education

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Heywood and Middleton have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [168511]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At present no centrally funded schemes exist which enable people to acquire free or low price recycled computers. In the past such schemes have been trialled but have proved costly to administer to ensure fair distribution of equipment.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports in Stalybridge and Hyde. [168762]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held in the format requested. Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged 5–16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government is investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of 5 to16-year-olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing just over £400,000 to support the delivery of one School Sport Partnerships in the Tameside LEA area. The partnership includes six secondary and 18 primary schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and School Sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Tameside LEA area with over £3 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Latest research, published by the Departments on 4 March shows that 68 per cent. of pupils in schools that have been in a partnership for three years, are taking up the two hour entitlement, rising to 90 per cent. at Key Stage 3. Data has been collected from remaining partnerships and will be published in April.

English/Mathematics

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils in Burnley reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years. [167927]

Mr. Miliband: The results from the 2003 National Curriculum tests showed that 75 per cent. of 11-year-olds in England reached Level 4 in English and 73 per cent. in mathematics. These results represent a significant improvement in standards—of 12 percentage points in English and 11 percentage points in mathematics—since 1997, reflecting the impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies on primary schools. We remain absolutely committed, through our new Primary Strategy, to supporting schools to achieve the ambitious targets we have set for standards of literacy and numeracy.

The following table shows the number and percentage of pupils in Burnley who have achieved Level 4 or above in the Key Stage 2 English and mathematics tests since 1997. The results for Burnley are below the national average but show improvements since 1997 in both English and mathematics which are only slightly below the improvements nationally.

	Number of pupils[1]		Percentage of pupils	
	English	Mathematics	English	Mathematics
1997	785	784	59	59
1998	762	655	60	51
1999	798	794	62	61
2000	844	819	67	65
2001	894	827	67	62
2002	843	864	66	68
2003	850	851	68	68

[1] The number of eligible pupils for the Key Stage 2 tests varies slightly from year to year

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils in Preston reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years. [168126]

Mr. Miliband: The results from the 2003 National Curriculum tests showed that 75 per cent. of 11-year-olds in England reached Level 4 in English and 73 per cent. in mathematics. These results represent a significant improvement in standards—of 12 percentage points in English and 11 percentage points in mathematics—since 1997, reflecting the impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies on primary schools. We remain absolutely committed, through our new Primary Strategy, to supporting schools to achieve the ambitious targets we have set for standards of literacy and numeracy.

The following table shows the number and percentage of pupils in Preston who have achieved Level 4 or above in the Key Stage 2 English and mathematics tests since 1997. The results for Preston are below the national average but show significant improvements since 1997 in both English and mathematics which are greater than the improvements nationally.

	Number of pupils[1]		Percentage of pupils	
	English	Mathematics	English	Mathematics
1997	666	664	53	52
1998	830	775	62	58
1999	909	913	66	66
2000	935	896	73	70
2001	905	879	70	70
2002	931	939	68	70
2003	918	876	70	67

[1] The number of eligible pupils for the Key Stage 2 tests varies slightly from year to year.

Further Education Colleges

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funds were available to the Learning and Skills Council nationally for further education colleges new build requirements for *(a)* each year of its existence and *(b)* the previous three years of the Further Education Funding Council. [168831]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not provide a specific budget to the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) for rebuilding further education colleges. It is for the LSC to determine for itself the right level of capital investment in further education colleges from the funds allocated to it by the Department for capital investment in the post-16 learning and skills sector. In 2001–02 the LSC's total post-16 learning and skills sector capital funding allocation was £136 million. This increased in 2002–03 to 231 million and to £327.5 million in 2003–04. In 1998–99 earmarked capital expenditure allocated to the Further Education Funding Council was NIL. In 1999–2000 it was £42 million and this increased to £56 million in 2000–01.

General Teaching Council

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been received by the General Teaching Council from his Department in each year since its creation. [167571]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Funding has been provided by this Department to the General Teaching Council (GTC) as shown in the table:

£000

	General Teaching Council
2000–01	[1]4,000
2001–02	9,024
2002–03	3,735
2003–04	1,463

[1] Grant in aid payments to the GTC began in September 2000. Funding in 2000–01 therefore covered the period September 2000 to March 2001 inclusive

Information and Communication Technologies

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to schools in Preston for information and communication technologies since 2001. [168116]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not hold information on school level allocations for information and communication technologies. However Preston is in Lancashire LEA and since 2001–02 schools in Lancashire have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Lancashire LEA (£)
2001–02	6,483,142
2002–03	8,983,493
2003–04	9,169,124
2004–05	11,892,478

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Preston have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [168117]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In the period October 2003[1]–March 2004, 6,262 people visited a UK online centre in the Preston constituency. 3,507 (56 per cent.) of these people were women.

Since learndirect was launched in 1999, 4,197 people from the Preston constituency have enrolled on a learndirect course. 2,395 (57 per cent.) of these people were women. Of the total number of women who enrolled on a course, 3 per cent. did so in order to learn skills to return to work.

[1] Please note the complete statistics are not available for UK online prior to September 2003 as the DfES did not collect this data on a centre-by-centre basis.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Preston have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [168118]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At present no centrally funded schemes exist which enable people to acquire free or low price recycled computers. In the past such schemes have been trialled but have proved costly to administer to ensure fair distribution of equipment.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment his Department has made of the impact of information and communication technology on *(a)* GCSE and *(b)* A-level grades. [168667]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Independent research has found that, when used effectively, ICT can raise levels of pupil attainment by the equivalent of half a grade at GSCE. We do not have any comparable research at 'A' level but this is currently being considered.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Burnley have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [167935]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In the period October 2003[1]—March 2004, 3,030 people visited a UK online centre in the Burnley constituency. 1,697 (56 per cent.) of these people were women.

Since learndirect was launched in 1999, 4,119 people from the Burnley Constituency have enrolled on a learndirect course. 2,466 (60 per cent.) of these people were women. Of the total number of women who enrolled on a course, 3 per cent. did so in order to learn skills to return to work.

[1] Please note the complete statistics are not available for UK online prior to September 2003 as the DfES did not collect this data on a centre-by-centre basis.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Burnley have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [167936]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At present no centrally funded schemes exist which enable people to acquire free or low price recycled computers. In the past such schemes have been trialled but have proved costly to administer to ensure fair distribution of equipment.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Manchester, Gorton have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [167433]

Mr. Charles Clarke: In the period October 2003[1]—March 2004, 2,828 people visited a UK online centre in the Manchester Gorton constituency. 1,584 (56 per cent.) of these people were women.

Since learndirect was launched in 1999, 6,485 people from the Manchester Gorton Constituency have enrolled on a learndirect course. 3,120 (48 per cent.) of these people were women. Of the total number of women who enrolled on a course, 8 per cent. did so in order to learn skills to return to work.

[1] Please note the complete statistics are not available for UK online prior to September 2003 as the DfES did not collect this data on a centre-by-centre basis.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what funding has been allocated to schools in the Easington constituency for IT technologies in 2002–03; and if he will make a statement. [168074]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not hold information on school level allocations for information and communication technologies. However, Easington is in Durham LEA and in 2002–03 schools in Durham benefited from £4,168,531 through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA).

Research shows that, when used effectively, ICT can engage pupils in learning and raise standards of performance to the equivalent of half a grade at GCSE. The positive impact of ICT in schools takes place irrespective of the socio-economic context of the school.

Literacy/Numeracy (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Burnley in each of the last five years. [167914]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Lancashire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table.

£ thousands

	Basic skills[1]	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	3,370	1,270
August 2001 to July 2002	6,577	1,857
August 2002 to July 2003	7,815	1,948

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Managed Migration

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) pursuant to the Home Secretary's written statement of 22 April 2004, on managed migration, whether publicly funded institutions will have to become accredited in order for the Home Office to approve visa applications for their students; [169140]

(2) pursuant to the Home Secretary's written statement of 22 April 2004 on Managed Migration, *Official Report*, column 23WS, whether publicly-funded institutions will have to become accredited in order for the Home Office to approve visa applications for their students. [169160]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Approval for leave to study will be based on a list we are putting together of institutions we know are offering genuine educational opportunities. This will, of course, include publicly funded higher and further education institutions.

In addition to this there are a number of private English language schools already accredited by the British Council who will automatically be registered.

Other private colleges offering genuine educational opportunities will have nothing to fear and will be included in the list following an accreditation process.

The new measures announced are specifically targeted at those organisations intent on getting around the visa regulations and not to damage genuine providers of good quality education. The Home Office is undertaking an intensive round of inspections of colleges where there are suspicions. Visa issue will be put on hold in respect of these until the checks have been made.

Religious Schools

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many schools of a religious nature there are, broken down by *(a)* local education authority and *(b)* religious affiliation; [167579]

(2) how many Church of England schools there are, broken down by local education authority. [167580]

Mr. Miliband: The information for mainstream schools of a religious nature, including Church of England schools, maintained by local education authorities in England is shown in the following tables.

Local education authority	*Christian*	*CofE*	*CofE/ Christian*	*CofE/ FC*	*CofE/ Methodist*	*CofE/ RC*	*CofE/ URC*	*Greek*	*Jewish*
City of London	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Camden	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Greenwich	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hackney	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Islington	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kensington and Chelsea	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lambeth	—	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lewisham	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Southwark	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Tower Hamlets	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wandsworth	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Westminster	1	22	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barking and Dagenham	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Barnet	—	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	9
Bexley	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Brent	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	4
Bromley	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Croydon	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	1	—
Ealing	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Enfield	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Haringey	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Harrow	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Havering	1	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hillingdon	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hounslow	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kingston upon Thames	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Merton	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Newham	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Redbridge	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Richmond upon Thames	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sutton	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Waltham Forest	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Birmingham	5	25	—	—	1	—	—	—	1
Coventry	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dudley	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sandwell	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Solihull	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Walsall	—	14	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wolverhampton	—	17	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Knowsley	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Liverpool	—	16	—	—	—	1	—	—	2
St. Helens	—	12	—	—	—	—	1	—	—
Sefton	—	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wirral	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bolton	—	32	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Bury	—	18	—	—	1	—	—	—	2
Manchester	—	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	3
Oldham	—	28	—	1	1	—	—	—	—
Rochdale	—	18	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Salford	—	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Stockport	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Tameside	—	18	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Trafford	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wigan	—	44	—	—	1	—	—	—	—

Local education authority	Christian	CofE	CofE/ Christian	CofE/ FC	CofE/ Methodist	CofE/ RC	CofE/ URC	Greek	Jewish
Barnsley	—	14	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Doncaster	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rotherham	—	12	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sheffield	—	10	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Bradford	—	27	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Calderdale	—	23	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kirklees	—	49	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Leeds	—	41	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Wakefield	—	21	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Gateshead	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Newcastle upon Tyne	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
North Tyneside	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
South Tyneside	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Sunderland	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Isles of Scilly	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bath and North East Somerset	—	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bristol, City of	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
North Somerset	—	27	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
South Gloucestershire	—	31	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Hartlepool	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Middlesbrough	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Redcar and Cleveland	—	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Stockton-on-Tees	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
East Riding of Yorkshire	—	44	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
North East Lincolnshire	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
North Lincolnshire	—	17	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
North Yorkshire	1	142	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
York	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bedfordshire	—	41	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Luton	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Buckinghamshire	1	82	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Milton Keynes	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Derbyshire	2	104	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Derby	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Dorset	1	89	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Poole	—	4	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Bournemouth	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Durham	—	26	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Darlington	—	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
East Sussex	—	67	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Brighton and Hove	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hampshire	—	115	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Portsmouth	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Southampton	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Leicestershire	—	92	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Leicester	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Rutland	—	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Staffordshire	1	103	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Stoke-on-Trent	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wiltshire	1	138	1	—	—	—	1	—	—
Swindon	—	6	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Bracknell Forest	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Windsor and Maidenhead	—	24	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
West Berkshire	—	31	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Reading	—	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Slough	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Wokingham	—	16	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	—	63	—	—	—	2	—	—	—
Peterborough	—	13	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cheshire	—	72	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Halton	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Warrington	—	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Devon	1	115	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Plymouth	—	8	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Torbay	—	9	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Essex	2	119	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Southend-on-Sea	—	1	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Thurrock	—	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Herefordshire	—	40	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Worcestershire	—	93	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Kent	1	168	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Medway	—	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lancashire	5	180	—	—	5	—	—	—	—
Blackburn with Darwin	—	24	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Blackpool	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	—	64	—	—	2	—	—	—	—
Nottingham	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Shropshire	—	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Telford and Wrekin	—	11	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Cornwall	—	44	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Cumbria	—	113	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Local education authority	Christian	CofE	CofE/ Christian	CofE/ FC	CofE/ Methodist	CofE/ RC	CofE/ URC	Greek	Jewish
Gloucestershire	—	108	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Hertfordshire	1	91	—	—	—	—	—	—	2
Isle of Wight	—	19	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Lincolnshire	3	118	—	—	4	—	—	—	—
Norfolk	3	121	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Northamptonshire	1	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Northumberland	—	36	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Oxfordshire	1	119	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Somerset	—	119	—	—	2	1	—	—	—
Suffolk	—	96	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Surrey	—	90	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Warwickshire	—	71	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Sussex	—	83	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
England	32	4,678	1	1	29	9	2	1	34

Local education authority	Methodist	Methodist/ CofE	Muslim	Quaker	RC	RC/ CofE	SDA	Sikh	URC	All schools of a religious nature
City of London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Camden	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	23
Greenwich	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	21
Hackney	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	17
Hammersmith and Fulham	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	16
Islington	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	18
Kensington and Chelsea	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	17
Lambeth	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	27
Lewisham	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	24
Southwark	—	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	30
Tower Hamlets	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	22
Wandsworth	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	21
Westminster	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	31
Barking and Dagenham	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	8
Barnet	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	41
Bexley	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	17
Brent	—	—	—	1	14	—	—	—	—	24
Bromley	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	18
Croydon	—	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	26
Ealing	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	13
Enfield	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	21
Haringey	—	—	—	—	12	—	1	—	—	23
Harrow	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	11
Havering	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	14
Hillingdon	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	2	—	16
Hounslow	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	13
Kingston upon Thames	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	18
Merton	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	13
Newham	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	12
Redbridge	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	13
Richmond upon Thames	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	16
Sutton	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	12
Waltham Forest	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	11
Birmingham	—	1	2	—	63	—	—	—	—	98
Coventry	—	—	—	—	22	—	—	—	—	31
Dudley	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	19
Sandwell	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	20
Solihull	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	24
Walsall	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	25
Wolverhampton	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	29
Knowsley	—	—	—	—	29	—	—	—	—	35
Liverpool	—	—	—	—	65	—	—	—	—	84
St. Helens	1	—	—	—	21	—	—	—	—	35
Sefton	—	—	—	—	37	—	—	—	—	55
Wirral	—	—	—	—	24	—	—	—	—	36
Bolton	—	—	—	—	19	—	—	—	—	52
Bury	2	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	35
Manchester	—	—	—	—	43	—	—	—	—	73
Oldham	—	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	44
Rochdale	—	—	—	—	17	—	—	—	—	36
Salford	2	—	—	—	25	—	—	—	—	48
Stockport	—	—	—	—	18	—	—	—	—	31
Tameside	1	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	34
Trafford	—	—	—	—	19	—	—	—	—	27
Wigan	2	—	—	—	35	—	—	—	—	82
Barnsley	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	20
Doncaster	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	22
Rotherham	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	21
Sheffield	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	26

Local education authority	Methodist	Methodist/ CofE	Muslim	Quaker	RC	RC/ CofE	SDA	Sikh	URC	All schools of a religious nature
Bradford	—	—	—	—	24	—	—	—	—	52
Calderdale	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	31
Kirklees	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	59
Leeds	—	—	—	—	34	—	—	—	—	76
Wakefield	1	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	33
Gateshead	—	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	22
Newcastle upon Tyne	—	—	—	—	21	—	—	—	—	25
North Tyneside	—	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	13
South Tyneside	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	20
Sunderland	—	—	—	—	18	—	—	—	—	22
Isles of Scilly	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	1
Bath and North East Somerset	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	39
Bristol, City of	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	29
North Somerset	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	31
South Gloucestershire	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	38
Hartlepool	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	12
Middlesbrough	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	13
Redcar and Cleveland	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	13
Stockton-on-Tees	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	26
Kingston Upon Hull, City of	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	13
East Riding of Yorkshire	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	49
North East Lincolnshire	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	10
North Lincolnshire	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	23
North Yorkshire	3	—	—	—	23	1	—	—	—	171
York	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	19
Bedfordshire	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	48
Luton	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	8
Buckinghamshire	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	71
Milton Keynes	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	14
Derbyshire	1	—	—	—	20	—	—	—	—	128
Derby	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	13
Dorset	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	98
Poole	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	7
Bournemouth	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	13
Durham	—	—	—	—	42	—	—	—	—	68
Darlington	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	12
East Sussex	1	—	—	—	10	—	—	—	—	79
Brighton and Hove	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	16
Hampshire	—	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	131
Portsmouth	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	8
Southampton	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	11
Leicestershire	—	—	—	—	14	—	—	—	—	106
Leicester	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	11
Rutland	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	12
Staffordshire	1	—	—	—	38	—	—	—	—	143
Stoke-on-Trent	—	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	29
Wiltshire	—	—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	153
Swindon	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	12
Bracknell Forest	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	10
Windsor and Maidenhead	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	29
West Berkshire	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	34
Reading	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	9
Slough	—	—	—	—	7	—	—	—	—	10
Wokingham	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	18
Cambridgeshire	—	—	—	—	2	—	—	—	—	67
Peterborough	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	16
Cheshire	—	—	—	—	30	—	—	—	—	102
Halton	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	23
Warrington	—	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	35
Devon	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	125
Plymouth	—	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	16
Torbay	—	—	—	—	4	1	—	—	—	14
Essex	—	—	—	—	31	—	—	—	—	153
Southend-on-Sea	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	7
Thurrock	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	8
Herefordshire	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	44
Worcestershire	—	—	—	—	17	—	—	—	—	110
Kent	2	—	—	—	33	—	—	—	—	204
Medway	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	19
Lancashire	9	1	—	—	126	—	—	—	1	327
Blackburn with Darwin	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	38
Blackpool	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	14
Nottinghamshire	—	—	—	—	15	—	—	—	—	81
Nottingham	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	14
Shropshire	—	—	—	—	3	—	—	—	—	86
Telford and Wrekin	—	—	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	17
Cornwall	—	—	—	—	4	—	—	—	—	48
Cumbria	—	—	—	—	29	—	—	—	—	142
Gloucestershire	—	—	—	—	11	—	—	—	—	119

Local education authority	Methodist	Methodist/ CofE	Muslim	Quaker	RC	RC/ CofE	SDA	Sikh	URC	All schools religious nature
Hertfordshire	—	—	—	—	44	—	—	—	—	138
Isle of Wight	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	25
Lincolnshire	—	—	—	—	9	—	—	—	—	134
Norfolk	—	—	—	—	6	—	—	—	—	130
Northamptonshire	—	—	—	—	17	—	—	—	—	101
Northumberland	—	—	—	—	16	—	—	—	—	52
Oxfordshire	—	—	—	—	17	—	—	—	—	137
Somerset	1	—	—	—	8	—	—	—	—	131
Suffolk	—	—	—	—	13	—	—	—	—	109
Surrey	—	—	—	—	33	—	—	—	—	124
Warwickshire	—	—	—	—	26	—	—	—	—	97
West Sussex	—	—	—	1	19	—	—	—	—	103
England	26	2	4	1	2,075	2	1	2	1	6,901

Notes:
CofE = Church of England
FC = Free Church
RC = Roman Catholic
URC = United Reformed Church
SDA = Seventh Day Adventist
Source:
Edubase (DfES database of educational establishments).

School Computers

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Burnley in each of the last seven years. [167931]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However Burnley is in Lancashire LEA and since 1998–99 schools in Lancashire have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Lancashire LEA (£)
1998–99	2,500,000
1999–2000	1,627,867
2000–01	5,576,036
2001–02	6,483,142
2002–03	8,983,493
2003–04	9,169,124
2004–05	11,892,478

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last seven years. [167441]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However Manchester, Gorton is in Manchester LEA and since 1998–99 schools in Manchester have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Manchester LEA (£)
1998–99	983,605
1999–2000	1,410,000
2000–01	1,861602
2001–02	2,012,866
2002–03	2,932,949
2003–04	2,880,827
2004–05	3,682,324

School Sports

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment he has made of the effects on schools in Burnley of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports; [167912]

(2) how much has been invested in sustainable school sports in Burnley. [167913]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: This information is not collected in the format requested.

Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged five to16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government is investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of five to 16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing just over £440,000 to support the delivery of a School Sport Partnership in the Lancashire LEA area. The partnership includes five secondary and 21 primary schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and School Sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund

has provided schools in the Lancashire LEA area with nearly £12 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Latest research, published by the Departments on 4 March shows that 68 per cent. of pupils in schools that have been in a partnership for three years, are taking up the two hour entitlement, rising to 90 per cent. at Key Stage 3. Data has been collected from the remaining partnerships and will be published in April.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment he has made of the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports in Manchester, Gorton; [167455]

(2) how much money has been invested in sustainable school sports in Manchester, Gorton. [167456]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held centrally. Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged five to 16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government are investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of five to 16-year-olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing just over £1.5 million to support the delivery of three School Sport Partnerships in the Manchester LEA area. The partnerships include 15 secondary and 92 primary schools and provide enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and School Sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Manchester LEA area with over £10 million to specifically enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Latest research, published by the Departments on 4 March shows that 68 per cent. of pupils in schools that have been in a partnership for three years, are taking up the two hour entitlement, rising to 90 per cent. at Key Stage 3. Data have been collected from remaining Partnerships and will be published in April.

Sports Days

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent estimate he has made of the number of schools holding annual school sports' days; and if he will make a statement. [167867]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Almost all schools hold an annual school sports day. The 2003–04 PE, School Sport and Club Links survey found that 96 per cent. of the 6,547 schools taking part in the survey held a sports day or equivalent event during the last academic year. The full results of the survey will be published later this year and a copy of the report will be placed in the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament.

Teachers

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools in each year since 1997, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [167558]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vacant head teacher posts existed in *(a)* primary schools, *(b)* secondary schools and *(c)* special schools in each year since 1997, broken down by parliamentary constituency. [167574]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what guidelines his Department issues on disciplinary action schools should take against teachers who develop inappropriate relationships with pupils outside of school hours; [167217]

(2) what guidelines his Department issues on investigations schools should conduct into allegations of impropriety against a teacher; [167218]

(3) if he will make a statement on his policies on the prevention of inappropriate relationships between teachers and pupils. [167219]

Mr. Miliband: My Department does not issue guidelines about the disciplinary action that might be appropriate to particular issues. The disciplinary sanctions that can be applied against staff in schools are governed by employment law in the same way as for any other employer, and each case must be considered on its merits.

Guidance about procedures for dealing with allegations against teachers, and other staff, including guidance about conducting disciplinary investigations, is annexed to my Department's Circular The protection of children from abuse: The ... the education service". However, the guidance also makes it clear that allegations involving a possible criminal offence, and allegations of possible child abuse must be investigated by the police and the social services respectively because those are the agencies with statutory responsibility for such matters.

An inappropriate relationship between a teacher and a pupil has always been regarded as professionally wrong, and as misconduct that is grounds for disciplinary action, including dismissal, by an employer. That kind of behaviour is also grounds on which the Secretary of State will consider exercising his powers under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 to prohibit the person from future employment as a teacher and other work involving regular contact with children and young people in the education service.

The Government also introduced a new criminal offence of abuse of trust in the Sexual Offences (Amendment) Act 2000 to protect young people under

18 years of age who are in full time education, or looked after by a local authority, or resident in NHS or other institutions, or in detention under an enactment. As well as teachers it applies to any adult working in one of those settings who is regularly involved in caring for, training, supervising, or being in sole charge of children under 18. As far as teachers it is an offence for a teacher to have relationship that involves sexual intercourse, or any other sexual activity, with a young person under 18 who is a pupil at the teacher's school. That offence is punishable by up to five years imprisonment, and it is repealed and re-enacted in the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

In addition, cross departmental guidance "Caring for Young People and the Vulnerable?" about preventing abuse of trust was published jointly by the Home Office, my Department, and the Department of Health in 1999. The guidance aims to help organisations create their own codes of conduct to prevent abuse of trust, either as part of wider codes to prevent abuse, or separately.

University Staff (Salaries)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average percentage change in salary for *(a)* university academic staff, *(b)* academic-related staff and *(c)* vice-chancellors has been for each year since 1993. [162295]

Alan Johnson: The Department does not collect all the information requested. However the Higher Education Statistics Agency, through the "Individualised Staff Record" (ISR), collects data that can be used to provide estimates of the earnings growth of academic staff employed by Higher Education Institutions. "Academic staff" are defined in the ISR as those whose primary employment function is teaching, research, or a combination of the two.

The ISR does not allow us to provide earnings data on other groups, such as vice-chancellors and academic-related staff where their primary function is not as stated above. Further, this source can only provide earnings growth data from 1995/96, and is also best used in analysing full-time employees only.

The following table shows the annual percentage change in the average salaries of full-time academic staff from 1995/96 to 2002/03, in real terms (adjusted by the Retail Price Index).

Table: Annual percentage change in the real average salaries of full-time academic staff, 1995/96 to 2002/03

	Gender	
Academic year	*Female*	*Male*
1995/96	-1.2	-1.7
1996/97	2.1	2.4
1997/98	0.4	0.2
1998/99	1.6	2.5
1999/2000	2.1	2.4
2000/01	1.4	1.2
2001/02	1.2	1.0
2002/03	1.8	1.4

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 28 April 2004

DEFENCE

Armed Forces Personnel

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* males and *(b)* females are employed in the (i) Army, (ii) Royal Air Force and (iii) Royal Navy as (A) commissioned officers, (B) non-commissioned officers and (C) other ranks. [168620]

Mr. Caplin: The strengths of male and female commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers and other ranks in each service as at 1 January 2004 are shown below:

	Naval Service[1]	*Army*	*Royal Air Force*
Males			
Commissioned officers[2]	7,110	12,420	9,600
Non-commissioned officers[3]	16,940	51,470	20,860
Other[4]	13,240	39,700	16,610
Total	37,280	103,600	47,070
Females			
Commissioned officers[2]	620	1,370	1,330
Non-commissioned officers[3]	1,120	3,950	1,800
Other[4]	1,960	2,980	3,020
Total	3,700	8,310	6,150

[1] Naval Service includes Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

[2] Commissioned officers include officers designate and above in the Naval Service and Royal Air Force. In the Army, commissioned officers include 2nd Lieutenant and above. As at 1 January 2004, there were an additional 660 male officers designate and 140 female officers designate in the Army, who are excluded from the table above.

[3] Non-commissioned officers includes junior non-commissioned officers; that is, ranks of Leading Rate and above in the Royal Navy, Lance Corporal and above in the Army and Corporal and above in the Royal Marines and Royal Air Force.

[4] This represents all other ranks who are not non-commissioned officers.

Notes:

1. Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

2. Due to rounding methods used, totals may not always equal the sum of their parts.

Figures provided are for United Kingdom regular forces (including both trained and untrained personnel), and therefore exclude Gurkhas, full-time reserve personnel, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment, mobilised reservists and naval activated reservists.

Army (Redress of Grievance Cases)

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many army redress of grievance cases have been submitted in the last five years; and how many are still pending after three years. [167836]

Mr. Caplin: Between 1 April 1999 and 31 March 2004, some 1,135 formal complaints were submitted within the Army. As at 31 March 2004, of the complaints submitted before 1 April 2001, 18 cases are still unresolved.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the reasons are for the delays of over three years of army redress cases; and if he will make a statement. [167837]

Mr. Caplin: All complainants have the right to take their complaint, through a series of levels in the chain of command, to the Army Board (as the Defence Council). Officers have the further opportunity to petition the Crown.

A relatively small number of redress cases remain unresolved after more than three years. This is usually because of the need to exchange detailed case papers with the complainant, prior to the redress being heard, or because the cases concern complex legal issues, which can take a considerable time to resolve. Additionally, if a complainant submits a case to an employment tribunal or civil court case it is normal practice for the Army to suspend its consideration until these bodies have reached a conclusion.

Defence Colleges

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress his Department has made in establishing defence colleges as centres of vocational excellence. [168468]

Mr. Caplin: In support of its strong and continuing commitment to meet its training needs in the most effective, efficient and economical manner, the Ministry of Defence has recently taken a major step in the Defence Training Rationalisation Programme by establishing six Defence Colleges for specialist skills training. As a major public employer and training provider in support of the Government's skills agenda, the Department also contributes significantly to the nation's wider economic and social well-being. In so doing, the Department responds to all relevant Government initiatives and is assessing the applicability of seeking Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVE) status for its developing Defence Colleges.

Droitwich Spa Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the impact of the planned closure of the Droitwich Spa Army Medal Office on the efficient issuing of the *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* GSM Canal Zone medals. [168922]

Mr. Caplin: Plans are currently being drawn up in consultation with the single Services to ensure that the distribution of medals to both serving personnel and the veterans' community continues and disruption is minimised. How best to tackle the current medals backlog prior to the formation of the Joint Medal Office is being considered as part of this work.

Joint Medal Office

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the written statement of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 11WS, on Joint Medal Office, how many personnel he expects will move

to RAF Innsworth from other bases following the creation of the Joint Medal Office on that site; and if he will make a statement. [168816]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* At this time it is not possible to say how many personnel will move to the Joint Medal Office at RAF Innsworth. Personnel at the sites affected are currently being asked to complete a preference proforma to assess how many would wish to transfer. This exercise should be completed by July, after which Planning Assumptions can be finalised.

I intend to keep the House and appropriate constituency members informed of progress.

Manning Control Points

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many military and civilian staff from APC Glasgow were involved in the administration of manning control points in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003, broken down by (i) rank and (ii) pay scale; and if he will make a statement. [167838]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 946W, which reported that the information requested was not held centrally and could be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many amendment to terms of service forms have been signed by army personnel who have been listed for manning control reviews in each of the last eight years; and if he will make a statement. [167839]

Mr. Caplin: I refer the hon. Member to my answer of 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 946W, which reported that AFB6848 forms are not held centrally for longer than a year.

Of the 28,000 AFB6848 forms signed during the period 1 March 2003 to 29 February 2004, the numbers signed by those listed for Manning Control Point review are not separately identified and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many soldiers who were *(a)* discharged under QR 9.413, *(b)* issued with manning control warning certificates and *(c)* discharged due to QR 9.414 who signed AFB130A were listed as P7 on their last recorded medical assessment, broken down for each of the last eight years; and if he will make a statement. [167840]

Mr. Caplin: The information requested at *(a)* and *(c)* is as follows:

	Soldiers graded as P7 discharged under:	
	(a) QR 9.413	*(b) QR 9.414*
1996	11	8
1997	15	16
1998	9	20
1999	[1]Under 5	13
2000	[1]Under 5	29
2001	[1]Under 5	29
2002	0	37
2003	0	57

[1] Actual figures cannot be provided without breaching disclosure and confidentiality policy.

The number issued with manning control warning certificates is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what forms are used in the process of manning control; and in what order they are used. [167842]

Mr. Caplin: Soldiers being considered for discharge by Manning Control Point are sent a letter up to 18 months beforehand. They are asked to sign a certificate to agree that they have been warned about their potential discharge.

If a soldier is to be discharged, the parent unit is informed by letter from the appropriate Manning and Career Management Division. The unit will then raise an Army Form B130A Application for the Compulsory Premature Discharge of a Soldier, which is completed by both the Commanding Officer and the individual concerned.

MOD Bases (Wales)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the change has been in the number of jobs at his Department's bases in Wales in each year since 1997; and what the change has been in the establishment of Welsh regiments in the same period. [168458]

Mr. Caplin: Information on the number of jobs is not available, only personnel numbers.

The number of service personnel located in Wales since 1997 were as follows:

Date	*Service Personnel*[1]	*Change*
1 July 1997	3,330	—
1 July 1998	3,240	-90
1 July 1999	3,270	+30
1 July 2000	3,220	-50
1 July 2001	2,570	-660
1 July 2002[2]	2,110	-460

[1] Figures are for UK regular forces (including both trained and untrained personnel), and therefore exclude Gurkhas, full-time reserve service personnel, the Home Service battalions of the Royal Irish Regiment, mobilised reservists and naval activated reservists.

[2] Location data for service personnel as at 1 July 2002 are the latest available.

Note:

All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

The number of Ministry of Defence civilian staff located in Wales since 1997 were as follows:

Date	*Civilian staff*[1]	*Change*
1 April 1997	4,890	—
1 April 1998	5,050	+150
1 April 1999	5,100	+50
1 April 2000	4,970	-120
1 April 2001	4,780	-190
1 April 2002	4,430	-350
1 April 2003	4,170	-260

[1] Civilian staff figures are full-time equivalent figures for industrial and non-industrial permanent staff, excluding Royal Fleet Auxiliaries and those on career breaks, long-term sick leave, secondments etc. The above figures include Trading Funds staff.

Note:

All figures have been rounded to the nearest 10.

The establishments of the Welsh Regiments since 1997 are as follows:

1st Battalion, The Queen's Dragoon Guards

From 1997 to 2000, the unit establishment was 474. In 2000 they adopted their present unit establishment of 454.

1st Battalion, The Royal Regiment of Wales

Their unit establishment of 741 has remained unchanged since 1997.

1st Battalion, The Welsh Guards

From 1997 to 2000, the unit establishment was 605. In May 2000 their role changed so the unit establishment changed to 668. From April 2003 they adopted their present unit establishment of 618.

1st Battalion, The Royal Welsh Fusiliers

From 1997 to 2003, they had a unit establishment of 605. Their role changed in August 2003 and they adopted their new unit establishment of 668.

Nuclear Co-operation (France)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans his Department has to share *(a)* nuclear weapons designs and *(b)* nuclear weapons technology with the French Government. [167976]

Mr. Hoon: The Ministry of Defence continues to maintain contacts with France on a range of technical and scientific issues relating to nuclear weapons. These contacts are consistent with the United Kingdom's international obligations, including those under the Non-Proliferation Treaty and the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty. I am withholding more specific information on the particular activities themselves under the terms of Exemption Category I of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information relating to defence, security and international relations.

Reservists

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reasons delays are occurring in relation to the payment of mobilised reservists; how many reservists are affected; and what action he is taking to expedite the payment of mobilised reservists. [165139]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 340W.

We are not aware of any delay in the payment of reservists' basic military salary. However, there have been some late payments of allowances for reservists during Operation Telic which is attributable to delays in the administrative process of taking the reservist on strength at the Theatre unit. In addition, there have also been delays in handling claims for financial assistance.

Both of these issues were identified during the Operation Telic lessons identified process and action is in hand to improve the administrative systems in use. In particular, as announced in the recent Defence White Paper, we are in the process of developing replacement regulations for reservists' financial assistance which should simplify and speed up the claims process.

US Nuclear Weapons

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether US nuclear weapons will be withdrawn from the UK as part of the current withdrawal of US nuclear weapons from Europe; and if he will make a statement. [169131]

Mr. Hoon: As stated in NATO's Strategic Concept (paragraph 63):

> "nuclear forces based in Europe and committed to NATO provide an essential political and military link between the European and North American members of the Alliance. The Alliance will therefore maintain adequate nuclear forces in Europe."

Numbers of United States nuclear weapons in the United Kingdom can and do vary, and the capability for deployments of such weapons to and from the UK remains extant regardless of the particular number of weapons in the UK at any given time.

It is NATO and national policy not to comment on the detail of such nuclear deployments.

Wind Farms

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what representations he has made to the Department of Trade and Industry regarding the placement of wind farms around the UK coast. [168233]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has engaged with the Department of Trade and Industry and Crown Estates throughout the initial planning stages for wind farms around the UK coast. In that context MOD has drawn attention to those cases where it has concerns relating to wind farms and their effects on air safety, national defence monitoring, operational needs or where sites are within danger areas.

The Ministry of Defence is fully supportive of the Governments aims and targets for renewable energy.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans his Department has for wind farms on its facilities on the UK coastline. [168236]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence currently has no wind farms on its facilities on the UK coastline, nor any plans to site any there. However, the Department would consider approaches from developers to site wind farms on its property where they will not interfere with defence operations, compromise safety or the United Kingdom defences.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what consultation he has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* planned with maritime groups about the impact of offshore wind farms on marine navigation. [168237]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence has engaged in consultation with The Maritime and Coastguard Agency in its capacity as a key sea user. This is to ensure that the Department's marine navigation and transport needs are adequately covered in the Marine Guidance Note to be published on Proposed UK Offshore Renewable Energy Installations: Guidance on Navigation Safety Issues.

TRANSPORT

Faulty Exhaust Pipes

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) how often checks are made to ensure that motorists with faulty exhaust pipes are prevented from releasing toxins into the atmosphere; [168873]

(2) what checks are in place to ensure motorists with faulty exhaust pipes are prevented from releasing toxins into the atmosphere; [168874]

(3) how many people in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK have been found guilty of driving vehicles with noxious exhausts in each year since 1997. [168875]

Mr. Jamieson: Emissions performance is checked in MOT tests, which in the case of cars are carried out three years after registration, and then every year thereafter. The MOT test includes a visual check of the exhaust system and, for most vehicles, a measurement of the concentration of exhaust gases that indicate whether or not the vehicle is being appropriately maintained.

In addition, roadside spot checks are carried out intermittently by the Department's Vehicle and Operator Services Agency (VOSA), and by certain local authorities with particular air quality problems, to help promote compliance.

There are no statistics available which record emissions offences separately from other minor offences under the Road Vehicles (Construction and Use) Regulations 1986. The best indication of non-compliance is given by MOT test failure rates, although this is not readily available by geographical area. The MOT emissions test failure rates for the whole of GB are given in the following table.

MOT emissions failures as a percentage of vehicles tested at MOT stations

Percentage

	Conventional petrol	*Catalyst petrol*	*Diesel*
1997–98	7.1	2.8	8.5
1998–99	6.4	3.3	7.4
1999–2000	5.6	2.9	5.9
2000–01	4.3	2.6	6.1
2001–02	3.1	2.6	5.5
2002–03	6.7	2.5	5.0
2003–04	[1]—	[1]—	[1]—

[1] Not available.

Diesel Spillages

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, (1) if he will take steps to encourage vehicle manufacturers to undertake or fund research into designs for a fuel tank that would not allow diesel to spill onto the highway, even if over-filled; [168612]

(2) if he will launch a campaign to raise awareness amongst commercial goods vehicle drivers of the risks that diesel spillage due to over-filled fuel tanks can cause to other road users, especially motorcyclists; [168613]

(3) if he will support the campaign by The Road Users Campaign to Kill Diesel Spills to reduce the number of diesel spillages on British roads; [168614]

(4) if he will make non-spill fuel caps compulsory for all new diesel vehicles to prevent dangerous diesel spillages on the road. [168615]

Mr. Jamieson: I recognise the problems that can be caused by spilled diesel, particularly to motorcyclists, which is why my Department has launched a review into this issue. Part of this review is looking into the possibility of raising the profile of the existing spillage prevention Regulations. Until this study is complete I will not be making any proposals or recommendations concerning the construction and use of diesel fuel tanks in respect of preventing diesel spillage.

The European fuel tanks Directive 2000/8/EC has been mandatory, since 3 May 2003 for cars.

At present there are no pre-registration checks on the fuel tanks of commercial vehicles and buses. However, these vehicles will have to meet Whole Vehicle Type Approval by 2008 at the earliest and completely by 2011, although manufacturers are all likely to comply before this date. The new Type Approval incorporates the fuel tank Directive.

The correct fitting and operation of fuel tank filler caps is now checked during a vehicle's annual test which will have a positive effect on preventing diesel spillage.

Highways Agency Traffic Officers

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the responsibilities of uniformed Highways Agency Traffic Officers are. [168254]

Mr. Darling: The responsibilities of the uniformed Highways Agency traffic officer patrols will be to keep traffic flowing and support road users by managing minor incidents, dealing with the traffic consequences of all incidents, organising the removal of broken down and abandoned vehicles, removing debris and obstructions and implementing traffic management measures.

Uniformed traffic officers will also be working in seven regional control centres where they will work in partnership with the police to control incident management, operate variable message signs and answer calls from emergency roadside telephones.

Traffic officers will help improve the quality of traffic information to road users by providing better information on the nature, scale and anticipated duration of incidents.

The police will continue to deal with major incidents, which require significant co-ordination of the emergency services, and those involving death, injury, criminality or threats to public order and public safety.

By transferring these roles and responsibilities to the Highways Agency, it will free-up police time to concentrate more on road safety, crime and law enforcement.

Ministerial Travel

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what form of transport he used to travel to and from London Liverpool Street railway station on 1 April to launch the new Greater Anglia Franchise. [167292]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State travelled by car to London Liverpool Street railway station.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the occasions from 1 January to 31 March when, in association with his ministerial duties, he used *(a)* railway services, *(b)* bus services and *(c)* underground trains. [168065]

Mr. McNulty: The Secretary of State has used various forms of transport, including railway services, bus services and underground trains, during this period, in association with his ministerial duties.

Motorways

Mr. Greg Knight: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will ensure that all future and current construction of fencing alongside the M1 motorway in Leicestershire and South Yorkshire is set back a sufficient distance from the motorway to accommodate future widening. [168230]

Dr. Howells: There are currently no proposals to install fencing along the sections of the M1 in Leicestershire and South Yorkshire that are affected by future widening schemes.

Should any proposals arise in the future, the Highways Agency would take into account the widening of the M1 prior to carrying out any works.

Recycled Paper

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) what percentage of *(a)* paper for printed publications and *(b)* copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained; [166058]

(2) what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content; [166059]

(3) what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled of which a minimum in 75 per cent. post-consumer waste; [166060]

(4) when his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications brought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [166061]

Mr. McNulty: It is the Department's policy to use 100 per cent. recycled paper (comprising at least 80 per cent. post consumer waste) for all work not requiring specialist papers. This exceeds the minimum required by the quick win targets set by DEFRA.

99 per cent. of the copier paper bought by my Department in 2002–03 and 2003–04 was 100 per cent. recycled and contained a minimum of 80 per cent. post consumer waste.

100 per cent. of paper used for printed publications produced through my Department's Communication Directorate contained a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Procurement officers are made aware of the availability of competitively priced recycled papers by:

(a) promoting the use of the recycled copier papers available under this contract to the Department's stationery ordering points and across its agencies and NDPB's;

(b) monitoring HQ paper consumption monthly and investigating non-compliant purchases. The Department's agencies are expected to monitor compliance similarly.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports, in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the (A) recycled and (B) post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [166062]

Mr. McNulty: This information is as follows:

(a) and *(b)* Copier paper and stationery:

Banner Business Supplies Limited:

Evolve Office Paper—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post consumer recycled

Xerox Recycled Paper—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post consumer recycled

Banner Office Paper—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post consumer recycled

(c) Envelopes:

Banner Business Supplies Limited:

Banner envelopes—80 per cent. to 100 per cent. recycled, 65 per cent. to 85 per cent. post consumer recycled

New Guardian Armour gusset envelopes—80 per cent. to 100 per cent. recycled, 65 per cent. to 85 per cent. post consumer recycled

Survivor Tyvek extra strong envelopes—Not known

(d) Paper for reports:

Howard Smith Paper:

Greencoat—80 per cent. recycled, 80 per cent. post-consumer waste Paper

Hexagon Wove—100 per cent. recycled, 80 per cent. post-consumer waste, 20 per cent. pre-consumer waste

Premier Paper:

Evolution Satin—75 per cent. recycled, 75 per cent. post-consumer waste

Evolution Gloss—75 per cent. recycled, 75 per cent. post-consumer waste

Evolve Business—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post-consumer waste

Cyclus Print—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post-consumer waste

Cyclus Offset—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post-consumer waste

James McNaughton Paper:

Cyclus Offset—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post-consumer waste

Cyclus Print—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post-consumer waste

Repeat—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post-consumer waste

ReVert—80 per cent. recycled, 80 per cent. post-consumer waste

Robert Home Paper:

Revive Matt—75 per cent. recycled, 75 per cent. post-consumer waste

Revive Gloss—75 per cent. recycled, 75 per cent. post-consumer waste

Evolve Business—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post-consumer waste

Alsaprint—100 per cent. recycled, 100 per cent. post-consumer waste

Revive Silk—75 per cent. recycled, 75 per cent. post-consumer waste

Revive Uncoated—100 per cent. recycled, 80 per cent. post-consumer waste, 20 per cent. pre-consumer waste

Road Casualties (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Burnley has been since 1997. [167881]

Mr. Jamieson: In the Burnley local authority area there was one fatal casualty in 1997 and no fatal casualties in 2002, the latest year for which figures are available. The number of people seriously injured in road accidents increased from 59 in 1997 to 62 in 2002, a rise of 5 per cent..

Shipping (Security)

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many additional staff his Department's Security Directorate has recruited in order to complete assessments of ship security plans as required under the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code. [167636]

Mr. Jamieson: TRANSEC has been able to approve and verify the passenger ship security plans within existing staff resources. The Maritime and Coastguard Agency has delegated responsibility for non-passenger (cargo) shipping and has recruited and trained 15 new security surveyors and five new office staff.

Transport Infrastructure (Stalybridge and Hyde)

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997. [168733]

Mr. McNulty: No priority bus lanes have been introduced in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997, although 11 km of Quality Bus Corridors (QBC) are proposed for the area, which will provide additional cycling facilities.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Ammonium Nitrate

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent discussions she has had with the agriculture industry on alternatives to ammonium nitrate fertiliser. [166842]

Mr. Morley: The Government have an on-going dialogue with the agriculture industry on a range of nitrogen fertilisers to compare how well they perform in GB soil and climatic conditions and their potential environmental impacts. Ammonium nitrate has for many years proved to be the most effective fertiliser for these conditions and the most environmentally acceptable.

Animal Carcase Incinerators

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on compliance arrangements for low capacity animal carcase incinerators. [168081]

Mr. Morley: Low capacity animal carcase incineration plants, to which the Waste Incineration Directive does not apply, must comply with the relevant requirements of Regulation (EC) No. 1774/2002 and must also be approved in accordance with this Regulation.

This Regulation is enforced in England by the Animal By-Products Regulations 2003 (SI 2003/1482). Operators must ensure compliance if they wish to obtain an approval to incinerate animal by-products.

The Waste Incineration Directive will apply immediately to all new plants and existing plants from 28 December 2005 that burn wastes derived from animal carcases. These existing installations are regulated under the Waste Management Licensing regime.

Bass Fishery

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will close the UK inshore bass fishery to commercial exploitation on conservation grounds; and if she will make a statement. [165930]

Mr. Bradshaw: Closure of the UK inshore bass fishery to commercial exploitation would have limited conservation benefits as the bass allowed to survive would simply become part of the winter offshore fishery. The International Council of Exploration of the Sea's assessment of bass stocks in EU waters in 2003 did not support such a closure, but recommended that fishing mortality should not be allowed to increase given the uncertainties in the assessment and the possible influence of climate change on the stock. This work also showed that landings in most inshore fisheries had remained buoyant.

Scientists from the Centre for Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture Science are closely monitoring the bass fishery on our behalf and I do not rule out further measures to protect bass, but any additional action would need to be supported by scientific evidence.

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many Scottish vessels are pair trawling the sea bass spawning shoals off the south and west coasts of England. [165931]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are 14 Scottish registered vessels currently involved in pair trawling operations off the south and west coasts of England.

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many vessels made landings of spawning sea bass at Plymouth on 26 March; and what their registered ports were. [165932]

Mr. Bradshaw: Departmental records do not separately record landings of spawning sea bass. On 26 March 15 vessels made landings of sea bass into Plymouth. Those vessels were registered at the following ports: Carlisle (one), Exeter (two), Fowey (one), Fraserburgh (two), Kircaldy (one), Lowestoft (one), Peterhead (four), Plymouth (two) and St Ives (one).

Batteries

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many businesses in the UK recycle small, domestic-type batteries. [164531]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* At present, such recycling capacity is extremely limited in the UK. There is a plant in the Midlands that recycles silver oxide batteries commonly used in watches and there are plans for a recycling plant in Scotland which would recycle Lithium-ion batteries, including the portable type. Currently, the Government are in discussions with stakeholders examining the possibility of setting up UK recycling capacity for zinc carbon and alkali manganese batteries, commonly found in portable radios and children's toys.

Carbon Trust

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 127W, on the Carbon Trust, how much money the Trust has loaned in total to small and medium enterprises for energy efficiency projects in each of the last five years. [157824]

Mr. Morley: The Action Energy Loan scheme for small and medium enterprises began operating in the 2003–04 financial year. The cumulative value of offers to date (including those committed but not necessarily paid out) is £2,887,000 and actual payments (excluding committed but not yet paid) is £2,305,000.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the Carbon Trust's budget has been allocated to projects in Scotland in each of the last five years; and what steps her Department takes to assess the effectiveness of work undertaken by the Carbon Trust. [158216]

Mr. Morley: The Carbon Trust is a private company launched in 2001 as part of the Climate Change Levy package. The Trust receives grant funding from Defra for the non-domestic element of the UK wide Energy Efficiency Best Practice Programme (EEBPp), and from the Climate Change Levy via Defra for England and via separate grant offer relationships with the Devolved Administrations. Therefore queries regarding projects carried out in Scotland should be addressed to the Scottish Executive.

A formal review of the Climate Change Programme is planned for 2004 that will include an assessment of the contribution of the Carbon Trust towards climate change targets. The Carbon Trust has undertaken an impact assessment of their programmes as part of their Annual Review which is available via their website www.thecarbontrust.co.uk.

Climate Change

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the implications of climate change for biodiversity in the United Kingdom and its surrounding waters over the next 50 years. [165285]

Mr. Morley: The Department, along with the Devolved Administrations, statutory nature conservation agencies and non-governmental organisations, is contributing to an on-going research programme on the impacts of climate change on biodiversity in the UK and its surrounding waters. Results suggest that as climate changes, the distribution of species and the composition of habitats will change. With warmer temperatures, some northern species are likely to retreat, while southern species may be able to expand their ranges. At the same time, coastal habitats will be affected by rising sea levels. On land, movement of some species may be impeded by our fragmented landscapes, possibly leading to local extinctions. However, dispersal and movement of species within the marine environment is not hindered in this way and evidence from surveys of rocky shorelines shows that many species have already extended their range northwards over the past 20 to 30 years.

The key to understanding climate change impacts on biodiversity are long time series of data which enable the distinction of natural variability from local human impacts and longer term climatic trends. Within the UK Marine Monitoring Strategy we are making provisions for collection of time series data to enable better estimation of the effects of climate change on marine ecosystems.

Contaminated Land

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will list the locations of *(a)* land deemed by the relevant local authority to be in a condition causing or likely to cause (i) significant harm and (ii) pollution of controlled waters as defined by 78A(2) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and *(b)* other contaminated land; what the size of each site is; what the nature of the contamination is in each case; and what steps (A) have been taken and (B) are planned to remedy any such contamination; [165806]

(2) if she will estimate the *(a)* number and *(b)* total area of sites where land is designated as contaminated land; [165807]

(3) if she will make a statement on steps *(a)* which have been taken and *(b)* are being taken to tackle the problem of contaminated land. [165808]

Mr. Morley: To help address the legacy of land contamination, the Government brought into force part IIA ("contaminated land") of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. This placed local authorities under a statutory duty to inspect their areas to identify contaminated land as defined in the Act, and to secure its remediation, in accordance with the detailed provisions of the regime. They are required to take a strategic and prioritised approach to the duty of inspection. For certain sites, known as special sites, enforcement is by the Environment Agency. The regime came into effect in April 2000 in England and is described in DETR Circular 02/2000, "Contaminated Land". In broad terms, the regime addresses unacceptable risk arising from land contamination in situations where other statutory regimes cannot be applied.

The Department and the Environment Agency publish technical and other material to assist local authorities. Defra provides capital and revenue support to both LAs and the agency in connection with part IIA duties. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has proposed updated guidance in connection with both planning and building control regimes, since these play a major part in addressing the legacy of land contamination. Urban regeneration initiatives, led by that Department, also help address land contamination, and tax incentives have been introduced.

Progress is being made. The agency prepares periodic statutory reports on the state of contaminated land, the first of which was published in September 2002 and laid in the Library. As at 31 March 2004, some 66 part IIA determinations had been recorded in England, as detailed in the following table. Some cases involve a number of determinations, and some involved both pollution of controlled waters and significant harm. The precise areas of individual sites, and planned measures, are not collected centrally, but size ranges are shown, together with the nature of the problem in each case.

Under part IIA, remediation can be secured through voluntary action, in which case a remediation statement is produced, or through enforcement action, in which case a remediation notice is served on the appropriate persons. Details are placed on a public register kept by the authority. Research is under way to improve our knowledge of the progress being made outside the part IIA regime.

Location	*Local authority area*	*Date determination notice issued*	*Steps taken*	*Approximate area in hectares (ha)*
Irchester Landfill, Irchester	Wellingborough	11 April 2000	—	0–5
Ailsworth Road, Landfill, Helpston[1]	Peterborough	22 August 2001	Remediation statement	5–10
Ben Johnsons Pit, Helpston[1]	Peterborough	13 August 2001	Remediation statement	5–10
Tiptree Heath Garage, Tiptree	Maldon	17 April 2001	—	0–5
Hazel Way, St. Ives	Huntingdonshire	2 May 2001	Remediation notice and statement	0–5
Newmarket Road and Ditton Walk, Cambridge	Cambridge	4 September 2001	—	0–5
Accommodation Lane, Stroud	Stroud	14 August 2000	—	0–5
Brades Rise, Oldbury	Sandwell	27 June 2001	—	5–10
Brookfields Marl Pit (Centre Forest Park) Hanley	Stoke on Trent	5 October 2001	—	0–5
Bransholme Landfill, Hull[1]	East Riding	22 March 2001	—	>20
Mirvale tarworks, Mirfield[1]	Kirklees	25 April 2001	Remediation statement	5–10
Woldgate Landfill, Bridlington[1]	East Riding	5 June 2001	Remediation statement	10–15
Furthergate Service Station, Blackburn	Blackburn with Darwen	5 March 2001	remediation notice	0–5
Mallards Walk. Bamber Bridge	Chorley	4 December 2000	Remediation statement	0–5
Old Goods Station, Carlisle	Carlisle	12 October 2000	Remediation statement	0–5
Hoole Bank, Hoole	Chester	25 September 2000	—	0–5
Broomgrove Power Station, Hastings	Hastings	18 August 2000	—	0–5
Worston Road, Highbridge	Sedgemoor	5 December 2001	—	0–5
Selworthy Gardens, Nailsea	North Somerset	8 November 2000	Remediation statement	0–5
Blaisdon, Yale	South Gloucestershire	22 August 2000	remediation statement	0–5
Cranleigh Brick and Tile Works, near Horsham[1]	Waverley	7 August 2000	—	>20
Byker City Farm, Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Newcastle	22 May 2001	Remediation statement	0–5
Tindale Fell, Tindale	Carlisle	n/a	—	5–10
Station Crescent, Ashford	Spelthorne	30 August 2000	Remediation statement	0–5
Mill Lane, Totley	Sheffield	17 January 2001	Remediation statement	0–5
George Street garage, Bletchley	Milton Keynes	21 December 2001	Remediation statement	0–5
Tinkers Bridge Park, Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	18 December 2001	—	0–5
Dump E, RAF Portreath[1]	Kerrier	7 February 2002	Remediation statement	0–5
Dump D, RAF Portreath[1]	Kerrier	7 February 2002	Remediation statement	0–5
Dump C, RAF Portreath[1]	Kerrier	7 February 2002	Remediation statement	0–5
Dump B, RAF Portreath[1]	Kerrier	7 February 2002	Remediation statement	0–5
Dump A, RAF Portreath[1]	Kerrier	7 February 2002	Remediation statement	0–5
Wantz Road Direct Services Operations Depot, Dagenham	Barking	31 January 2001	Remediation statement	0–5
Moss Lane Allotments, Altrincham	Trafford	17 January 1900	—	0–5
St. Leonards Court, Sandridge[1]	St. Albans	12 June 2002	—	0–5
Brambles End, Southminster	Maldon	17June 2002	—	0–5

Location	Local authority area	Date determination notice issued	Steps taken	Approximate area in hectares (ha)
Scotland Lodge, Cholderton	Salisbury	24 July2002	—	0–5
Well Close, Tonbridge	Sevenoaks	21 June 2002	Remediation notice	0–5
Scholar's Court, Neston[1]	Ellesmere Port	22 July 2002	—	5–10
Dapps Hill, Keynsham	Bath	22 August 2002	Remediation statement	0–5
Coopers Walk, London E15	Newham	27 September 2002	—	0–5
Coopers Walk, London, E15	Newham	27 September 2002	—	0–5
Coopers Walk, London, E15	Newham	27 September 2002	—	0–5
Coopers Walk, London, E15	Newham	27 September 2002	—	0–5
Coopers Walk, London, E15	Newham	27 September 2002	—	0–5
Coopers Walk, London, E15	Newham	27 September 2002	—	0–5
Coopers Walk, London, E15	Newham	27 September 2002	—	0–5
Coopers Walk, London, E15	Newham	27 September 2002	—	0–5
Furfield Quarry Landfill, Maidstone	Maidstone	25 October 2002	—	5–10
Carr Head, Hebden Bridge	Calderdale	14 January 2003	—	0–5
Green Works, Colne	Pendle	8 January 2003	—	5–10
Manywells Landfill, Bradford	Bradford	16 January 2003	—	0–5
Old Hampole Quarry, Doncaster[1]	Doncaster	18 February 2003	—	0–5
Mullen Avenue, Milton Keynes	Milton Keynes	20 February 2003	Remediation statement	0–5
Radcliffe Road Allotments (North), Southampton	Southampton	3 December 2002	—	0–5
Radcliffe Road Allotments (South), Southampton	Southampton	3 December 2002	—	0–5
The Bell House, Rushlake Green	Wealden	1 May 2003	Remediation statement	0–5
Bayer Crop Science Ltd., Cambridge[1]	South Cambridgeshire	3 June 2003	—	>20
Ivatt Close, Bawtry[1]	Doncaster	19 May 2003	—	0.3
Sherborne Landfill, Sherborne	West Dorset	31 July 2003	—	0–5
Moor Park, Clevedon	North Somerset	4 September 2003	—	0–5
Albright and Wilson Works, Whitehaven[1]	Copeland	27 August 2002	—	>20
Area A12Q1, AWE Aldermaston[1]	West Berkshire	1 December 2003	—	0–5
Gibbwin, Great Linford	Milton Keynes	9 July 2003	Remediation statement	0–5
Bransholme Landfill, Kingston upon Hull[1]	Hull	22 March 2001	—	>20
Stretton Sugwas Landfill, Hereford	Herefordshire	17 July 2002	—	15–20

	Contamination				
Location	Metals and metalloids	Inorganic compounds	Organic compounds	Gas/ vapours	Other
Irchester Landfill, Irchester	N	N	N	Y	N
Ailsworth Road, Landfill, Helpston[1]	Y	Y	Y	N	List 1 Substances
Ben Johnsons Pit, Helpston[1]	Y	Y	Y	N	List 1 Substances
Tiptree Heath Garage, Tiptree	N	N	Y	N	N
Hazel Way, St. Ives	N	N	Y	N	N
Newmarket Road and Ditton Walk, Cambridge	Y	N	N	N	N
Accommodation Lane, Stroud	N	N	N	N	Asbestos
Brades Rise, Oldbury	N	N	N	Y	N
Brookfields Marl Pit (Centre Forest Park) Hanley	N	N	N	Y	N
Bransholme Landfill, Hull[1]	N	Y	N	N	N
Mirvale tarworks, Mirfield[1]	Y	Y	Y	N	Pesticides
Woldgate Landfill, Bridlington[1]	Y	Y	N	N	N
Furthergate Service Station, Blackburn	N	N	Y	N	N
Mallards Walk. Bamber Bridge	N	N	N	Y	N
Old Goods Station, Carlisle	N	N	Y	N	N
Hoole Bank, Hoole	N	N	Y	N	N
Broomgrove Power Station, Hastings	N	N	N	N	Asbestos
Worston Road, Highbridge	N	N	Y	N	N
Selworthy Gardens, Nailsea	N	N	Y	N	N
Blaisdon, Yale	N	N	Y	N	N
Cranleigh Brick and Tile Works, near Horsham[1]	Y	Y	N	N	Dieldrin (pesticide)
Byker City Farm, Newcastle-upon-Tyne	Y	N	N	N	N
Tindale Fell, Tindale	Y	N	N	N	N
Station Crescent, Ashford	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Mill Lane, Totley	Y	N	N	N	N
George Street garage, Bletchley	N	N	Y	N	N
Tinkers Bridge Park, Milton Keynes	N	N	N	N	Asbestos
Dump E, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	Y	N	N	N

Location	Contamination: Metals and metalloids	Contamination: Inorganic compounds	Contamination: Organic compounds	Contamination: Gas/ vapours	Contamination: Other
Dump D, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	Y	N	N	N
Dump C, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Dump B, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Dump A, RAF Portreath[1]	N	N	Y	N	N
Wantz Road Direct Services Operations Depot, Dagenham	Y	N	Y	N	N
Moss Lane Allotments, Altrincham	Y	N	N	N	N
St. Leonards Court, Sandridge[1]	N	N	N	N	Bromate and Bromide
Brambles End, Southminster	N	N	N	N	Asbestiform Materials
Scotland Lodge, Cholderton	Y	N	N	N	N
Well Close, Tonbridge	N	N	Y	Y	N
Scholar's Court, Neston[1]	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Dapps Hill, Keynsham	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London E15	N	N	Y	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	N	Y	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	N	Y	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	N	Y	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	N	Y	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	N	Y	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	N	Y	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	N	Y	N	N
Furfield Quarry Landfill, Maidstone	N	N	N	Y	N
Carr Head, Hebden Bridge	N	N	N	N	Y
Green Works, Colne	N	N	N	N	N
Manywells Landfill, Bradford	Y	N	Y	Y	N
Old Hampole Quarry, Doncaster[1]	Y	Y	Y	Y	N
Mullen Avenue, Milton Keynes	N	N	N	N	Y
Radcliffe Road Allotments (North), Southampton	Y	N	N	N	N
Radcliffe Road Allotments (South), Southampton	Y	N	N	N	N
The Bell House, Rushlake Green	N	N	Y	N	N
Bayer Crop Science Ltd., Cambridge[1]	N	Y	Y	N	Pesticides
Ivatt Close, Bawtry[1]	Y	N	Y	N	N
Sherborne Landfill. Sherborne	N	Y	N	N	Iron (and Ammonia)
Moor Park, Clevedon	N	N	Y	Y	N
Albright and Wilson Works, Whitehaven[1]	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Area A12Q1, AWE Aldermaston[1]	N	N	Y	N	N
Gibbwin, Great Linford	N	N	N	N	Asbestos
Bransholme Landfill, Kingston upon Hull[1]	N	Y	N	N	N
Stretton Sugwas Landfill, Hereford	N	N	N	Y	N

Location	Receptor(s): Controlled waters	Receptor(s): Human beings	Receptor(s): Ecological systems	Receptor(s): Property in the form of buildings	Receptor(s): Other property
Irchester Landfill, Irchester	N	Y	N	N	N
Ailsworth Road, Landfill, Helpston[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Ben Johnsons Pit, Helpston[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Tiptree Heath Garage, Tiptree	N	Y	N	N	N
Hazel Way, St. Ives	N	Y	N	Y	N
Newmarket Road and Ditton Walk, Cambridge	N	Y	N	N	N
Accommodation Lane, Stroud	N	Y	N	N	N
Brades Rise, Oldbury	N	Y	N	Y	N
Brookfields Marl Pit (Centre Forest Park) Hanley	N	Y	N	N	N
Bransholme Landfill, Hull[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Mirvale tarworks, Mirfield[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Woldgate Landfill, Bridlington[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Furthergate Service Station, Blackburn	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Mallards Walk. Bamber Bridge	N	Y	N	Y	N
Old Goods Station, Carlisle	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
Hoole Bank, Hoole	Y	N	N	N	N
Broomgrove Power Station, Hastings	N	Y	N	N	N
Worston Road, Highbridge	N	Y	N	N	N
Selworthy Gardens, Nailsea	N	Y	N	Y	N
Blaisdon, Yale	N	Y	N	N	Y

Location	Controlled waters	Receptor(s) Human beings	Ecological systems	Property in the form of buildings	Other property
Cranleigh Brick and Tile Works, near Horsham[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Byker City Farm, Newcastle-upon-Tyne	N	Y	N	N	N
Tindale Fell, Tindale	N	Y	Y	N	N
Station Crescent, Ashford	N	Y	N	N	N
Mill Lane, Totley	N	Y	N	N	N
George Street garage, Bletchley	Y	Y	N	N	N
Tinkers Bridge Park, Milton Keynes	N	Y	N	N	N
Dump E, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Dump D, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Dump C, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Dump B, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Dump A, RAF Portreath[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Wantz Road Direct Services Operations Depot, Dagenham	Y	N	N	N	N
Moss Lane Allotments, Altrincham	N	Y	N	N	N
St. Leonards Court, Sandridge[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Brambles End, Southminster	N	Y	N	N	N
Scotland Lodge, Cholderton	N	Y	N	N	N
Well Close, Tonbridge	N	Y	N	N	N
Scholar's Court, Neston[1]	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Dapps Hill, Keynsham	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London E15	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	Y	N	N	N
Coopers Walk, London, E15	N	Y	N	N	N
Furfield Quarry Landfill, Maidstone	N	Y	N	Y	N
Carr Head, Hebden Bridge	N	Y	N	N	N
Green Works, Colne	Y	Y	Y	N	N
Manywells Landfill Bradford	Y	Y	N	N	N
Old Hampole Quarry, Doncaster[1]	Y	Y	N	N	N
Mullen Avenue, Milton Keynes	N	Y	N	N	N
Radcliffe Rd Allotments (North), Southampton	N	Y	N	N	N
Radcliffe Rd Allotments (South), Southampton	N	Y	N	N	N
The Bell House, Rushlake Green	Y	Y	N	Y	N
Bayer Crop Science Ltd., Cambridge[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Ivatt Close, Bawtry[1]	Y	Y	N	N	N
Sherborne Landfill, Sherborne	Y	N	N	N	N
Moor Park, Clevedon	N	Y	N	Y	N
Albright and Wilson Works, Whitehaven[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Area A12Q1, AWE Aldermaston[1]	Y	Y	N	N	N
Gibbwin, Great Linford	N	Y	N	N	N
Bransholme Landfill, Kingston upon Hull[1]	Y	N	N	N	N
Stretton Sugwas Landfill, Hereford	N	Y	N	Y	N

[1] Special site.

Dairy Farming

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has held with dairy farmers on the 2004 integrated administration and control system form. [168086]

Alun Michael: The 2004 IACS application form was based on the 2003 form and updated to take account of the requirements of new EC legislation. The application form has been developed over time with considerable input from farmers' representatives. As is usual the National Farmers Union and the Country Land and Business Association were copied the proposed drafts of the IACS 2004 literature and their comments noted.

Four new Aids were introduced for 2004 including those for Dairy Premium and the Additional Dairy Payment. In order to meet the printing deadlines the design of the form had to be finalised before the Minister had agreed to the detail regarding the Additional Payment.

The final design was a compromise between simplicity for farmers claiming Dairy Premium/Additional Payment and the need to collect enough information to cover a range of possible options for the Additional Payment criteria without having to ask farmers for further information.

Disposable Nappies

Mr. Lepper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proposals she has under the Waste Implementation Programme to identify and promote best practice within the NHS in relation to the promotion and use of disposable nappies. [168777]

Mr. Morley: The use of disposable nappies in the NHS is well established. Government want to ensure that parents who are interested in re-usable nappies are provided with information about that option alongside information on disposables.

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) is employing staff to work alongside health professionals in hospitals and trusts as part of its work on waste minimisation and identifying and promoting best practice in relation to re-usable nappies in the NHS.

EU Accession States

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures her Department has in place effectively to monitor imports of *(a)* human food and *(b)* animal feed from (i) EU member states and (ii) EU accession states in respect of their compliance with EU regulations on labelling and traceability. [167417]

Mr. Morley: Imports of Genetically Modified Organisms into and within the EU are covered by existing legislation in the form of Directive 2001/18/EC on the deliberate release into the environment of GMOs, Regulation (EC) No. 1829/2003 on GM food and feed and Regulation (EC) No. 1830/2003 concerning the traceability and labelling of GMOs and the traceability of food and feed products produced from GMOs). All Regulations take direct effect in both existing member states and accession states.

Domestic implementation of the new Regulations (which cover imports of both human food and animal feed) is a devolved competence. In England, local authorities are under a duty to enforce the requirements. Sample analysis must be carried out by a public analyst laboratory accredited for GM analysis.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what efforts her Department has made to ensure that EU accession states have the required technical capacity and advice to ensure their compliance with *(a)* testing, *(b)* labelling and *(c)* traceability of GM crops and foods under EU regulations; [167418]

(2) what discussions she has had with *(a)* the EC and *(b)* her counterparts in the 10 EU accession states to seek a timetable for the compliance of the accession states with regulations (EC) 1829/2003 and (EC) 1830/2003 on the labelling and traceability of genetically modified crops; [167419]

(3) what efforts her Department is making to ensure that *(a)* EU member states and *(b)* EU accession states comply with EU rules on genetically modified crops, including regulations (i) (EC) No.1829/2003 and (ii) (EC) No.1830/2003 under directive 2001/18/EC on traceability and labelling. [167420]

Mr. Morley: Directive 2001/18 on the deliberate release into the environment of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) is part of the aquis communautaire for the new member states.

New Regulations on traceability and labelling of GMOs (Regulation (EC) 1830/2003) and GM food and feed (Regulation (EC) 1829/2003) are not formally included in the "aquis communautaire" for accession states as negotiations were closed in December 2002. However, the regulations will apply in new member states from 1 May 2004, and new member states will be required to have appropriate legislative frameworks in place. The new Regulations took effect in existing member states from 18 April 2004.

All these Regulations require member states to introduce a proportionate and effective hierarchy of offences and penalties related to the potential seriousness of the failure to comply with the various EU requirements.

The Commission is required to produce Community-wide guidance in relation to the new Regulations, including guidance on sampling and testing, to ensure a co-ordinated approach between member states. Work on this is still under way.

The Secretary of State has not explicitly discussed the application of these Regulations with current or accession member states. However, officials from my Department and the Food Standards Agency continue to liaise with their counterparts in other member states through Regulatory and Standing Committees and informal contacts.

Fluoxetine

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what work has been carried out to establish the background levels of fluoxetine in the aquatic environment; [167861]

(2) what information she has procured to establish the levels of residues from anti-depressant drugs in the *(a)* livers, *(b)* brains and *(c)* muscle of fish. [167860]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 23 April 2004]*: During 2002–03 the Environment Agency carried out a desk based ranking exercise on the 500 pharmaceuticals most commonly used in England and Wales in order to prioritise those of environmental significance. This exercise included fluoxetine, more commonly known under the trade name Prozac. A short, targeted monitoring programme was then set up for 12 pharmaceuticals. Fluoxetine was not included because no analytical method suitable for use on environmental samples existed and development of one would be difficult. The top ranked antidepressant was lofepramine and this was included in the monitoring survey. A method was not in existence and had to be developed. Lofepramine was not detected in any of the five sewage works effluents or receiving watercourses monitored. However, it does not necessarily follow that the same would be true for fluoxetine.

No monitoring of fish has been undertaken.

The Environment Agency have developed a Position Statement on pharmaceuticals—which can be found on the Agency's website, www.environment-agency.gov.uk

(search—pharmaceuticals). This elaborates further on the work done and includes a recommendation to the pharmaceutical industry to do more on the development of analytical methods for environmental monitoring. I am pleased that the Environment Agency is in discussion with the industry on the development of a work programme to cover the recommendations to industry listed in the Position Statement.

Fly-tipping

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she will take to enable more rapid action against fly-tipping. [168016]

Mr. Morley: The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 gave powers to local authorities, allowing them to stop, search and seize vehicles suspected of fly-tipping. It also gave the Secretary of State the power to request fly-tipping data returns from waste collection authorities and the Environment Agency (the Agency). The national database, Flycapture, was launched on 5 April 2004 for this purpose, and a notice in writing was issued to all waste collection authorities and the Agency. A clearer national picture of fly-tipping will form a more robust evidence base informing future policy decisions, at a national and local level.

The Fly Tipping Strategy was published for consultation on 23 February 2004. The Strategy builds on previous legislative changes and aims to extend the tools available to the authorities in the prevention and enforcement of fly-tipping.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the Government's fly tipping strategy. [168084]

Mr. Morley: The Fly Tipping strategy was published for consultation on 23 February 2004. The consultation period ends on 14 May 2004. Comments received will be analysed and responses will be made publicly available.

The strategy proposes a range of measures to help tackle the problem of fly-tipping and encourage effective enforcement alongside pro-active preventative policies.

Hazardous Waste

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what assessment she has made of the Hazardous Waste Forum's recommendations for contingency plans to give temporary authorisation for export of hazardous waste to mainland Europe; and if she has discussed this possibility with European governments; [164076]

(2) what estimate she has made of the total potential hazardous waste storage capacity available from businesses using the exemption on temporary storage of hazardous waste at the place of production in paragraph 41 of Schedule 3 of the Waste Management Licensing Regulations 1994; and what plans she has to amend the regulations to increase the volumes of waste that may be stored under this exemption; [164074]

(3) what contingency measures she is putting in place in the event of a shortfall in *(a)* treatment and *(b)* disposal capacity for hazardous wastes following (i) the end of co-disposal in July 2004 and (ii) the enforcement of the Waste Acceptance Criteria in July 2005; and if she will make a statement; [164075]

(4) what sites she has identified on a contingency basis as suitable for the storage of hazardous wastes from July 2004. [164077]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 26 March 2004]:* We have a series of actions programmed, as presented to the seventh meeting of the Hazardous Waste Forum, to ensure the smooth implementation of the Landfill and Hazardous Waste Directives, and, in particular, the ban on co-disposal. The impact of expected higher costs on disposal and treatment provides a greater incentive for waste minimisation at source, through source separation and segregation of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes. Future arisings of hazardous waste are therefore uncertain. In addition, higher costs of landfill will enable alternative treatments to be more economically viable, diverting hazardous waste from landfill. The Government and the Environment Agency are monitoring closely, through a range of measures, waste industry plans for the provision of treatment and disposal capacity, and the response of waste producers and will continue to do so. A number of possible response options exist, including those identified by the Forum, should these be necessary.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1620W, on hazardous waste, how many of the *(a)* 100,000 special waste producers and *(b)* 750,000 future hazardous waste producers (i) her Department and (ii) the Environment Agency have contacted to inform them of the requirements of the Landfill Directive relating to hazardous waste. [165324]

Mr. Morley: Clearly it is a challenge to communicate directly with many thousands of companies and the Department is continually looking at the communication systems it employs to test their effectiveness. In respect of consulting business on issues of importance, electronic communications such as websites and e-mails are used extensively and the Department relies on informing trade associations and small business services in the expectation that they will pass the information on to their members.

Specifically in relation to Landfill Directive/ hazardous waste issues, a dedicated Communications Manager has developed a co-ordinated communications strategy in conjunction with the Environment Agency, Envirowise and the DTI—to address all the key stakeholder requirements. One part of this strategy is to set up a communications network across the country, with active participation by industry and relevant trade associations.

Key activities planned over the next few months include:

a targeted mail shot directed at small businesses;

dissemination of a series of information leaflets to producers and the waste management industry focused on providing guidance, details of timings, responsibilities and where to go for additional information;

seminars directed at 'new' waste producers;

roadshows across the country to raise awareness of the legislation, its implications, minimisation and help available for businesses;

targeted media articles focused on the key waste streams and industry sectors; and

attending a series of third party events through the provision of support e.g. speakers for events being held by other organisations (e.g. the Chemical Industries Association, the Engineers Employers Federation and the Environmental Industries Commission).

These activities follow up earlier actions by the Department and the Department of the Environment, Transport and the Regions to implement the 1999 Landfill Directive in England and to divert waste from landfill. These include:

preparation and issue of Waste Strategy 2000;

conducting six rounds of public consultation on aspects of the Landfill Directive;

setting up four stakeholders groups—including the Hazardous Waste Forum, and the Landfill Directive Implementation Group;

publishing an action plan on the reduction and environmentally sound management of hazardous waste;

issuing guidance material by the Environment Agency, e.g. on defining and classifying hazardous waste;

arranging bilateral meetings with a wide range of industry and other interests;

commissioning research and other projects (either direct or though the Hazardous Waste Forum or the Environment Agency);

setting up the Waste and Resources Action Programme to develop markets for recycled materials (so diverting waste away from landfill); and

introducing the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund to support projects that use waste materials (e.g. construction and demolition waste) to replace primary aggregates.

Home Energy Efficiency Scheme

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Manchester, Gorton have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme. [167538]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 3,200 households in Manchester, Gorton received assistance from the Scheme.

National Allocation Plan

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs where and when she announced that she intends to delay submission of the UK's National Allocation Plan to the European Commission; and on what grounds. [167524]

Mr. Morley: The European Commission was informed of the UK's intention to delay submission of the National Allocation Plan (NAP) for the EU Emissions Trading Scheme on Friday 26 March 2004. Stakeholders were informed via email and an announcement made on the Defra website on Monday 29 March 2004; I wrote to Commissioner Wallstrom on Wednesday 31 March 2004 and the Government position regarding the delay in publication was further clarified in a press release on 2 April 2004.

During the consultation on the draft NAP, a number of issues were raised which Government wanted to take into account and consider in full. Some of these issues were complex and took considerable time to work through. It was therefore agreed to delay the submission of the NAP to the Commission by a few weeks to take account of the extra work.

The UK takes all EU responsibilities and deadlines seriously and is fully supportive of the EU ETS. We also have a duty to take full account of issues raised as a result of public consultation. We intend to submit the NAP to the Commission and publish it for further consultation by the end of April.

Oceans

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the incidence of oxygen-free zones in the oceans. [165590]

Mr. Morley: A recent report by the United Nations Environment programme drew attention to a number of cases across the world where there are regular instances of oxygen deficiency, often caused by excessive inputs of nutrients from land based sources. This underlines the need for action to limit the input of nutrients, and the UK has supported the UNEP Global Plan of Action on land-based sources of pollution which is seeking to address this.

There have been no cases of oxygen levels in UK coastal waters falling so low as a result of anthropogenic nutrient inputs as to be a cause for concern, e.g. through fish kills. Historically, there have been oxygen depletion problems affecting the passage of migratory fish in certain estuaries due to the direct discharge of sewage. The problems no longer exist due to the effective management of the discharges.

There are some areas where nutrient levels are high as a result of anthropogenic nutrient inputs, and in a few cases this has resulted in undesirable changes to the water environment. We have taken action to reduce nutrient inputs in these cases, through improved treatment of sewage and through designating Nitrate Vulnerable Zones to control the use of fertilisers and slurry on farmland.

The Department is committed to take further action to address diffuse water pollution. Officials are undertaking a range of work to identify diffuse pollution problems and the best ways to tackle them across all activities and a formal consultation on a range of options to tackle water pollution from agriculture will be issued shortly.

In some places, for example systems with limited water exchange, it is natural for there to be areas where oxygen levels are low without anthropogenic nutrient input.

Oil Storage Tanks

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of

the oil storage tanks subject to the Control of Pollution (Oil Storage) (England) Regulations 2001 she expects the Environment Agency to inspect each year; and what percentage were inspected in 2003–04. [166050]

Mr. Morley: The Environment Agency does not undertake specific inspections but enforces the Oil Storage Regulations during routine visits in order to reduce resource burdens. There is no annual target for the percentage of tanks inspected and no record of the number of tanks inspected in 2003–04.

Over-30-months Scheme

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost of payments to farmers under the Over-30-Months Scheme was in each of the last 12 months. [168950]

Alun Michael: The cost of payments to farmers under the Over-30-Months Scheme in each of the last 12 months, April 2003 to March 2004, was as follows:

	Amount (£)
2003	
April	28,129,511
May	8,859,938
June	9,449,415
July	11,164,461
August	10,554,215
September	14,979,891
October	20,950,694
November	22,387,481
December	20,174,638
2004	
January	21,726,791
February	14,602,777
March	13,702,852
Total	196,682,664

Recycled Paper

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [165659]

Alun Michael: The UK Sustainable Development in Government Second Annual report shows that in the year ended 31 March 2003 recycled paper accounted for 42 per cent. of the value of desk top paper purchased by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The post consumer waste element of that recycled paper was 80 per cent. or more.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [165660]

Alun Michael: The UK Sustainable Development in Government Second Annual report shows that in the year ended 31 March 2003 recycled paper accounted for 89 per cent. of the value of paper for printed publications purchased by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs. The post consumer waste element of that recycled paper was 75 per cent. or more.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the quick win targets set by her Department to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [165661]

Alun Michael: Procurement units in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs have been made aware of the quick win target for purchases of copying paper. Defra monitors its performance for the purpose of reporting progress in the annual Sustainable Development in Government report.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she has put in place to ensure that her Department meets the quick win targets set by her Department to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165662]

Alun Michael: Procurement units in the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs have been made aware of the quick win target for purchases of paper for printed publications. Defra monitors its performance for the purpose of reporting progress in the annual Sustainable Development in Government report.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs by what date her Department expects to reach the quick win targets to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165663]

Alun Michael: The Sustainable Development in Government Report shows that Defra met the quick win target for paper for printed publications purchased in 2002–03. That target is likely to have been met in 2003–04 too. This achievement owes much to the fact that most of Defra's printed publications are commissioned from a single central business unit. The situation with copier paper is that there are many different ordering points over a large and diverse organisation and that makes achievement of the target difficult to accurately predict. Nevertheless, Defra has procedures in place to help ensure that all new copying paper purchased will be recycled and aims to reach the target as soon as possible.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; what the name of the paper used in each case is; and what the (i) recycled and (ii) post-consumer recycled content of each type of paper is. [165664]

Alun Michael: Information on paper, stationery and envelopes purchased by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is set out as

follows. Data have been provided on the basis of contracts that have been operational in the department and its agencies at some time over the past two financial years. Purchase of paper used for reports is generally not recorded as a separate category.

Paper for Copying

The main suppliers are: The Paper Company; Premier Paper Group plc; Guilbert UK; Banner Business Systems; and Lyreco.

The main brand names of recycled paper supplied, with the percentage of post consumer waste shown in brackets, are Evolve (100 per cent.) and Niceday 3500 (80 per cent.).

The main brand names of virgin paper supplied are Neusiedlea and Banner Value.

Paper for Printed Publications

The main suppliers are: Howard Smith Paper; Premier Paper Group plc; Robert Horne; and James McNaughton.

The main brand names are: Greencoat; Evolve; Evolution; Cyclus; and Revert.

Much of the paper for printed publications was purchased centrally and over 80 per cent. of that was recycled with a post consumer waste content of 75 per cent. or more.

Stationery

The main supplier is Guilbert UK. Information on paper supplied by Guilbert has been covered by the preceding text.

Envelopes

The main supplier is Banner Business systems. Manila envelopes purchased were 70 per cent. post consumer waste. White envelopes purchased had less than 5 per cent. post consumer waste.

Refrigeration

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of UK refrigeration equipment disposal plants use vapour recovery hoods. [165454]

Mr. Morley: Sites in England and Wales do not have vapour recovery hoods as the technology developed to recover ozone-depleting substances (generally mechanical recovery) incorporates alternative mechanisms to prevent gas release (e.g. vacuum sealing).

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many tonnes of CFCs were converted into inert substances in 2003; what her estimate is of how many tonnes of CFCs will be converted into inert substances in 2004; and what her target is for the conversion of CFCs into inert substances for 2004. [167238]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Under EC Regulation 2037/2000 on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer, CFCs must be recovered for destruction. The amount of CFCs destroyed in 2003 for the whole of the UK was 494,356 kg. Figures for 2004 are not available yet, but will need to be reported to the European Commission by 31 March 2005 in order to fulfil the reporting requirements under Article 16 of the Regulation.

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the cost to *(a)* central Government and *(b)* local government of an effective containment programme of hydrofluorocarbons leakage. [167239]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The European Commission have proposed a Regulation on certain fluorinated greenhouse gases (hydrofluorocarbons/HFCs) which includes proposed containment measures as well as measures prohibiting the placing on the market of HFCs in certain uses.

The Government provided an initial assessment of the costs of the proposed Regulation in a Partial Regulatory Impact Assessment, published in November 2003. The annualised costs were estimated to be in the range £74,000 to £225,000.

These costs related to the compliance costs of the sectors directly affected by the proposal. Some of these costs may be passed on to the consumer. This initial assessment did not estimate anticipated enforcement costs for central/local government or other bodies.

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was to *(a)* central Government and *(b)* local government of recovering, recycling and destroying CFCs from refrigeration and air conditioning equipment in each year for which figures are available; and what her estimates are for future expenditure. [167240]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The cost to central Government of recovering, recycling and destroying CFCs from refrigeration and air conditioning equipment would have fallen mainly on the Government estate, but is not quantified.

The Government provided an additional £46 million in England for the period 1 January 2002 to 31 March 2003 to cover the costs on local authorities of implementing the Regulation. The Spending Review 2002 provided an increase in the Environmental, Protective and Cultural Services block Formula Spending Shares for 2003–04 onwards to cover the on-going costs on local authorities.

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the average decommissioning cost per refrigerator. [165857]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The average decommissioning cost of a refrigerator is between £10 and £15.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the volume of emissions of hydrofluorocarbons in each of the last five years; and what forecast she has made of future emissions. [167480]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The table shows total emissions of hydrofluorocarbons for the last five years for which estimates have been made, plus projections for 2010 and 2020. The historical estimates are from the UK Greenhouse Gas Inventory,

1990–2002, published in April 2004. The projections are consistent with the inventory and were made by AEA Technology in a contract to Defra completed in July 2003. The data are expressed in terms of a unit equivalent to the emission of a thousand tonnes of carbon dioxide.

UK emissions of hydrofluorocarbons (kt CO_2 equivalents)

	Emissions
1998	17,268
1999	10,830
2000	9,081
2001	9,728
2002	10,418
2010	11,563
2020	10,394

In August 2003, the European Commission proposed a regulation on certain fluorinated gases intended to reduce further emissions of hydrofluorocarbons. The additional emission reduction achieved by this regulation will depend on the final outcome of EU negotiations.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the environmental effects of replacing chlorofluorocarbons with hydrofluorocarbons in new refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment; and if she will make a statement. [167481]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) in new refrigeration and air-conditioning equipment has been prohibited under EC Regulation 2037/2000 on substances that deplete the ozone layer. In practice, new most domestic refrigerators in the UK now use hydrocarbon (HCs) refrigerants rather than hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs).

CFCs have a global warming potential (GWP) of 4,600–14,000, The HFCs in most common use in UK have GWPs in the range 650–3,800. Hydrocarbon refrigerants (e.g. propane, butane) have a GWP of 3.

The change from CFCs to HCs is likely to result in a reduced impact on the climate from refrigeration emissions, due to their lower GWP. In 2002, emissions of HFCs from mobile air conditioning (MAC) were equivalent to 1,080 kilo tonnes of CO_2.

CFCs have an ozone depleting potential, whereas HFCs and HCs do not, so the effect of replacing CFCs with these refrigerants is to lessen ozone depletion activity.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what progress is being made towards developing less environmentally damaging alternatives to hydrofluorocarbons in refrigeration and air-conditioning plant; and if she will make a statement. [167482]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Alternatives to hydrofluorocarbons are already available. Hydrocarbons, ammonia and carbon dioxide can be used as the coolant in refrigeration and air-conditioning plant. The choice of coolant will depend on relative energy consumption, safety and other technical considerations.

Mr. Peter Ainsworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what information she has collated regarding *(a)* the number of sites in the United Kingdom for retrieving chlorofluorocarbons from domestic refrigerators and *(b)* the location of such sites; and what measures she is taking to facilitate the development of further sites. [167483]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Under Article 16 of EC Regulation 2037/2000 the UK is required to submit details on the sites available for retrieving chlorofluorocarbons from domestic refrigerators. There are 24 sites in total. Details of these facilities and their locations are listed in an annex available in the Library of the House .

The market will facilitate the development of further sites (if needed).

Regulatory Guidance Note 6

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate the Environment Agency has made of the financial cost of implementing Regulatory Guidance Note 6, and who will bear which costs. [165269]

Mr. Morley: No cost estimate relating to Regulatory Guidance Note 6, covering the engineering requirements of Schedule 2 of the Landfill (England and Wales) Regulations 2002, has been carried out by the Environment Agency or by my Department. This is an internal guidance note to assist environment agency staff to interpret and enforce the Regulations, but is published in the interests of transparency. It is subject to change as situations develop.

A Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) of the Landfill Directive in England and Wales was published with the Second Consultation Paper on Implementation of Council Directive (1999/31/EC) on the Landfill of Waste. This is available on the Defra website (www.defra.gov.uk). The RIA indicates that at the extreme, waste producers will face an additional cost in the range of £97 million to £696 million as a result of implementing the Directive.

The RIA also points out that increasing disposal costs will provide greater impetus to minimise, recycle and re-use waste and hence move the management of waste up the waste hierarchy. This outcome is a major objective of the Government's environmental policy and is supported by business, non-Government organisations and Select Committees of this House.

River Invertebrates

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to increase invertebrate monitoring in rivers during summer months to identify serious insecticide pollution. [163079]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 24 March 2004]:* The Environment Agency currently monitors 6,000 sites for invertebrates, covering a network of just under 40,000 km of river. Sites are sampled on a three-year rolling programme such that each year two samples are taken from a third of the sites. These samples are timed to give a good picture of the invertebrate population.

The Environment Agency and the Pesticides Safety Directorate (PSD) have recently commenced a research project to establish whether the actual use of agricultural pesticides, including insecticides, is causing unacceptable adverse effects on aquatic invertebrates and plants. The project will include intensive chemical and biological sampling of identified higher risk rivers and streams. This will provide field-based evidence on whether the way that plant protection products are currently approved and used is sufficiently protective of the aquatic environment.

Sea Birds

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects the ratification of the agreement on the conservation of albatrosses and petrels to be extended to include Tristan da Cunha. [168002]

Mr. Morley: The Government ratified the Agreement on the Conservation of Albatrosses and Petrels on 2 April for the UK and three Overseas Territories. We are working hard to extend the ratification to Tristan da Cunha and will do so as soon as possible.

IACS Forms

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will extend the deadline of 17 May for completion by farmers of integrated administration and control system forms. [167608]

Alun Michael: A deadline of 15 May for the submission of the Integrated Administration and Control System forms is set out in Article 8(2) of Council Regulation 1251/1999.

Where a submission deadline falls on a public holiday or a weekend there is provision within Article 6(2) of Council Regulation 3508/1992 as amended by 1593/2000 for the deadline to be amended to fall on the first working day following. Therefore, as 15 May 2004 falls on a Saturday the deadline for submission has been set as 17 May.

There is no further scope within the regulations to extend the deadline beyond 17 May.

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reason this year's integrated administration and control system forms have had to be reprinted; and when they will be posted to farmers. [167609]

Alun Michael: This year's Integrated Administration and Control System (IACS) forms have not had to be reprinted.

All IACS forms were dispatched in early April and the Rural Payments Agency (RPA) believes that they should all by now have been delivered to producers. However, the RPA has advised via an advertisement placed in the farming press and on its website that where forms have not been received producers should contact their RPA processing site.

Rats (Sewers)

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussion she has had with local authorities on the *(a)* working and *(b)* effectiveness of the Water UK protocol on sewer baiting for rats; and if she will make a statement. [162399]

Mr. Morley: We recently sought the views of all Chief Executives of local authorities in England and Wales on how well the liaison arrangements between water companies and local authorities are working in relation to sewer baiting for rats. We asked them to identify which parts of the Water UK protocol were working well and those aspects where improvements might be made. The results of that review will be considered by the Rats in Sewers Working Group.

Thames Barrier

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what circumstances have led to an increase in use of the Thames Barrier; and whether this has been due to long-term changes in national phenomena. [166014]

Mr. Morley: The Thames Barrier is closed to protect London from extreme high tidal waters generated by 'storm surge' in the North Sea and to provide storage for extreme freshwater flows, which would threaten West London, and combinations of these phenomena.

The Thames Barrier has been closed on 67 occasions in the last 10 years during the winter flood seasons.

Mean sea level and extreme tidal waters are expected to increase as the south east of England continues to fall relative to sea level. This was factored into the design of the barrier and closures for extreme high tides are within those expected when the barrier began operation. Closures due to extreme freshwater flows are harder to predict, but the winters of 2000–01 and 2002–03 were two of the wettest on record.

It is too early to say whether these trends are anthropogenically driven or part of the natural variance. It is also possible that extreme freshwater flows have been affected by changes in the land use of the Thames catchment.

Sea level rise, tidal surge extremes, tidal propagation, wave driven storminess, freshwater flows and combinations of these phenomena are all expected to be affected by climate change. The uncertainty for the future flood regime is high and creates a challenge for the long term financial and environmental planning in the Thames Estuary.

The Environment Agency are aware of these challenges and are already two years into TE2100, a project that will deliver by 2008–09 a flood risk management plan for the next 100 years. As well as the continued use of the Barrier, a number of flood risk management measures are also being considered.

Tobacco

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what area of land is used to grow tobacco in each EU *(a)* member state and *(b)* accession country; how much subsidy was given for tobacco growing in each EU member state in 2003–04; and how much will be given to each EU member state in 2004–05. [167068]

Alun Michael: The area of land used to grow tobacco in the producer member states and in new member states is:

2002 (1,000ha)

Member states	*Area of land*
EU15:	
Belgium	0.381
Germany	4.789
Greece	[1]54.77
Spain	11.5
France	8.901
Italy	37.676
Austria	0.116
Portugal	1.901
EU25:	
Cyprus	[1]0.077
Hungary	5.477
Poland	10.296
Slovak Republic	1.1
Total	136.984

[1] 2001 figures.
Source:
Eurostat CRONOS

The tobacco premia paid in 2002 (the latest year for which figures are available) is:

Million euro

Member states	*Amount*
Belgium	3.9
Germany	35.1
Greece	369.0
Spain	115.4
France	80.4
Italy	330.8
Austria	0.9
Portugal	16.3
Total	951.8

Source:
Official Journal of the European Union 23/2/04.

Payments in 2004–05 will be based on claims for tobacco that has not yet, or only just, been planted. The information requested is therefore not available. However, the EU budget provision for expenditure on tobacco premia in 2004 is 929 million euro.

Warm Front Scheme

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Burnley have benefited from the Warm Front Scheme. [168304]

Mr. Morley: Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 3,500 households in Burnley received assistance from the scheme.

Waste Management

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the potential adverse *(a)* environmental and *(b)* health impacts of waste incineration are; and what measures the Government has introduced to deal with these impacts. [163609]

Mr. Morley: An independent review of the environmental and health effects of all waste management options for municipal solid waste and similar wastes is currently being prepared. This review, which includes incineration, is in response to a recommendation in the Strategy Unit report "Waste not, Want not". It brings together for the first time, existing literature and evidence on the health and environmental effects of managing municipal solid waste. We aim to publish the report within the next month or so.

Emission standards, which seek to limit environmental and health impacts, apply to waste incinerators as they do to all energy from waste facilities, and are enforced by the Environment Agency. These are European wide discharge standards, which are equally applicable to old and new facilities. We are currently implementing the new Waste Incineration Directive (WID), which is an extremely tough directive that will further tighten the emissions standards in this country. The older generation of incinerators has now been replaced with newer, cleaner technology, and most municipal waste incinerators in this country already meet the new, tougher, standards.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of a UK company's turnover on average accounts for the cost of managing waste for *(a)* chemical firms, *(b)* construction firms and *(c)* manufacturing firms employing more than 500 people. [165267]

Mr. Morley: We do not have this information in the format requested. Envirowise, which is a Government-funded programme offering waste minimisation advice to business, estimate that the average true cost of waste for businesses, as percentage of turnover, is 4.8 per cent. Only about one-tenth of this is the cost of disposing of that waste.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what definition she has of hazardous waste; and what plans she has to amend this definition. [165268]

Mr. Morley: Hazardous waste is defined in the Hazardous Waste Directive as waste featuring on a list drawn up by the European Commission and which has one or more of the hazardous properties listed in Annex III to that Directive. Any other waste considered by a member state to display any of the properties listed in Annex III will also fall within this definition. The European Commission implemented a new list of hazardous waste in January 2002.

In England and Wales, hazardous waste is already defined in some legislation on the basis of the new European definition, for example, with respect to landfill. However, for the purposes of the Special Waste Regulations 1996, which control the tracking and movement of special waste, the definition of special (hazardous) waste is on the basis of a list of hazardous waste drawn up by the European Commission in 1994.

The Government propose to replace the Special Waste Regulations with new Regulations for hazardous waste in England to come into force in 2005. These will revoke the existing definition of special waste and implement the new European definition.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what date has been set for the publication of the Government's report on the environmental and health impacts of waste disposal. [167760]

Mr. Morley: We have received the final report from its authors as well as comments from the peer review panel at the Royal Society. We are aiming to publish the report shortly.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the consultation paper on waste management controls is expected to be introduced. [168083]

Mr. Morley: We propose to consult later in the spring on a draft of the Regulations necessary to repeal section 75(7)*(c)* of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 and to apply the Waste Framework Directive and the Landfill Directive to agricultural waste and to non-mineral mines and quarries waste. We also expect to consult shortly thereafter on draft regulations which will implement the current review of waste permitting. New Hazardous Waste Regulations will also be put out for consultation later this year.

Waste Research Strategy

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to conclude work on the waste research strategy. [165262]

Mr. Morley: The three-year waste research strategy is due to be completed in the summer and will be based on advice form the Waste Resources and Research Advisory Group and input from stakeholders.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many companies have benefited from assistance through the Waste Implementation Programme. [165310]

Mr. Morley: Much of the direct funding and assistance available through the Waste Implementation Programme (WIP) is directed at local authorities to help with the challenges of long-term progress in sustainable waste management, sufficient to meet the Article 5 targets of the EU Landfill Directive. It has been estimated that the additional investment needed from local authorities to meet these targets could be as high as £600-£700 million per annum over the next 10 years. This would largely be spent through contracts with the private sector. Waste Private Finance Initiative (PFI) is a key part of this approach, and has been managed through WIP since 2003. Nine major waste PFI contracts have been let to private companies, and nine more local authorities have either had their proposals approved, or are in the process of applying for PFI credits.

In addition, WIP is seeking to provide improved data and research to industry, and to encourage local authorities to work more effectively with waste companies. And a major programme of new technology pilots for more innovative waste management practices is being taken forward in partnership with industry and local authorities.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the budget for research through the Waste Implementation Programme is in 2004–05. [165311]

Mr. Morley: In 2004–05, the Government have allocated £5 million to research into sustainable waste management through the Waste Implementation Programme. This is a priority area, which will contribute to the development of a sound evidence base for policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

Water Prices

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she plans to publish the departmental guidelines on the five-year review of water prices. [159189]

Mr. Morley: The Secretary of State published her Principal Guidance to the Director General of Water Services on the 2004 Periodic Review on 11 March.

The Secretary of State's Final Guidance will be published in the autumn.

SCOTLAND

Advertising Campaigns

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland pursuant to his answer of 26 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 485W, on publicity campaigns, on what advertising campaigns the Scotland Office spent money in 2002–03. [164651]

Mrs. McGuire: During 2002–03 the Scotland Office incurred expenditure on advertising campaigns relating to the consultation on the size of the Scottish Parliament and expenditure by the Office of the Advocate-General on statutory public notices.

There was also expenditure by the Boundary Commission for Scotland on statutory notices relating to electoral boundaries.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Scotland if he will list for each civil service grade within his Department, the total number of staff employed, broken down by *(a)* gender, *(b)* ethnic group; and how many are registered disabled. [166403]

Mrs. McGuire: Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service are collected by the Cabinet Office and published in "Civil Service Statistics". A copy of "Civil Service

Statistics 2002" is available in the Library, and at: www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

More recent staffing information is available in the Scotland Office Departmental Report 2003.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Cinema Facilities

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what requirements there are on cinemas to provide facilities for deaf people. [168898]

Estelle Morris: The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) requires service providers to ensure access to their goods and services. However, such things as the provision of subtitles are likely to fall under the remit of product or service design, which is not currently covered under the auspices of the DDA.

As part of its £500,000 National Lottery funded Cinema Access Programme, the UK Film Council's Distribution and Exhibition Fund has allocated £350,000 towards a pilot project for the installation of captioning and audio-description equipment in 78 cinemas across England.

A web-based film information service, www.yourlocalcinema.com < http://www.yourlocalcinema.com/ > has also received £50,000 over three years to inform those with sensory impairments about films being screened at local cinemas in England.

£60,000 has been allocated to assist distributors films with lower marketing budgets meet the cost of audio description and subtitling of prints.

Finally, £40,000 has been earmarked for a research project that will look into consumer issues relating to the current technical means of overcoming the barriers faced by customers with sensory impairments.

Libraries (Digitisation)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in Preston since 1997. [168140]

Estelle Morris: This information is not held centrally.

The New Opportunities Fund £50 million Digitisation of Learning Materials Programme has delivered 150 projects across the UK to enable resources which support learning of all kinds held in libraries as well as museums, archives and other public-sector institutions, to be made available online through the People's Network and the National Grid for Learning. This initiative has created a body of material containing over 2 million images, tens of thousands of sound and video clips and documents and over 1,000 learning packages. All projects can be accessed via the EnrichUK portal at: http://www.enrichuk.net

Information on grants awarded to individual local authorities and their expenditure can be obtained from the relevant authority.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Education (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Bootle in the last five years. [169178]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Merseyside Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table.

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001	3,803	1,094
August 2001 to July 2002	6,575	1,564
August 2002 to July 2003	10,677	1,755

Note:

The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Class Sizes (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Preston were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [168132]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools[1] number of pupils in classes of 31 or more pupils taught by one teacher—Preston Parliamentary Constituency

	January 2003		
	Total pupils in all classes	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more*	
		Number of pupils	*Percentage of pupils*
Maintained Primary	7,736	1,686	21.8
Maintained Secondary	3,627	646	17.8

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.

[2] Percentage of pupils in those classes expressed as a percentage of pupils in all classes taught by one teacher.

Source:

Annual Schools' Census

Computers

Mr. Peter Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Liverpool, Walton have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [166963]

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many people in Manchester, Gorton have received a computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining. [167434]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At present no centrally funded schemes exist that provide people with a free or low cost computer to assist in seeking employment or retraining.

Condover Hall School

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he made of the educational effects on students of closing Condover Hall School. [168008]

Mr. Miliband: All pupils currently attending Condover Hall School have statements of special educational needs. Local education authorities placing pupils at Condover Hall have a duty to arrange the educational provision specified in their statements. That responsibility will continue after Condover Hall has closed and the children have transferred to alternative schools.

Education (Heywood and Middleton)

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding each school in Heywood and Middleton has received from the New Deal for Schools; [168499]

(2) how much public money was spent on repairing schools in Heywood and Middleton in each year since 1997. [168497]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Heywood and Middleton have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [168500]

Mr. Miliband: The table as follows shows the number of children in Heywood and Middleton benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure[1] (£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
2000–01	5,856	410,307	70.07
2001–02	7,640	688,572	90.13
2002–03	7,753	1,074,454	138.59
2003–04	7,679	2,074,823	270.19

[1] Funding figures were supplied by the Senior Finance Officer for Rochdale

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2002–03 is due to the extra funding provided through the Behaviour Improvement Programme and the increase in 2003–04 is due to the extra funding provided through the Leadership Incentive Grant.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Heywood and Middleton deemed to be failing since 1997 have since reached satisfactory standards. [168501]

Mr. Miliband: Two schools in Heywood and Middleton, one primary and one secondary, have been deemed to require special measures since 1997 and have since recovered and reached satisfactory standards.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in Heywood and Middleton achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A*-C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [168504]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A-C*

Percentage

Academic year	*Heywood and Middleton parliamentary constituency*	*England*
1997	33.1	45.1
1998	35.9	46.3
1999	38.2	47.9
2000	37.3	49.2
2001	40.9	50.0
2002	39.5	51.6
2003	43.5	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year ie 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Heywood and Middleton have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [168510]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In the period October 2003[1]—March 2004, 3,030 people visited a UK online centre in the Heywood and Middleton constituency. 1697(56 per cent.) of these people were women.

Since learndirect was launched in 1999, 1,411 people from the Heywood and Middleton Constituency have enrolled on a learndirect course. 769 (55 per cent.) of these people were women. Of the total number of women who enrolled on a course, 2 per cent. did so in order to learn skills to return to work.

[1] Please note the complete statistics are not available for UK online prior to September 2003 as the DfES did not collect this data on a centre by centre basis.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Heywood and Middleton have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [168514]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1996 to March 2001 in the six Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) that amalgamated into Greater Manchester LSC—Bolton and Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and High Peak and Wigan.

Time period and TEC/LSC	*Advanced MAs*	*Foundation MAs*
April 1998 to March 1999		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	800	600
Manchester	2,400	700
Oldham CCTE	400	300
Rochdale CCTE	500	100
Stockport and High Peak[1]	800	100
Wigan CCTE	700	300
April 1999 to March 2000		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	900	1,000
Manchester	2,800	1,800
Oldham CCTE	500	500
Rochdale CCTE	500	600
Stockport and High Peak[1]	700	700
Wigan CCTE	700	600
April 2000 to March 2001		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	700	1,200
Manchester	3,200	2,600
Oldham CCTE	500	700
Rochdale CCTE	400	700
Stockport and High Peak[1]	800	1,000
Wigan CCTE	900	800
April 2001 to July 2002		
Greater Manchester LSC	4,800	9,800
March 2001 to July 2002		
Greater Manchester LSC	2,900	6,800

[1] TEC also became part of Derbyshire LSC.

Note:

TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.

Sources:

TEC management information.

LSC Individualised Learner Record.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Heywood and Middleton in each of the last five years. [168577]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table:

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	8,925	2,598
August 2001 to July 2002	15,369	3,586
August 2002 to July 2003	27,258	4,210

Note:

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Heywood and Middleton on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [168578]

Mr. Miliband: Information on teacher vacancies is not available by constituency as it is collected at local education authority level. In January 2003, the latest information available, there were 13 full-time teacher vacancies in Rochdale local education authority.

Like other areas, since 1997 Rochdale has benefited from the initiatives that the Government have put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in the former Lancashire LEA area has risen by 60, from 1,830 to 1,890 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the area has grown by 610 from 510 to 1,120 in 2003.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Heywood and Middleton *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [168579]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Heywood and Middleton constituency for each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	110
1998	120
1999	130
2000	150
2001	240
2002	300
2003	320

Source:

Annual Schools' Census.

Education (Stalybridge and Hyde)

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Stalybridge and Hyde have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [168749]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1996 to March 2001 in the six Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) that amalgamated into Greater Manchester—Bolton and Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and High Peak and Wigan.

Time period	*TEC/LSC*	*Advanced MAs*	*Foundation MAs*
April 1998 to March 1999	Bolton and Bury CCTE	800	600
	Manchester	2,400	700
	Oldham CCTE	400	300
	Rochdale CCTE	500	100
	Stockport and High Peak[1]	800	100
	Wigan CCTE	700	300
April 1999 to March 2000	Bolton and Bury CCTE	900	1000
	Manchester	2,800	1,800
	Oldham CCTE	500	500
	Rochdale CCTE	500	600
	Stockport and High Peak[1]	700	700
	Wigan CCTE	700	600
April 2000 to March 2001	Bolton and Bury CCTE	700	1,200
	Manchester	3,200	2,600
	Oldham CCTE	500	700
	Rochdale CCTE	400	700
	Stockport and High Peak[1]	800	1,000
	Wigan CCTE	900	800
April 2001 to July 2002	Greater Manchester LSC	4,800	9,800
March 2001 to July 2002	Greater Manchester LSC	2,900	6,800

[1] Denotes TEC also became part of Derbyshire LSC

Note:

TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.

Source:

TEC management information

LSC Individualised Learner Record

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16-year-olds in Stalybridge and Hyde achieved five or more GCSEs at grade A* to C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [168753]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows.

Percentage of 15-year-old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A-C*

Percentage

Academic year	*Stalybridge and Hyde parliamentary constituency*	*England*
1997	36.0	45.1
1998	35.6	46.3
1999	38.6	47.9
2000	40.9	49.2
2001	42.5	50.0
2002	39.9	51.6
2003	47.2	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year ie 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Stalybridge and Hyde have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [168755]

Mr. Miliband: There are currently 11 schools in Stalybridge and Hyde Constituency that are included in the Excellence in Cities; three secondary schools and eight primaries. The following table shows the number of children in the Stalybridge and Hyde constituency benefiting; and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question:

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure* (£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
2001–02	4,544	320,806.4	70.6
2002–03	4,583	557,292.8	121.6
2003–04	4,805	1,667,000	212.9

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2003–04 is due to the extra funding provided through the Leadership Incentive Grant, which came on stream in 2003.

Excellence in Cities

Excellence in Cities was launched in March 1999 as a targeted programme of support for deprived secondary schools in our major cities. It has since expanded beyond the cities and now covers 57 whole authority areas as well as 51 Excellence Clusters covering smaller pockets of deprivation. The Tameside Excellence Cluster started in September 2001.

EiC provides resources and a coherent programme of strategies focused on:

Teaching and Learning

enhanced opportunities for gifted and talented children

study support

strategic use of specialist and Leading Edge schools and

City Learning Centres providing IT support for CPD and the curriculum;

Behaviour and Attendance

Learning Mentors, Learning Support Units and

Behaviour Improvement Programme and

Leadership

Leadership Incentive Grant.

Primary EiC

EiC is also expanding to provide behavioural support and extended opportunities for gifted and talented children in our most deprived primary schools. This help will include all schools meeting the relevant criteria, and will provide the support they need to ensure that their most disadvantaged pupils are better able to access the national primary strategy.

Results

The EiC programme is now paying off. GCSE exam results last year were the best yet for EiC schools. Results for 2001 and 2003 show that EiC is making an impact on closing the achievement gap. Results in terms of pupils achieving five good GCSEs or equivalent, improved at about twice the rate overall in EiC schools than schools elsewhere.

There was also a significant impact on behaviour and attendance—with standards again improving fastest in EiC schools.

In the Hyde schools, the improvement rate, at this stage, is more mixed. The Hyde primary school results set out below are based on an aggregate of the three percentages of pupils achieving level 4 or above in English, Maths and Science:

Arundale Primary School went from 145 to 181 an increase of 36 points

Dowson Primary School went from 236 to 247 an increase of 11 points

Gee Cross Holy Trinity CofE Primary School went from 241 to 248 an increase of seven points

Godley Community Primary School went from 256 to 206 a decrease of 50 points

Greenfield Primary School and Early Years Centre went form140 to178 an increase of 38 points

Leigh Primary School went from 213 to 147 a decrease of 66 points

Pinfold Primary School went from 240 to 230 a decrease of 10 points

St. George's CofE Primary School went from 279 to 259 a decrease of 20 points.

The secondary school results are based on achievement at 5+ A*-C GCSE show:

Alder Community High School opened after January 2003

Hyde Technology School and Hearing Impaired Resource Base went from 63 per cent. to 53 per cent. decrease of 10 per cent.

Longdendale High School went from 44 per cent. to 47 per cent. an in crease of 3 per cent.

There was a 2.9 per cent. increase in the national rate of improvement between 2001 and 2003.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Stalybridge and Hyde *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [168760]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Stalybridge and Hyde constituency for each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	130
1998	130
1999	130
2000	150
2001	210
2002	130
2003	170

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

Education Psychologists

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many education psychologists there were per child in *(a)* primary education, *(b)* secondary education, *(c)* primary schools serving special educational needs and *(d)* secondary schools serving special educational needs in each year since 1997. [168635]

Mr. Miliband: Information on the number of education psychologists is not available by phase of education. The following table gives the number of pupils in all phases per educational psychologist in England for each year from 1997 to 2003, the latest information available.

	Number
1997	4,210
1998	4,200
1999	4,050
2000	3,940
2001	3,900
2002	3,770
2003	3,490

Source:
Annual survey of Teachers in Service and Teacher Vacancies (educational psychologists) and Annual Schools Census (pupil numbers).

Educational psychologists are employed by local education authorities. Decisions on their deployment and use are therefore matters for LEAs to determine in the light of local circumstances and available resources.

Education Statements

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children have received statements in Gloucestershire in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; what the figures are for other shire counties; and if he will make a statement. [168061]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the table.

Number of children for whom statements were made for the first time. Position in January each year.
Children for whom local education authorities maintain a statement of SEN

	1993	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Bedfordshire[1]	530	401	264	358	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Bedfordshire[2]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	315	385	364	305	295	352
Buckinghamshire[1]	705	660	472	589	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Buckinghamshire[2]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	440	382	250	338	340	311

Number of children for whom statements were made for the first time. Position in January each year. Children for whom local education authorities maintain a statement of SEN

	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Cambridgeshire[1]	547	725	603	633	583	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Cambridgeshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	334	394	356	385	299
Cheshire[1]	946	1,022	727	784	756	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Cheshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	421	446	436	459	482
Cornwall	445	515	491	488	463	499	374	395	355	437
Cumbria	829	515	402	420	416	436	356	272	356	346
Derbyshire[1]	[4]—	779	1,025	843	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Derbyshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	426	783	592	719	572	472
Devon[1]	604	689	807	832	923	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Devon[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	369	432	401	347	300
Dorset[1]	496	605	202	351	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Dorset[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	303	219	251	301	297	164
Durham[1]	505	661	478	552	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Durham[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	483	510	551	578	461	160
EastSussex[1]	864	792	538	405	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
East Sussex[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	251	245	362	291	264	304
Essex[1]	1,101	1,035	632	754	790	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Essex[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	521	612	546	591	609
Gloucestershire	454	518	358	459	311	344	503	414	458	372
Hampshire[1]	1,411	1,569	700	604	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Hampshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	507	673	537	488	583	609
Hertfordshire	785	1,146	864	802	801	395	441	376	455	530
Isles of Scilly	2	5	2	0	0	1	2	0	1	2
Kent[1]	1,308	1,302	1,480	1,241	1,271	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Kent[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	1,141	1,470	1,151	1,050	708
Lancashire[1]	1,468	1,816	2,253	1,704	1,661	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Lancashire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	1,022	1,143	1,083	950	956
Leicestershire[1]	580	685	1,129	639	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Leicestershire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	469	398	360	362	400	471
Lincolnshire	650	579	545	538	412	269	408	375	466	533
Norfolk	778	940	992	473	562	459	461	401	468	502
North Yorkshire[1]	470	466	551	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
North Yorkshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	353	440	359	372	365	426	356
Northamptonshire	477	452	377	439	397	456	363	413	484	398
Nottinghamshire[1]	123	239	207	242	236	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Nottinghamshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	116	119	106	115	102
Oxfordshire	443	491	368	367	330	403	302	336	348	400
Shropshire[1]	354	455	521	473	495	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Shropshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	304	205	160	209	185
Somerset	379	511	534	305	233	233	219	202	168	75
Staffordshire[1]	895	990	614	847	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Staffordshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[4]—	896	1,078	654	850	759
Suffolk	522	737	430	461	312	494	489	562	494	444
Surrey	755	925	567	645	628	644	574	665	721	699
Warwickshire	552	607	326	283	365	394	351	339	290	325
West Sussex	592	673	654	591	685	686	461	497	521	497
Wiltshire[1]	333	228	351	419	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—
Wiltshire[2]	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	[3]—	398	222	223	230	251	226

[1] Before local government reorganisation
[2] After local government reorganisation
[3] Not applicable
[4] Not available

Source:
SEN2 Surveys

Educational Attainment

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of students achieved five GCSEs (A*-C) and one GCSE or more (A*-G) broken down by *(a)* specialist schools, *(b)* grammar schools, *(c)* faith schools, *(d)* maintained schools and *(e)* independent schools, in each year since 1997. [167581]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Percentage of 15-year-olds achieving 5 or more A-C grades at GCSE/GNVQ*

Type of school	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
(a) Specialist schools	52.0	52.4	53.3	53.9	54.1	54.7	56.5
(b) Grammar Schools	94.1	95.9	96.7	97.6	97.5	97.5	97.5
(c) Faith Schools	50.1	51.1	53.3	54.6	55.4	57.4	59.5
(d) Maintained schools	42.2	43.5	45.3	46.7	47.5	49.1	50.6
(e) Independent schools	80.4	80.7	80.9	81.4	82.0	82.5	82.4
England average	45.1	46.3	47.9	49.2	50.0	51.6	52.9

Percentage of 15-year-olds achieving 1 or more A-G grades at GCSE/GNVQ*

Type of school	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
(a) Specialist schools	96.1	96.5	97.0	97.0	96.8	96.7	96.6
(b) Grammar Schools	99.3	99.9	99.9	100.0	99.7	99.7	99.8
(c) Faith Schools	95.7	96.5	96.8	97.2	97.2	97.1	97.0
(d) Maintained schools	92.3	93.5	94.1	94.6	94.6	94.7	94.9
(e) Independent schools	92.6	92.8	92.2	92.4	93.3	93.1	93.2
England average	92.3	93.4	94.0	94.4	94.5	94.6	94.8

Notes:
1. *(a)*, *(b)* and *(c)* are based on maintained mainstream schools only. The groups of schools are not mutually exclusive.
2. All figures are unadjusted.
3. *(a)* Specialist schools operational at the start of the relevant academic year. Includes some schools which have since been de-designated as specialist. Year-on-year comparisons should not be made, due to the increasing numbers of specialist schools in the time series.
4. *(b)* Grammar schools—selective schools as included in Performance Tables

Examination Results

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16 year olds in Burnley achieved five+ GCSEs at grade A*-C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [167929]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15 year old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A-C*

Percentage

Academic year	*Burnley parliamentary constituency*	*England*
1997	40.0	45.1
1998	42.3	46.3
1999	43.9	47.9
2000	41.2	49.2
2001	44.5	50.0
2002	42.5	51.6
2003	41.4	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16 year olds in Preston achieved five+ GCSEs at grade A*-C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last seven years. [168122]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15 year old pupils[1] achieving five or more grades A-C*

Percentage

Academic year	*Preston parliamentary constituency*	*England*
1997	32.7	45.1
1998	35.7	46.3
1999	37.2	47.9
2000	41.6	49.2
2001	38.4	50.0
2002	44.4	51.6
2003	45.2	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Excellence in Cities Programme

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Burnley have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [167925]

Mr. Miliband: The following schools in Burnley have been included in the Excellence in Cities programme since September 2001:

Secondary

Barden High School
St. Hilda's RC Primary School
Towneley High School
Edge End High School
Walshaw High School

Primary

Barden Junior School
Brunshaw Primary School
Heasandford Primary School
St. John the Baptist RC Primary
St. Mary's RC Primary School
Stoneyholme Primary School
Casterton Primary School
Springfield Primary School
Lomeshaye Junior School
Marsden Primary School

The following table shows the number of children in Burnley benefiting, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure (£)*	*Additional spend per pupil (£)*
2001–02	4,853	540,555	94.6
2002–03	4,615	919,500	174.1
2003–04	4,540	1,544,500	340.1

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2002–03 is due to the extra funding provided through the Leadership Incentive Grant which came on stream in 2003. It also includes a full financial year's funding for the Burnley Excellence Cluster.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Preston have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [168129]

Mr. Miliband: The following schools in Preston have been included in the Excellence in Cities programme since December 2002:

Ashton Primary School
Ashton-on-Ribble High School
Ashton-on-Ribble St Andrew!s Church of England Primary School
Christ The King Catholic High School, Preston
Deepdale Infants' School
Deepdale Junior School
Fishwick Primary School
Frenchwood Community Primary School
Lea Community Primary School
Moor Nook Community Primary School
Moor Park High School
Preston Greenlands Community Primary School
Preston St Matthew's Church of England Primary School
Ribbleton Avenue Infant School
Ribbleton Avenue Methodist Junior School
Ribbleton Hall High School
St Augustine's Catholic Primary School
St Ignatius' Catholic Primary School
St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Preston
St Teresa's Catholic Primary School, Preston

The following table shows the number of children in Preston benefiting, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure (£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
2002–03	5,987	307,000	51.2
2003–04	6,490	2,150,000	331.2

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2003–04 is due to the extra funding provided through the Leadership Incentive Grant and Behaviour Improvement Programme which came on stream in 2003. It also includes a full financial year's funding for the City of Preston Excellence Cluster.

Foundation Degrees

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* full-time and *(b)* part-time students enrolled on courses at higher education institutions in London in each of the last 10 years; and what the drop out rates in the first year of study were for each year. [151072]

Alan Johnson: The available information covering undergraduate enrolments to London HE institutions is given in a table which has been placed in the Library.

The information on non-continuation rates is contained in "Performance Indicators in Higher Education", published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE), The figures cover full-time first degree courses only, and show, for each individual HE institution in the UK, the numbers and proportion of entrants who failed to continue beyond the first year and the numbers and proportion of entrants who fail to complete their course. Copies of the HEFCE publication are available for students starting courses in 1996–97,1997–98,1998–99,1999–2000 and 2000–01 in the House Library.

Gemini Project

Mr. Chaytor: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what level of funding his Department has allocated to the Gemini project; and what evaluation he has made of the effectiveness of the project. [166450]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* My Department has not allocated any funding to this project. This is a devolved matter for the Scottish Executive and my hon. Friend may wish to write to them about this project.

Overseas Students (UAE)

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps are being taken by his Department to assist the higher education sector in attracting students from the United Arab Emirates. [168570]

Alan Johnson: My Department leads and funds the Prime Minister's Initiative (PMI) to attract more international students to the UK, including those from the United Arab Emirates (UAE). A vigorous world wide marketing campaign under the Education UK Brand promotes the credentials of UK education and training, and supports the work of the higher education sector in attracting international students who might not otherwise study in the UK. We have also taken a number of steps to make the UK a more attractive study destination for international students by—streamlining entry and visa arrangements; offering opportunities to work while studying; and providing specific information and advice about living and studying in the UK for the first time. The number of UAE students in UK higher education has increased from 777 in 1996–97 to 1,306 in 2002–03, an increase of 68 per cent.

Partnerships for Schools

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the start-up and estimated running costs of Partnerships for Schools are for each year up to and including 2006; and if he will make a statement. [166864]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Partnership for Schools is a company limited by shares and a non-departmental public body established on 2 April 2004 to deliver the Building Schools for the Future programme. In 2005–06, this programme will invest around £2 billion in renewing the English secondary schools estate.

The forecast spend on start up costs (pre-incorporation) for Partnership for Schools was £4.1 million. The forecast running costs are in the following table:

	£ million
2004–2005	10
2005–2006	9.5
2006–2007	9.8

The estimates for 2005–06 and 2006–07 are based on 2004–05 activity with an estimate for inflation, and are indicative as the Building Schools for the Future programme itself is still being developed. In particular, work on the creation of local education partnerships is still subject to consultation with stakeholders.

School Computers (Uxbridge)

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Uxbridge in each of the last five years. [168991]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However Uxbridge is in Hillingdon LEA and since 2000–01 schools in Hillingdon have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA).

Allocation to Hillingdon LEA

	£
2000–2001	734,488
2001–2002	1,065,479
2002–2003	1,508,280
2003–2004	1,571,762
2004–2005	2,015,276

School Places (Battersea)

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many children attending Battersea primary schools did not get an initial offer of a secondary school place in a Wandsworth school on 1 March, broken down by primary school; [167638]

(2) how many secondary school places were offered by Wandsworth secondary schools on 1 March to out-of-borough applicants, broken down by individual secondary schools; and how many of those offers were accepted. [167639]

Mr. Miliband: My Department does not hold this information.

School Repairs (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding money has been spent on repairing schools in Bootle in each year since 1997. [169083]

Mr. Miliband: The majority of capital funding is now allocated to local authorities and schools by needs-related formulae. Authorities invest according to priorities agreed in their asset management plans. The following table shows total capital allocations to Sefton local education authority (LEA) since 1996–97.

	Allocation £000[1]
1996–1997	1,904
1997–1998	1,634
1998–1999	1,802
1999–2000	4,562
2000–2001	9,388
2001–2002	11,146
2002–2003	15,980
2003–2004	16,930

Note:
Includes allocations to the voluntary aided sector.

To date, we have also announced indicative allocations of around £10.2 million for 2004–05 and £5 million for 2005–06.

School Tests

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 15 and 16 year olds achieved five + GCSEs at grade A* -C or GNVQ equivalent in each of the last four years; and if he will make a statement. [168073]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Percentage of 15 year old pupils[1] *achieving five or more grades A**

Percentage

Academic year	*England*
2000	49.2
2001	50.0
2002	51.6
2003	52.9

[1] GCSE/GNVQ results are reported as standard as the results of pupils aged 15 at the start of the academic year i.e. 31 August and therefore reaching the end of compulsory education at the end of the school year.

Teacher Vacancies

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Burnley on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [167915]

Mr. Miliband: Information on teacher vacancies is not available by constituency as it is collected at local education authority level. In January 2003, the latest information available, there were 40 full-time advertised teacher vacancies in Lancashire local education authority.

Like other areas, since 1997 Preston has benefited from the initiatives that the Government have put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in the former Lancashire LEA area has risen by 390, from 11,870 to 12,260 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the area has grown by 2,870 from 3,620 to 6,490 in 2003.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Preston on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [168139]

Mr. Miliband: Information on teacher vacancies is not available by constituency as it is collected at local education authority level. In January 2003, the latest information available, there were 40 full-time advertised teacher vacancies in Lancashire local education authority.

Like other areas, since 1997 Preston has benefited from the initiatives that the Government has put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in the former Lancashire LEA area has risen by 390, from 11,870 to 12,260 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the area has grown by 2,870 from 3,620 to 6,490 in 2003.

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vacant *(a)* teacher and *(b)* deputy head teacher posts there were in (i) primary, (ii) secondary and (iii) special schools in each year since 1997, broken down by local education authority. [167572]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Teachers (Work Permits)

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many work permits have been granted since 1 October 2003, broken down by country of origin of applicant for *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary teachers in each Government office region. [164462]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 31 May 2004]:* I have been asked to reply.

The following table provides a breakdown of the number of work permit applications, including extensions, approved for teaching posts, by country of origin since 1 October 2003.

Work permit applications

Country	*Number*
Argentina	1
Australia	332
Bangladesh	2
Bosnia—Herzegovina	1
British National Overseas	1
Bulgaria	2
Canada	52
China Peoples Republic of	5
Cuba	3
Cyprus	1
Egypt	1
Gambia	1
Georgia	1
Ghana	26
Guyana	1
Honduras	1
Hungary	3
India	32
Israel	1
Jamaica	84
Japan	2
Jordan	1
Kenya	2
Lebanon	3
Macedonia	1
Mauritius	4
Mexico	1
Namibia	2
New Zealand	128
Nigeria	11
Pakistan	15
Philippines	5
Poland	3
Romania	3
Russia	5
Singapore	2
South Africa	254
South Korea	3
St. Lucia	1
Taiwan	1
Trinidad and Tobago	5
Turkey	3
Uganda	2
Ukraine	5
United States of America	55
Venezuela	1
Yemen Republic of	1
Zimbabwe	47
Total	1,117

Figures broken down by primary and secondary teachers and by Government office region are not available.

Teaching Assistants

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Burnley *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [167916]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Burnley constituency in January of each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	160
1998	173
1999	176
2000	184
2001	220
2002	212
2003	287

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Preston in *(a)* each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [168137]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Preston constituency for each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Teaching assistants
1997	176
1998	202
1999	203
2000	211
2001	255
2002	237
2003	350

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Benefits Payment

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many benefit recipients there are in each constituency in Great Britain; and how many of them collect their benefits from post offices, excluding those who use network banking arrangements. [167329]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. A table has been placed in the Library, which provides the total number of benefits in each constituency, and shows how many of those accounts receive at least one benefit payable at a post office. The information is from data available at 21 February 2004.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners draw their benefits at *(a)* post offices and *(b)* banks or building societies in the Havant constituency. [167331]

Mr. Pond: Information available on pensioners (women over 60 and men over 65) as at 21 February 2004 in the Havant constituency receiving benefit payments collectable at a post office and by Direct Payment into bank and building society accounts, is as follows.

Number of pensioner benefit accounts in the Havant parliamentary constituency paid at a post office or into a bank or building society

	Havant
Total paid at post office	8,995
Total paid by direct payment into a bank or building society account	14,655

Source:
IAD information centre, 100 percent sample.

Included in payment through the post office are customers paid into post office card accounts and customers paid by girocheque. Girocheques are encashable either at a post office or they can be paid into a bank or building society account. These figures do not include war pensions and child benefit customers as these accounts are the responsibility of the Ministry of Defence and Inland Revenue respectively.

Some customers who are paid direct into an account can also collect their payments in cash at post offices through the wider range of banking services now available at the post office. There is no data available on the number of benefit claims collected in this way.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he intends to reply to the letter from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton, dated 2 March, with regard to Mr. S. West, transferred to him by the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry. [167261]

Mr. Andrew Smith: I replied to my right hon. Friend on 21 April.

Departmental Officials

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which former officials of the Department have asked for permission to join *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst and Young and *(d)* KPMG. [156905]

Maria Eagle: All civil servants are subject to the Business Appointment Rules, which set out the circumstances in which they must seek permission to accept outside appointments within two years of leaving Crown employment. A copy of the rules is available in the Libraries of the House. Information about appointments taken up by the most senior staff is published in the annual reports of the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments. The next annual report will be published shortly.

Since 2001 the Department has not had any requests for permission to join *(a)* PricewaterhouseCoopers, *(b)* Deloitte & Touche, *(c)* Ernst and Young and *(d)* KPMG.

Disability Living Allowance

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claims there were for disability living allowance for people disabled by mental illness, broken down by age group for each year since the introduction of disability living allowance. [168151]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the tables.

Numbers of people receiving disability living allowance (DLA) whose main disabling condition is psychosis[1], psychoneurosis, personality disorder, or alcohol abuse, broken down by age group at 31 August in each year from 1992 to 2003.

Thousand

Age	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
All	23.9	40.3	57.1	82.3	106.7	136.2
Unknown	8.1	*0.5	—	—	—	—
0–4	0.6	*0.3	*0.2	*0.1	*0.2	*0.1
05–9	0.7	0.5	*0.4	*0.3	0.5	0.6
10–15	*0.3	*0.4	0.5	*0.5	0.5	0.7
16–19	*0.2	*0.4	*0.3	0.7	1.0	1.4

Numbers of people receiving disability living allowance (DLA) whose main disabling condition is psychosis[1], psychoneurosis, personality disorder, or alcohol abuse, broken down by age group at 31 August in each year from 1992 to 2003.

Thousand

Age	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
20–24	0.5	1.9	2.4	3.6	4.3	5.1
25–29	1.1	3.1	5.1	7.6	9.5	11.7
30–34	1.2	4.1	6.5	9.8	13.3	16.9
35–39	1.0	4.1	6.5	9.8	13.3	17.3
40–44	1.5	4.0	6.1	8.9	11.9	16.3
45–49	1.9	5.0	7.0	10.4	13.7	17.4
50–54	1.7	4.7	6.4	9.8	12.6	16.8
55–59	1.9	4.3	5.9	8.3	10.6	13.4
60–64	2.1	4.7	6.2	7.6	8.7	10.5
65–69	0.7	1.8	3.0	4.4	6.1	7.0
70–74	*0.4	*0.4	*0.4	*0.4	*0.3	0.6
75–79	—	*0.1	*0.1	*0.2	*0.3	*0.3
80+	—	—	—	—	—	—

Thousand

Age	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
All	156.5	173.7	188.4	211.8	239.5	272.7
Unknown						
0–4	*0.1	*0.1	*0.1	*0.1	*0.1	*0.1
05–9	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.5	*0.4
10–15	0.9	1.2	1.1	1.3	1.3	1.4
16–19	1.8	1.9	2.0	1.8	2.1	2.7
20–24	5.6	6.3	7.2	8.3	10.0	11.5
25–29	12.4	13.1	13.7	14.7	16.2	17.2
30–34	18.9	20.7	21.6	23.1	25.4	28.7
35–39	20.2	22.7	25.0	28.5	32.0	36.4
40–44	18.7	21.1	23.6	27.8	32.1	37.8
45–49	19.9	21.4	22.0	24.7	29.5	33.9
50–54	19.5	22.1	24.5	27.6	29.1	32.2
55–59	16.3	17.8	19.3	22.4	26.5	30.5
60–64	12.4	13.7	15.4	17.1	19.0	22.0
65–69	7.7	8.5	9.1	9.0	10.2	11.6
70–74	1.4	2.1	3.0	4.2	4.8	5.3
75–79	*0.2	*0.3	*0.2	*0.2	*0.5	1.0
80+	[2]—	[2]—	*0.1	*0.2	*0.2	*0.1

[1] Medical advice is that, of the range of disabling mental conditions recorded for the purposes of DLA, these four are clearly forms of "illness", as opposed to developmental abnormality.
[2] Denotes nil or negligible.

Notes:
1. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample at 31 August each year (consistent with answers to your related questions 168152 and 168153).
2. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Figures marked "*" are less than 500 and subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
4. In the first two years of records, dates of birth for some recipients are not available.
5. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.

Source:
IAD Information Centre

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants for disability living allowance there were, broken down by *(a)* age and *(b)* amount spent on each group in each year since the introduction of disability living allowance. [168152]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the tables.

Numbers of people receiving disability living allowance (DLA) as at 31 August each year, broken down by age group

Thousand

Age group (years)	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
All	1,019.1	1,243.2	1,395.2	1,581.3	1,750.4	1,926.2
Unknown	102.8	6.3	—	—	—	—
0–4	22.7	30.1	34.2	38.8	39.8	42.0
5–9	37.2	48.0	54.3	60.9	68.0	74.8
10–15	33.1	43.8	50.4	57.5	64.9	73.7
16–19	15.7	21.4	24.0	27.3	30.2	32.9
20–24	27.2	39.6	42.5	44.6	44.6	45.5
25–29	29.6	48.5	53.6	60.9	67.4	71.3
30–34	33.6	53.6	63.8	74.5	84.7	93.3

Numbers of people receiving disability living allowance (DLA) as at 31 August each year, broken down by age group

Thousand

Age group (years)	*1992*	*1993*	*1994*	*1995*	*1996*	*1997*
35–39	36.2	59.8	71.2	82.8	93.6	107.7
40–44	49.1	72.0	82.4	93.9	105.9	118.2
45–49	64.0	95.3	110.3	129.8	146.2	153.2
50–54	82.7	113.1	128.7	149.8	170.4	197.9
55–59	120.1	160.6	177.3	199.5	216.5	234.1
60–64	161.3	206.9	224.9	247.0	264.8	286.7
65–69	137.4	163.6	185.1	207.7	234.4	256.8
70–74	55.8	66.0	74.4	81.1	88.1	99.6
75–79	9.2	12.8	16.4	22.5	26.9	32.9
80 +	1.6	1.7	1.6	2.7	4.1	5.5

Thousand

Age group (years)	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
All	2,014.2	2,084	2,160.3	2,271.1	2,385.8	2,526.7
Unknown	—	—	—	—	—	—
0–4	40.0	38.8	37.7	37.9	38.4	38.7
5–9	79.3	82.4	84.6	86.3	90.3	93.8
10–14	81.2	88.0	96.4	107.0	115.5	127.4
16–19	35.6	38.0	39.5	44.6	48.7	55.0
20–24	45.8	46.1	49.3	52.8	57.7	62.7
25–29	72.2	69.9	67.5	64.9	67.0	68.5
30–34	96.2	97.2	97.7	101.1	102.4	108.4
35–39	113.7	118.9	123.4	130.2	136.4	143.8
40–44	125.5	131.4	136.9	144.9	156.5	168.6
45–49	151.7	154.2	155.2	163.5	175.6	187.6
50–54	207.6	212.6	221.2	227.8	223.8	227.8
55–59	239.9	244.4	248.3	264.1	287.0	305.2
60–64	298.8	303.1	308.7	316.4	321.5	335.5
65–69	268.0	275.4	282.2	286.0	293.3	307.3
70–74	112.7	130.0	150.2	173.2	189.5	200.4
75–79	38.9	45.1	49.0	54.4	62.2	72.2
80 +	6.9	8.5	12.5	16.1	20.0	23.8

Notes:

1. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample at 31 August in each year, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred
3. Totals may not sum due to rounding
4. In the first two years of records, dates of birth for some recipients are not available and this has resulted in some recipients being grouped in the 'unknown' age group.
5. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.

Source:

Information and Analysis Directorate, estimated number of claimants in receipt of disability living allowance based on data from the Quarterly Statistical Enquiry at 31 August in each year.

Estimated expenditure on disability living allowance (DLA) in each financial year, broken down by age group

£ million (in 2004–05 prices)

Age group (years)	*1992–93*	*1993–94*	*1994–95*	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*
All	2,666	3,646	4,050	4,788	5,476	5,881
Unknown	235	16	—	—	—	—
0–4	53	75	76	86	93	94
5–9	109	160	179	205	231	247
10–15	98	142	168	196	226	249
16–19	45	67	81	92	103	111
20–24	83	122	136	145	147	147
25–29	86	146	167	194	220	228
30–34	95	157	194	236	275	292
35–39	99	175	211	254	297	331
40–44	137	213	242	289	332	362
45–49	177	284	325	396	456	465
50–54	228	339	380	456	534	596
55–59	333	486	513	602	674	710
60–64	445	627	654	744	824	868
65–69	303	441	508	628	739	797
70–74	117	160	172	203	239	280
75–79	19	31	40	56	73	90
80+	3	4	4	7	11	15

£ million (in 2004–05)

Age group (years)	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
All	6,135	6,390	6,737	7,147	7,416	7,764
Unknown	—	—	—	—	—	—
0–4	92	91	95	105	107	107
5–9	261	269	277	290	300	307
10–15	272	299	330	366	395	428
16–19	118	126	135	149	160	178
20–24	146	148	158	170	182	196
25–29	227	221	213	207	205	209
30–34	297	302	309	319	319	323
35–39	348	361	381	407	417	432
40–44	383	400	420	449	476	503
45–49	460	464	480	507	532	563
50–54	621	637	671	695	680	690
55–59	722	738	766	819	872	921
60–64	896	917	945	980	991	1,024
65–69	830	858	885	906	917	942
70–74	337	407	492	568	612	639
75–79	107	125	142	162	192	233
80+	20	27	38	50	61	71

Notes:

1. Figures are consistent with outturn expenditure as published in the DWP benefit expenditure tables.
2. Expenditure has been apportioned to age groups using age group data from the DLA Quarterly Statistical Enquiry which is based on a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
3. In the first two years of records, dates of birth for some recipients are not available and this has resulted in some expenditure being grouped in the 'unknown' age group.
4. Figures are in 2004–05 prices, calculated using the latest GDP deflator.
5. Figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds.
6. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
7. Figures for 2003–04 are estimated outturn.

Source:

Information and Analysis Directorate, Great Britain estimated expenditure on disability living allowance in each financial year and age group.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants for disability living allowance there were, broken down by *(a)* type of disability and *(b)* amount spent on each group in each year since the introduction of disability living allowance. [168153]

Maria Eagle: The information is in the tables.

Numbers of people receiving disability living allowance (DLA) as at 31 August each year, broken down by type of disability

Thousand

Disability type	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997
All	1,019.0	1,243.0	1,395.2	1,581.3	1,750.4	1,926.2
Arthritis	227.9	270.0	300.8	340.5	379.8	418.1
Muscle/Joint/Bone Disease	88.7	95.9	107.9	121.8	133.9	146.5
Blindness	22.7	32.5	37.4	42.3	45.7	49.1
Stroke Related	67.5	74.2	76.2	79.6	81.6	86.2
Learning Difficulty	92.7	136.7	152.6	168.1	178.7	191.0
Epilepsy	19.5	25.3	30.0	36.0	40.4	44.9
Deafness	8.1	9.3	10.1	11.8	13.9	16.7
Malignant Disease	21.4	25.0	28.4	33.1	36.3	41.7
Chest Disease	59.2	69.5	73.1	78.3	81.8	85.3
Back Ailments	76.8	90.5	104.7	124.1	146.3	167.1
Heart Disease	95.7	110.1	119.3	129.5	139.0	146.6
Parkinsons Disease	6.4	8.0	8.5	9.5	10.3	11.3
Diabetes Melitus	19.3	22.8	25.6	29.0	32.2	34.7
Renal Disorders	5.8	6.6	7.8	8.7	9.0	9.1
AIDS	2.1	3.4	4.5	4.8	5.5	5.8
Skin Disease	2.7	4.3	5.8	7.1	8.3	9.8
Other	147.6	188.7	214.7	241.7	264.7	284.3
Alcohol Abuse	0.7	1.3	2.0	2.3	3.1	4.1
Other Mental Health Causes						
Psychosis	8.2	22.4	36.1	51.7	62.8	74.7
Psychoneurosis	14.7	15.4	17.1	25.5	37.6	53.6
Personality disorder	*0.3	1.2	1.9	2.8	3.2	3.8
Dementia	6.3	7.6	7.7	8.4	8.6	9.0
Behavioural disorder	5.7	8.0	10.2	12.8	16.2	21.2
Severely mentally impaired	19.0	14.5	13.0	12.0	11.6	11.7

Thousand

Disability type	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
All	2,014.2	2,084.0	2,160.3	2,271.1	2,385.8	2,526.7
Arthritis	434.5	444.4	457.1	471.7	490.0	508.8
Muscle/Joint/Bone Disease	152.1	158.8	164.7	176.1	188.2	203.6
Blindness	51.3	53.5	54.6	56.8	59.0	60.7
Stroke Related	88.5	90.6	93.3	95.4	96.8	99.4
Learning Difficulty	201.2	208.8	216.4	224.7	233.6	244.0
Epilepsy	46.8	47.6	49.5	52.3	55.0	58.9
Deafness	20.4	22.9	24.1	26.9	28.9	30.8
Malignant Disease	42.6	44.1	47.3	52.2	54.8	60.2
Chest Disease	84.5	84.1	83.1	83.2	84.1	85.9
Back Ailments	174.9	181.0	188.1	199.2	209.1	221.1
Heart Disease	146.7	146.9	147.1	150.5	152.4	157.0
Parkinsons Disease	11.8	11.9	12.5	12.8	13.3	13.8
Diabetes Melitus	37.1	38.6	40.8	42.8	45.4	47.8
Renal Disorders	9.4	9.5	10.0	10.5	10.9	11.6
AIDS	6.1	6.3	6.6	6.7	6.9	6.9
Skin Disease	10.5	11.1	11.1	11.9	13.0	13.7
Other	292.0	296.3	303.0	314.2	324.7	337.9
Alcohol Abuse	4.9	5.6	6.3	7.8	9.4	10.6
Other Mental Health Causes						
Psychosis	82.8	88.7	94.2	101.0	110.1	120.9
Psychoneurosis	64.5	74.3	82.4	96.6	113.0	133.6
Personality disorder	4.3	5.1	5.5	6.4	7.0	7.7
Dementia	8.8	9.1	9.6	9.8	9.3	9.7
Behavioural disorder	26.8	32.8	40.5	49.3	58.5	69.6
Severely mentally impaired	11.7	12.2	12.3	12.4	12.3	12.6

Notes:

1. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample at 31 August in each year, and are therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
2. Figures are in thousands and rounded to the nearest hundred.
3. Figures marked "*" are less than 500 and subject to a high degree of sampling variation.
4. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
5. From November 2002, the methodology for producing these figures was changed to allow statistics to be published much sooner. This has resulted in a small increase in the reported caseload. This is because some cases which have actually terminated but have not yet been updated on the computer system are now included.
6. The 'Other' category comprises of 25 conditions, including alcohol abuse. Alcohol abuse has been listed separately, along with a breakdown of the conditions covered by the 'Other Mental Health Causes' category to provide the equivalent breakdown to that provided in a related PQ, PQ 168151. PQ 168151 asks about mental illness which has been defined as psychosis, psychoneurosis, personality disorder or alcohol abuse

Source:

Information and Analysis Directorate, estimated number of claimants in receipt of Disability Living Allowance based on data from the Quarterly Statistical Enquiry at 31 August in each year.

Estimated expenditure on disability living allowance (DLA) in each financial year, broken down by type of disability)

£ million (in 2004–05 prices)

Disability type	*1992–93*	*1993–94*	*1994–95*	*1995–96*	*1996–97*	*1997–98*
All	2,666	3,646	4,050	4,788	5,476	5,881
Arthritis	558	753	847	1,019	1,181	1,280
Muscle/Joint/Bone Disease	233	287	320	372	418	443
Blindness	42	64	72	87	97	104
Stroke Related	228	279	278	300	316	321
Learning Difficulty	250	380	408	461	512	533
Epilepsy	54	78	90	113	130	141
Deafness.	18	24	25	29	35	39
Malignant Disease	76	101	116	142	159	179
Chest Disease	143	197	209	238	259	268
Back Ailments	180	245	287	360	443	496
Heart Disease	214	286	315	366	408	426
Parkinsons Disease	21	30	31	37	41	45
Diabetes Melitus	48	63	71	84	96	102
Renal Disorders	15	21	23	28	30	30
AIDS	8	15	21	23	28	28
Skin Disease	7	11	13	16	19	22
Other	423	612	691	806	904	946
Alcohol Abuse	2	4	6	7	10	12
Other Mental Health Causes						
Psychosis	21	55	83	124	168	199
Psychoneurosis	37	42	45	62	91	122
Personality disorder	1	3	4	7	9	10
Dementia	21	27	26	29	31	31
Behavioural disorder	14	23	29	38	48	63
Severely mentally impaired	50	47	42	42	42	43

£ million (in 2004–05 prices)

Disability type	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
All	6,135	6,390	6,737	7,147	7,416	7,764
Arthritis	1,333	1,378	1,448	1,510	1,558	1,604
Muscle/Joint/Bone Disease	460	483	507	545	576	614
Blindness	111	117	122	130	135	138
Stroke Related	331	338	353	362	360	365
Learning Difficulty	553	577	605	639	647	676
Epilepsy	147	150	158	168	174	184
Deafness	46	51	54	62	66	70
Malignant Disease	183	189	207	229	235	254
Chest Disease	267	270	274	278	279	283
Back Ailments	516	536	568	608	637	668
Heart Disease	429	437	449	467	471	481
Parkinsons Disease	46	48	51	52	53	54
Diabetes Melitus	109	114	122	130	137	142
Renal Disorders	31	31	33	35	36	38
AIDS	29	30	32	32	32	32
Skin Disease	24	25	25	28	30	32
Other	975	1,002	1,044	1,093	1,121	1,151
Alcohol Abuse	14	16	19	22	27	30
Other Mental Health Causes					0	
Psychosis	218	236	254	276	296	324
Psychoneurosis	146	170	192	229	267	313
Personality disorder	12	14	16	19	20	22
Dementia	30	31	33	33	31	31
Behavioural disorder	80	98	123	152	180	211
Severely mentally impaired	44	47	49	50	48	49

Note:

1. Figures are consistent with outturn expenditure as published in the DWP benefit expenditure tables.
2. Expenditure has been apportioned using disability type data from the DLA Quarterly Statistical Enquiry which is based on a 5 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.
3. Figures are in 2004–05 prices, calculated using the latest GDP deflator.
4. Figures are rounded to the nearest million pounds.
5. Totals may not sum due to rounding.
6. Figures for 2003–04 are estimated outturn.
7. The 'Other' category comprises of 25 conditions, including alcohol abuse. Alcohol abuse has been listed separately, along with a breakdown of the conditions covered by the 'Other Mental Health Causes' category to provide the equivalent breakdown to that provided in a related PQ, PQ 168151, PQ 168151 asks about mental illness which has been defined as psychosis, psychoneurosis, personality disorder or alcohol abuse.

Source:

Information and Analysis Directorate, Great Britain estimated expenditure on Disability Living Allowance in each financial year and disability type.

Disabled Workers

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Burnley over the last seven years. [168322]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Burnley, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, firefighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisers, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from

the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures his Department has introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Birkenhead over the last seven years. [166513]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Birkenhead, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, firefighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisers, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

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Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures have been introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Heywood and Middleton over the last seven years; and if he will make a statement. [168542]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Heywood and Middleton, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, firefighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisers, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Manchester, Gorton over the last seven years. [167349]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Manchester, Gorton, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, firefighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and

Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisors, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Stalybridge and Hyde over the last seven years. [168740]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Stalybridge and Hyde, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, firefighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisers, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

Female Poverty

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what proportion of women in each ethnic group are living in poverty, defined as below 60 per cent. of median income *(a)* before and *(b)* after housing costs. [166923]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The information is in the following tables.

Ethnic Group	*Percentage of adult women living below 60 per cent. of contemporary median income before housing costs*
White	16
Asian or Asian British	34
Of which:	
Indian	21
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	55
Black or Black British	26
Chinese, Mixed or Other	18
All Women	17

Ethnic Group	*Percentage of adult women living below 60 per cent. of contemporary median income after housing costs*
White	20
Asian or Asian British	40
Of which:	
Indian	23
Pakistani/Bangladeshi	64
Black or Black British	38
Chinese, Mixed or Other	28
All Women	21

Notes:

1. All figures are estimates and are taken from the Households Below Average Income (HBAI) series.
2. The data given are for 2002–03, and are taken from the Family Resources Survey.
3. Estimates are for Great Britain, and relate to both working-age and pensioner females.
4. The estimates are based on sample counts, which have been adjusted for non-response using multipurpose grossing factors that control for tenure, Council Tax band and a number of other variables. Estimates are subject to both sampling error, and to remaining variability in non-response, which is not corrected by the grossing regime.
5. The income measure used is weekly net (disposable) equivalised household income (that is to say income that is adjusted to reflect the composition of the household). Figures include the self-employed.
6. Caution should be taken when interpreting results for gender groups using HBAI data. HBAI attempts to measure living standards as determined by household income; consequently both partners in a couple will appear at the same position in the income distribution.
7. Ethnic categories published in HBAI 2002–03 are more detailed; results in this answer have been aggregated because of the additional breakdown for gender.
8. Figures for the 'Chinese, Mixed or Other' group are based on a smaller sample and should only be used as a guide.

Health and Safety

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many of the recommendations contained in the Health and Safety Commission Strategy Statement, Revitalising Health and Safety, published in June 2000 the Government have implemented. [167496]

Jane Kennedy: Of the 44 Action Points published in Revitalising Health and Safety, 34 have been implemented.

Housing Benefit (Payment Options)

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which direct payment options are *(a)* offered and *(b)* available to housing benefit claimants; and if he will make a statement. [160679]

Mr. Pond: Payment of Housing Benefit for private sector dwellings can be made either to the claimant or, where certain conditions are satisfied, direct to the landlord; Housing Benefit for local authority dwellings is paid as a rebate on the rent account. Individual local authorities have discretion in deciding the appropriate method of payment of housing benefit, taking into account tenants' circumstances, such as access to bank accounts.

Wave 8 of the Local Omnibus Survey, which is conducted with local authority managers, asked about payment methods for housing benefit; of those local authorities, which responded, the main method of payment was by cheque. Although 45 per cent. of responding local authorities said that they were not currently using automated credit transfer, 81 per cent. of those said that they had plans to introduce it. A copy of the survey has been placed in the Library.

We are currently undertaking Local Housing Allowance pathfinders in nine local authorities, under which payments are made directly to tenants. We are working with the pathfinder authorities and the British Banking Association to provide tenants with easier access to bank accounts.

Permitted Work Regulations

Mr. Denham: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants have had their right to permitted work restricted to £20 per week, having previously had higher earnings, since the introduction of the permitted work regulations in April 2002. [168828]

Maria Eagle: The information is not available.

Recruitment Advertising

Pete Wishart: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his Department's expenditure on recruitment advertising was in each of the last three years, broken down by publication; and what proportion of such expenditure was *(a)* to advertise vacant posts and *(b)* in the form of other general recruitment advertising. [155523]

Maria Eagle: The information is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Cereal/Animal Fodder Exports

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development pursuant to the answer from the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 129W, on animal fodder, what his policy is towards developing countries which export cereals and animal fodder. [168797]

Hilary Benn: The UK Government are committed to assisting developing countries that export agricultural products, including cereals and animal fodder, through improving market access and reducing trade-distorting subsidies. DFID continues to work for a fair and equitable international trading system for all agricultural products. In particular, the 49 Least Developed Countries have unlimited duty free access to the EU market under the 'Everything But Arms' agreement, except for rice, sugar and bananas, where limited arrangements apply until full liberalisation takes place. In addition, reforms to the EU's Common Agricultural Policy last June break the link between subsidy and production and hence reduce the damaging effect EU agricultural subsidies can have on developing countries' producers.

However, the largest potential gains for developing countries will come at the multilateral level. At the World Trade Organisation (WTO) Doha Ministerial meeting in 2001 it was agreed that agriculture negotiations would aim to achieve:

> "substantial improvements in market access; reductions of, with a view to phasing out, all forms of export subsidies; and substantial reductions in trade-distorting domestic support".

DFID is committed to ensure that these negotiations result in liberalisation that will benefit the world's poor.

China (Coercive Population Control)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) when he last raised the issue of coercive population control in China with his Chinese counterpart; and with what results; [168174]

(2) if he will make a statement on the practice of coercive population control by the Chinese authorities on the people of Tibet. [168179]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The UK Government have made it clear to the Chinese Government that we believe their family planning policies should be based on the principles of the International Conference on Population and Development; that is on the principle of informed choice, voluntarism, and consent and not coercion. In May 2002, the then Secretary of State for International Development raised the issues of coercive family planning programmes with her counterpart, and the Chinese authorities gave assurances that China was working towards relaxing the one-child policy. At that time Tibetans, as ethnic minorities, were allowed two children (rather than one) in urban areas, and there was legally no limit to the number of children herdsmen could have, although in practice many localities limited them to three.

The new population law of September 2002 reduced birth targets and respects the reproductive rights of couples to freely and responsibly choose the spacing and number of their children. However, it maintained financial incentives for small family size.

DFID funds the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), which is working to promote policy change within China towards meeting international standards, including the removal of social compensation fees. DFID funds are used to support independent monitoring and evaluation of the impact of UNFPA's work.

Democracy (Africa)

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development further to his recent statement to the all-party Africa Group, if he will list the governments in Africa that he regards as having been democratically elected. [168201]

Hilary Benn: DFID welcomes the fact that the number of free and fair elections in Africa has grown significantly in the last 30 years and real alternation of power is now taking place. Kenya, Senegal, Botswana, Namibia, Ghana, Mozambique and South Africa are all recent examples of African countries whose governments have been elected democratically. DFID also welcomes moves by the African Union to produce common standards on African elections based on international best practice, and we hope that, in time, they will increase further the number of free and fair elections in Africa.

Elections in Africa, as elsewhere, are usually monitored by independent electoral commissions who are responsible for their organisation and conduct. HMG does encourage the involvement of local civil society to monitor elections and has on occasion sent international observers as part of the wider international community's involvement in specific monitoring missions where these have been requested.

EU Development Assistance

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the non-governmental organisations involved in the delivery of EU Development Assistance projects in *(a)* Angola, *(b)* Burundi, *(c)* the Congo, *(d)* Eritrea, *(e)* Ethiopia, *(f)* Kenya, *(g)* Madagascar, *(h)* Malawi, *(i)* Mozambique, *(j)* Namibia, *(k)* Rwanda, *(l)* Somalia, *(m)* South Africa, *(n)* Sudan, *(o)* Tanzania, *(p)* Uganda, *(q)* Zambia and *(r)* Zimbabwe. [167191]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development does not maintain a record of the wide range of NGOs funded by the EU in delivering its development assistance programmes in sub-Saharan Africa. To obtain this information would incur a disproportionate cost.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance to participate in the 8th Ceramics Biennale in all African, Carribean and Pacific countries; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169412]

(2) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on Post Masa 2001 in West Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169413]

(3) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide funding for the film Zulu Love Letter; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169414]

(4) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to undertake preliminary work on regional refrom in African, Carribean and Pacific countries; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169415]

(5) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on the functioning of regional operational centre junior achievement in all African, Carribean and Pacific countries; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169416]

(6) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide training in numerical and radio recycling; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169417]

(7) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide a mobile numerical cinema in West Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169418]

(8) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to conduct a study of theatre festivals in Sub-Saharan Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169419]

(9) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the Sand School in Dabar, West Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169420]

(10) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to undertake youth development in Netherlands Antilles; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169421]

(11) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to deliver sustainable management of biodiversity in the Pacific; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169422]

(12) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to maintain tropical forest biodiversity in West Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169423]

(13) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to deliver forest law enforcement and governance is *(a)* West Africa, *(b)* Central Africa, *(c)* Eastern and Southern Africa and *(d)* the Indian Ocean; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169424]

(14) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on technological development for sustainable resource management: Cyber Tracker in *(a)* Central Africa, *(b)* Eastern and Southern Africa and *(c)* the Indian Ocean; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169425]

(15) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to implement terms of employment studies in Zimbabwe; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169426]

(16) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the primary education development plan in Tanzania; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169427]

(17) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance *(a)* to undertake capacity building in education in Ethiopia and *(b)* to establish a law faculty at Mekelle University in Ethiopia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169428]

(18) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to strengthen civil society in Comoros; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169429]

(19) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance *(a)* to support the Ministry of Finance in Botswana and *(b)* to upgrade Gaborone Technical College in Botswana; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169430]

(20) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide funding for *(a)* the film Comboio da Canhoca and *(b)* the film Na Cidade Vazia in Angola; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169431]

(21) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to deliver training to combat prostitution in Côte d'Ivoire; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169432]

(22) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* support decentralisation and *(b)* sponsor the Pan-African Cinema Festival in Burkina Faso; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169433]

(23) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to support cultural activities in *(a)* Gabon and *(b)* Sao Tomé and Principe; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169434]

(24) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to train air traffic controllers in Vanuatu; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169435]

(25) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to improve rural primary education facilities in Papua New Guinea; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169436]

(26) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct a new building for the Laukota Learners College in Fiji; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169437]

(27) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to combat AIDS, TB and malaria; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169438]

(28) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance entitled Immpact; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169474]

(29) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to end female genital mutilation; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169475]

(30) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to deliver economic diversification of the mining sector in Botswana; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169497]

(31) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide mining sector support in Gabon; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169498]

(32) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to repair energy transmission and distribution networks in Sierra Leone; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169499]

(33) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to re-open the titanium ore mine in Sierra Leone; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169500]

(34) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to strengthen and diversify the mining sector in Niger; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169501]

(35) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to repair the Novadhibou Port in Mauritania; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169502]

(36) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to re-equip the training institute in Guinea-Conakry; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169503]

(37) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide mining sector support in Ghana; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169504]

(38) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to repair and maintain roads in Burkina Faso; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169505]

(39) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to undertake a preparatory study of infrastructure in Benin; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169506]

(40) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide mining sector support in Papua New Guinea; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169507]

(41) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to vaccinate against porcine flu in Cuba; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169508]

(42) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to expand rice production in Caribbean countries; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169509]

(43) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to raise the efficiency of banana production in Caribbean countries; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169510]

(44) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct three fishing ports in New Caledonia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169511]

(45) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project, financed by EU Development Assistance, to develop and repair urban markets in Zambia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169512]

(46) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to fund development in Durban and surrounding areas of South Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169513]

(47) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to train banana producers in West Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169514]

(48) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to reinforce food security in Oriente Province of Cuba; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169515]

(49) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support school canteens and reinforce food security governance in Haiti; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169516]

(50) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to raise the efficiency of banana production in the countries of Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169517]

(51) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to raise the efficiency of banana production in Cameroon; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169518]

(52) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to implement forestry programmes in Chad; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169519]

(53) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to improve food security in Niger; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169520]

(54) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to promote rural development in Benin; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169521]

(55) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to promote hub rural development in several west African countries; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169522]

(56) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to devise an integrated pest management programme for countries of Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169523]

(57) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to devise a fisheries management plan for countries of Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169524]

(58) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to undertake land and water research in countries of Eastern and Southern Africa and the Indian Ocean; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169525]

(59) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to supply 40,000 tonnes of corn to Malawi; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169527]

(60) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to supply 183,000 tonnes of cereals to Ethiopia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169528]

(61) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to supply 24,000 tonnes of cereals to Eritrea; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169529]

(62) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to improve public financial management and accounting in Cuba; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169530]

(63) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to implement sustainable agricultural development in several Pacific countries; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169531]

(64) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support farmers' organisations in Vanuatu; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169532]

(65) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to supply 90,000 tonnes of cereals and 1,300 tonnes of seeds to Zimbabwe; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169533]

(66) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to deliver a pluriannual programme on easy currency supporting actions and technical assistance; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169534]

(67) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to promote tourism from the Basque countries to Saint Pierre and Miquelon; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169535]

(68) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support business opportunities in Burkina Faso; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169536]

(69) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support community-based projects in Côte d'Ivoire; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169537]

(70) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support *(a)* the Caribbean Regional Trade Development Programme and *(b)* the Caribbean Regional Tourism Development Programme; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169538]

(71) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to combat racism in the Central African Republic; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169539]

(72) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to prevent torture in Cameroon; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169540]

(73) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* protect human rights, *(b)* restore peace and *(c)* reconcile divided communities in Burundi; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169541]

(74) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* monitor elections, *(b)* support the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *(c)* report human rights abuses and *(d)* rehabilitate victims of torture in Sierra Leone; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169542]

(75) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to maintain the peace settlement in Angola; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169543]

(76) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* combat racism in Rwanda and *(b)* fund legal trials at Gacaca; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169544]

(77) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to tackle debt arrears and reduce poverty in Niger; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169547]

(78) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to reduce poverty in Mali; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169548]

(79) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to reduce poverty in Jamaica through structural adjustment; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169549]

(80) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to prevent torture in *(a)* Senegal, *(b)* Mali, *(c)* Burkina Faso, *(d)* Gambia, *(e)* Ghana, *(f)* Nigeria, *(g)* Togo, *(h)* Côte d'Ivoire, *(i)* Sierra Leone and *(j)* Benin; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169550]

(81) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance on the abolition of the death penalty in *(a)* Botswana, *(b)* Cameroon, *(c)* Ghana, *(d)* Kenya, *(e)* Lesotho, *(f)* Malawi, *(g)* Nigeria, *(h)* Swaziland, *(i)* Tanzania, *(j)* Uganda, *(k)* Zambia and *(l)* Zimbabwe; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169551]

(82) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on the abolition of the death penalty in the Caribbean; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169552]

(83) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to ensure free and fair elections in Jamaica; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169553]

(84) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to combat racism in the Dominican Republic; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169554]

(85) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to develop democracy in Cuba; and what assessment he has made of the effectiveness of the project; [169555]

(86) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to strengthen civil society in Haiti; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169556]

(87) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* promote good governance and *(b)* support the Human Rights Commission in Fiji; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169557]

(88) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* prevent torture and *(b)* promote good governance in Zimbabwe; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169558]

(89) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to monitor elections in Madagascar; and what recent assessment he has made of the project; [169559]

(90) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* prevent torture and *(b)* monitor elections in Kenya; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169560]

(91) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* strengthen parliamentary institutions and *(b)* support community-based projects in Ethiopia; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169561]

(92) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* protect human rights, *(b)* strengthen the judicial system and *(c)* combat racism in the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169562]

(93) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to monitor elections in the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169563]

(94) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to reduce poverty in *(a)* Ethiopia and *(b)* Mozambique; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169564]

(95) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to tackle debt arrears and reduce poverty in Burundi; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169565]

(96) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to implement an emergency programme on debt arrears, roads, drugs provision, electricity and the provision of health and education in Madagascar; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169566]

(97) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to implement an emergency programme to tackle debt arrears to the African Development Bank in the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169567]

(98) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to tackle debt arrears in the Central African Republic; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169568]

(99) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to reduce poverty in Burkina Faso; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169569]

(100) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to tackle internal debt arrears in Côte d' Ivoire; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169570]

(101) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide complementary support to the health sector in Zambia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169571]

(102) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* raise HIV/AIDS awareness and *(b)* pursue an AIDS vaccine initiative in South Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169572]

(103) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to provide complementary support to the health sector in *(a)* Cameroon, *(b)* the Central African Republic and *(c)* the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169573]

(104) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to fund reproductive healthcare in Nigeria; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169574]

(105) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to make blood transfusions safe in Niger; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169575]

(106) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to reduce illicit drug dealing in the Caribbean; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169576]

(107) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on participation in the Barcelona Conference; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169577]

(108) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on maternal health; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169578]

(109) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on youth HIV/AIDS; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169579]

(110) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on UNFPA/IPPF; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169580]

(111) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to maintain the cease-fire agreement in the Sudan; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169586]

(112) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to undertake a national census in Sierra Leone; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169591]

(113) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* provide local government training and *(b)* improve the treament of prisoners in Togo; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169592]

(114) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support elections in Nigeria; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169593]

(115) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the regionally sponsored peace talks in Côte d' Ivoire; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169594]

(116) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support peace talks in Kenya; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169595]

(117) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support elections in Madagascar; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169596]

(118) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* support the peace process and *(b)* undertake mine clearance in Eritrea and Ethiopia; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169597]

(119) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support elections and protect human rights in Congo—Brazzaville; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169598]

(120) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* support the African Union sponsored peace talks and *(b)* conduct a national census in the Central African Republic; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169599]

(121) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide a financial information system in Ethiopia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169600]

(122) what his Department's institutional was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to deliver the first instrumental support programme in the Democratic Republic of the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169601]

(123) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by the EU Development Assistance on human rights, democratisation and elections in the Congo; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169602]

(124) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the National Institute of Statistics in Angola; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169603]

(125) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by the EU Development Assistance to support the National Authorising Officer in *(a)* the Central African Republic and *(b)* Gabon; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169604]

(126) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support NGOs and civil society in Togo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169605]

(127) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the National Authorising Officer in Sierra Leone; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169606]

(128) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by the EU Development Assistance to deliver an economic management capacity project in Nigeria; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169607]

(129) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to *(a)* support the National Authorising Officer and *(b)* manage public expenses on the Ivory Coast; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169608]

(130) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the National Authorising Officer in Guinea; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169609]

(131) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the Launch of Communes in Benin; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169610]

(132) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support non state actors in Vanuatu; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169611]

(133) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the National Authorising Officer in Trinidad and Tobago; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169612]

(134) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the mission to the organisation of American states in Haiti; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169613]

(135) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the National Authorising Officer in Antigua and Barbuda; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169614]

(136) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to repair the Livingstone and Lusaka airports; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169615]

(137) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct the Kampala bypass in Uganda; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169616]

(138) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance for training and funding government transport departments in Rwanda; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169617]

(139) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct the Karonga-Chiveta road in Malawi; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169618]

(140) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct *(a)* the Addis Ababa-Jima road and *(b)* the Kombolcha-Mille road in Ethiopia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169619]

(141) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 projects financed by EU Development Assistance to construct roads in cities in Djibouti; and what assessment he has made of the projects; [169620]

(142) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to repair the road network in the Democratic Republic of Congo; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169621]

(143) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to build the Bouar to Garoua Boulai road in the Central African Republic; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169622]

(144) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support road maintenance in the Central African Republic; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169623]

(145) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct the Freetown to Conakry highway in Sierra Leone; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169624]

(146) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to train and fund government transport departments in Senegal; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169625]

(147) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to plan the construction of roads in Mauritania; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169626]

(148) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to maintain the road network in Guinea Bissau; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169627]

(149) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to plan the construction of roads in Burkina Faso; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169628]

(150) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct the Cotonou bypass in Benin; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169629]

(151) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to reconstruct a harbour in Antigua; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169630]

(152) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance on audit-fed interests in all ACP countries; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169631]

(153) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the OCT/EU annual forum for all overseas countries and territories; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169632]

(154) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support the Regional Authorising Officer in the Pacific region; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169633]

(155) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to provide consultancy to non state actors in the Sudan; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169634]

(156) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support *(a)* reconstruction and development and *(b)* the Conflict and Governance Fund in South Africa; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169635]

(157) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to support development planning and non state actors in Nambia; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169636]

(158) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct a tertiary level college in St Vincent and Grenadines; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169638]

(159) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to use satellite imaging for planning in Haiti; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169639]

(160) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to build low income housing in Guyana; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169640]

(161) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to construct a new airport in Montserrat; and what assessment he has made of the project; [169641]

(162) what his Department's involvement was in the 2002 project financed by EU Development Assistance to repair the road network in Anguilla; and what assessment he has made of the project. [169642]

Hilary Benn: I refer the hon. Member for Buckingham to the response I gave him on Thursday 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 602W.

HIV/AIDS (Rwanda)

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps he is taking to support rape victims living with HIV/AIDS in Rwanda; and if he will make a statement. [169145]

Hilary Benn: HIV/AIDS is a serious problem in Rwanda. Rwanda does not yet have the health infrastructure required to effectively deliver anti-retroviral therapy (ART) countrywide. But the Government have produced a comprehensive Strategic Framework for HIV/AIDS Control and all the major donors, including the Clinton Foundation, the Global Fund and the World Bank, who have committed to support it. This framework includes the progressive provision of ART to all who need it, through a strengthened network of health centres. Through a partnership between the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS (UNAIDS) and five of the leading multinational pharmaceutical companies (including the Accelerating Access to HIV/AIDS Care, Treatment And Support Initiative), Rwanda is one of the countries that have reached agreement with manufacturers to significantly reduce drug prices in the context of its national HIV care and treatment plans.

The UK has committed £25 million through the International Partnership Against AIDS in Africa Programme (IPAA) to increase capacity in certain National HIV/AIDS Commissions, including Rwanda. DFID is currently considering whether we can build on this engagement, to ensure that Rwanda has the capacity to manage and direct the various programmes of support.

DFID is also providing direct assistance to the survivors of the genocide through the Government's Survivors Fund (FARG). This assistance is currently running at some £200,000 per annum, and planned

additional support up to £850,000 will enable FARG to broaden the services it provides to include advice and counselling on issues around HIV/AIDS.

I have had specific concern over the inequity in access to Anti-Retroviral Treatment between the defendants and the witnesses at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR), which is considering crimes committed during the genocide. While defendants have access to health care including ART, witnesses generally do not. I wrote to the Secretary General of the United Nations, Kofi Annan, asking how the United Nations and the international community could work to resolve this inequity. The UN Secretary General replied, reporting that UNAIDS/WHO were identifying suitable health care providers, but seeking assistance from the UK to fund ART treatment for witnesses. I have responded positively and offered DFID assistance up to £200,000 for health care (including ART) to be provided in Kigali for ICTR witnesses and others called by the tribunal.

Iraq

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures his Department have taken since the end of the war in Iraq to restore *(a)* drinking water supplies, *(b)* sewerage infrastructure and *(c)* electricity supplies. [166870]

Hilary Benn: The Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) in conjunction with the various Iraqi Ministries, the UN, bilateral donors and civil society have been engaged in significant efforts that have led to improvements in drinking water, sewerage and electricity provision across the whole of Iraq. The CPA website www.cpa-iraq.org gives weekly updates on developments in electricity supply and other essential services.

The UK is contributing £17.2 million to the Emergency Infrastructure Programme in southern Iraq, which is focused on reinstating essential infrastructure in the power, fuel and water sectors. DFID has also provided £500,000 to CARE UK for their Integrated Water and Health Relief Project, which has improved the quantity and quality of drinking water to about 100,000 people in Najaf Governorate, 170 km south of Baghdad. More information on CARE UK's work in Iraq can be found at: www.careinternational.org.uk

Particularly significant in the water, sewerage and electricity sectors have been the efforts of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and UNICEF. Details of their interventions can be found on the following websites:

www.usaid-gov/iraq

www.iq.undp.org

www.unicef.org/index.html

The UN and World Bank undertook a comprehensive needs assessment in conjunction with the Iraqi authorities, which formed the basis for the pledges offered by the international community at the Madrid conference. The international community is now seeking to take forward this further reconstruction effort and the International Reconstruction Financing Facility for Iraq (IRFFI) has been established. The UK has made an early contribution to the IRFFI of £70 million.

Maldives

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much grant-in-aid the United Kingdom gave to the Maldives in each year since 1997. [167273]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* UK bilateral aid to the Maldives in each financial year since 1997–98 has been:

£

	Technical cooperation	*Grants and other aid in kind*	*Total*
1997–1998	88	204	292
1998–1999	70	240	310
1999–2000	44	248	292
2000–2001	69	217	286
2001–2002	17	66	83
2002–2003	16	180	195

Source:
Statistics for International Development

Data for 2003–04 are not yet published.

The EU did not make any development assistance grants to the Maldives, which could be attributable to the UK, in the period 1997–2001. Figures for 2002 are not yet published.

Nigeria

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what support his Department is providing to people displaced by violence against Christians in Nigeria. [166917]

Hilary Benn: DFID Nigeria provides limited humanitarian assistance to Nigerians displaced by violence. In 2002 assistance was provided (approx. £233,000) through the Red Cross to victims of communal violence in Benue state. DFID Nigeria has recently approved support (£100,000) to Save the Children Fund Nigeria (SCF) to train Nigeria's emergency response organizations to ensure children are protected and their needs addressed in an emergency (including violent conflict). The Africa Conflict Prevention Pool supports Coventry Cathedral's International Centre for Reconciliation's work (£300,000 over three years) to prevent religious conflict throughout Nigeria.

Population Initiatives

Mr. David Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money has been given to *(a)* the UN Population Fund and *(b)* the International Planned Parenthood Federation in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [168171]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* DFID spending is as follows, for the last five financial years (1999–2000 to 2003–2004):

A. UN Population Fund:

	£ million
Total for period	106.263
1999–2000	15.0
2000–2001	40.050
2001–2002	24.213
2002–2003	9.0
2003–2004	18.0

B. International Planned Parenthood Federation:

	£ million
Total for period	30.5
1999–2000	5.5
2000–2001	5.5
2001–2002	4.5
2002–2003	4.5
2003–2004[1]	10.5

Notes:
[1] £4.5 million in 2003 and £6.0 in 2004

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development in which countries the Government are supporting programmes run by *(a)* the UN Population Fund and *(b)* the International Planned Parenthood Federation. [168172]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The Government provide core contributions to both the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) in support of their global activities. UNFPA currently operates in 140 countries, supporting women, men and young people to promote reproductive health issues as well as combating violence against women. IPPF, the world's largest voluntary organisation in sexual and reproductive health and rights, has a network of almost 150 civil society organisations in over 164 countries, all committed to promoting the rights of women and men to decide freely, the number and spacing of their children and the right to the highest possible level of sexual and reproductive health.

Reproductive Health

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will make a statement on Government support for reproductive health programmes in Peru between 1990 and 2000. [168173]

Hilary Benn *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* During the 1990s, DFID financed five projects in Peru supporting reproductive health. These were:

(a) the Multi-Sectoral Population Project (1996–2002—£2,188,000);

(b) the Contraceptives Supply Project (1994–98—£1,402,000);

(c) the Post-Abortion Care Project (1997–2002—£349,000);

(d) the Andean Reproductive Health Initiative, co-financed with the European Commission (1998–2002—£270,000); and

(e) a Small Initiatives Fund (1997–98—£109,000).

The purpose of these projects was to extend the coverage and quality of basic reproductive health and family planning services, in particular for Peru's poorer and more marginalised people. The projects helped develop the capacity of the Ministry of Health to formulate policy on and deliver these health services. The main overall objective was to lower Peru's high rates of maternal and infant mortality.

St. Helena

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what discussions his Department has had with each of the four bidders for St. Helena's Air Access Project. [168384]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: I wrote direct to the four respondents on 14 April to notify them of the evaluation outcome and to offer them meetings. Atkins Management Consultants, in their capacity as advisers to the St. Helena Government and DFID, have had various contacts with all respondents in the course of the evaluation process that is now complete.

Although DFID has had some discussions in 2002 with the St. Helena Leisure Corporation Ltd. (SHELCO), which was one of the four respondents to last year's international invitation for expressions of interest, we have not yet met direct with SHELCO or other respondents since receipt of their outline proposals. We did write to SHELCO in January and March of this year in response to specific queries.

Togo

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance he has offered the Government of Togo to reduce levels of child prostitution in the country. [167825]

Hilary Benn: DFID has had no bilateral programme of assistance with the Government of Togo. The European Commission (EC) suspended development co-operation with the Togolese Government in 1993, but provides limited support to development projects via European Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs). To the best of DFID's knowledge, no EC-funded NGO project in the last five years has specifically involved combating child prostitution.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Equal Opportunities and Rights at Work

Mr. Connarty: To ask the Leader of the House what assessment has been made of the amendments required to the rules of the House to ensure that all equal opportunity and rights at work related laws apply to hon. Members and their staff. [167854]

Mr. Hain: Hon. Members are, in their capacity as employers, subject to employment rights legislation and in particular equality legislation in the same way as other employers. The House authorities have a role in encouraging good practice. For example, the Department of Finance and Administration recently circulated information about the implications of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995.

Hon. Members themselves are holders of elective office and are not employees for the purpose of employment rights legislation.

PRIME MINISTER

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Prime Minister what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Office on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169009]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 27 January 2003, *Official Report*, column 564W.

For 2002–03, the total cost of official entertainment to my Office at 10 Downing street and Chequers was £62,709.

Final figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

Downing Street Staff

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister if he will place in the Library an up-to-date organogram of 10 Downing street, showing individuals *(a)* functions, *(b)* lines of accountability and *(c)* classification as civil servant or special adviser. [167796]

The Prime Minister: An up-to-date copy of the No. 10 organogram has been placed in the House Library.

Dr. A. Q. Khan

Harry Cohen: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 757W, what reports he has received of the involvement of UK companies and individuals in the network of suppliers of nuclear components associated with Dr. A. Q. Khan; and if he will make a statement. [169149]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing further to add to my previous answer.

Government Buildings (Party Use)

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer to hon. Member for Bexhill and Battle, (Gregory Barker) on 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1144W, on party use of Government buildings, what income has been received from the Labour Party for each year from 1997 to date. [167743]

The Prime Minister: Political events held in Downing street are conducted in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 65 of the Ministerial Code. The costs of such events are met directly by the Labour Party.

Iraq

Mr. Dalyell: To ask the Prime Minister what recent assessment he has made of *(a)* Shia, *(b)* Kurdish and *(c)* Sunni opinion towards the Coalition forces in Iraq. [167657]

The Prime Minister: The vast majority of Iraqis want a prosperous, stable, democratic Iraq. We are in constant dialogue and discussion with the key groups in Iraq and the process being conducted by the Coalition, with increased UN involvement, for the transition of power and the implementation of a constitution, has a broad basis of consent from these various groups.

Kean Inquiry

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Prime Minister whether Her Majesty's Government have *(a)* been approached to provide information, *(b)* provided information, *(c)* made representations and *(d)* intends to make representations to the commission of inquiry into the terrorist attacks on the United States chaired by Thomas Kean; and if he will make a statement. [168182]

The Prime Minister: The UK has not provided formal witness statements to the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States (9/11 Commission). Where we have been asked for information by the Commission we have provided it and there have been a number of meetings between UK and Commission officials.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Prime Minister whether Her Majesty's Government has *(a)* been approached to provide information, *(b)* provided information, *(c)* made representations and *(d)* intends to make representations to the US Administration in connection with the commission of inquiry into the terrorist attacks on the United States chaired by Thomas Kean; and if he will make a statement. [168183]

The Prime Minister: We have not been approached nor have we provided any information to the US Administration in connection with the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States (9/11 Commission). Officials at the British embassy in Washington have discussed the progress of the Commission with the US Administration informally, as part of our normal business.

Lord Levy

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister for what reasons Lord Levy's responsibilities as his special envoy have been widened to encompass education-related matters. [167749]

The Prime Minister: Lord Levy's responsibilities as special envoy were set out by my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary on 9 July 2001, *Official Report*, column 350W. With regard to education, Lord Levy has helped support the Government's programme to establish City Academies.

Ministerial Responsibility

Richard Ottaway: To ask the Prime Minister which Minister is responsible for the environmental impact of the Government's energy policy. [168866]

The Prime Minister: Stephen Timms, Minister for Energy, E-commerce and Postal Services at the Department and Trade and Industry, has responsibility for the environmental impact of the Government's energy policy.

He works closely on this issue with Elliott Morley, Minister for the Environment and Agri-Environment and Lord Whitty, Minister for Food, Farming and Sustainable Energy at the Department of the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

HEALTH

Care Homes

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the required criteria are for a complaint about a care home to be investigated; and if he will make a statement. [166914]

Dr. Ladyman: Regulations made under the Care Standards Act 2000, require care homes to have arrangements for dealing with complaints made by, or on behalf of, those seeking or receiving any of the services provided by that establishment or agency. The Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) is responsible for ensuring that establishments and agencies set-up and maintain comprehensive, effective and robust procedures and communicate these to people using the service and the public.

All care homes in England are regulated (registered and inspected) by the CSCI in accordance with statutory regulations and national minimum standards. Anyone who has concerns about a care home can raise these with the CSCI. The CSCI will decide what appropriate action to take in response to information received. The CSCI also has discretionary powers to investigate formal complaints but will only do this where it would inform its role as regulator.

If a resident's care is commissioned by the local authority, complaints can also be made through the statutory social services complaints procedure. If the local authority has serious concerns, it could decide not to commission services from a particular care home.

Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the estimated *(a)* inpatient, *(b)* outpatient hospital, *(c)* primary care and *(d)* investigation costs of treating chronic obstructive pulmonary disease were in 2003–04. [166705]

Dr. Ladyman: The tables show information relating to the national average unit cost in England for in-patient and out-patients respectively with chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and bronchitis for 2002–03.

In-patient

Patient type	*HRG code*	*HRG label*	*National average unit cost (£)*
Elective Inpatient	D20	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease of Bronchitis	1,177
Non-Elective Inpatient	D20	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease of Bronchitis	1,136
Day Case	D20	Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease or Bronchitis	404

Out-patient

Patient type	*Specialty code*	*Specialty*	*National average unit cost (£)*
First attendance	340	Respiratory medicine	163
Follow up attendance	340	Respiratory medicine	114

Information relating to primary care and investigation costs is not able to be separately identified from current central returns.

Departmental Procurement (Sea Bass)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to source sea bass used in catering outlets for which his Department is responsible from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167542]

Mr. Hutton: The National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency has a national contract for the supply of fish, including sea bass. All sea bass supplied to the NHS comes either from fish farms in the Aegean or is caught by line. No sea bass provided in the NHS is caught by pair trawlers.

General Practitioners

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many whole time equivalent NHS plan group general practitioners per 100,000 population there were in *(a)* each region, *(b)* each strategic health authority and *(c)* each primary care trust in (i) 2002 and (ii) 2003. [167424]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the number of whole time equivalent general practitioners (excluding GP retainers and GP registrars) per 100,000 population in each government office region, each strategic health authority, and in each primary care trust in 2002 and 2003 has been placed in the Library.

Infection Control

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what standards the National Care Standards Commission has set for care homes on infection control; and how these standards are monitored centrally. [165248]

Dr. Ladyman: Standards for infection control in care homes are contained in the relevant National Minimum Standards (NMS) for care homes and are set by the Secretary of State for Health. A copy of the NMS is available in the Library.

The Commission for Social Care Inspection, which replaced the National Care Standards Commission from 1 April 2004, is responsible for ensuring that homes comply with the care homes regulations, subject to the NMS being taken into account.

Intermediate Care Beds

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many intermediate care beds have been created since June 2001. [167708]

Dr. Ladyman: The information is not available in the format requested.

However, as at the 31 December 2003, there were an additional 4,100 intermediate care beds, compared to the 1999–2000 baseline.

Mifegyne

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health in what year and in which area health authority each of the fatal suspected adverse reactions associated with the use of Mifegyne were reported; what age the women whose deaths gave rise to the reports of fatal suspected adverse reactions associated with the use of Mifegyne were; and what the post mortems concluded was the cause of death in each case. [167257]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As with all medicines, the safety of Mifegyne (mifepristone) is continuously monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA). To date, the MHRA has received two reports of suspected adverse drug reactions (ADRs) with a fatal outcome.

In line with the "Code of Practice on Access to Government Information", we are unable to release any information that may possibly enable any patient to be identified and, in cases such as these, cause further unnecessary distress to the family. I am, therefore, unable to provide my hon. Friend with specific details concerning these cases.

National Service Frameworks

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health with reference to the 2003 Report of Progress and Future Challenges on the National Service Framework for Older People, what written policies were found that discriminated against older people; what progress has been made in amending these policies; and if he will make a statement. [168644]

Dr. Ladyman: A report on the local age discrimination audits of written policies in the national health service was published in April 2002. Copies are available in the Library. Reports of local action to address issues found should be covered in each local health organisation's annual report. Support for continued local action has included working to support the King's Fund to develop and publish "Auditing Age Discrimination—a practical approach to promoting equality in health and social care" in February 2003, the development of statistical tools to allow comparisons of local treatment and care by age group and training events around the country on age discrimination run with Age Concern.

The Healthcare Commission is to undertake a review of progress on implementation of the national service framework for older people, including age discrimination from July 2004 to June 2005.

Neurosurgical Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many new neurosurgical consultancy posts are predicted for each of the next five years. [167065]

Mr. Hutton: The Department does not have figures for planned numbers of posts.

If the number of specialist registrars in neurosurgery who are due to qualify in the next five years is taken into account, along with the likely levels of retirement and other recruitment and retention factors, it is expected that there would be sufficient trained specialists in neurosurgery to increase consultant numbers by around a quarter by 2008.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the latest average time between the award of a Certificate of Completion of Specialist Training and appointment as a consultant for neurosurgical trainees is. [167066]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally.

NHS Hospitals

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's policy is on the introduction of single rooms in NHS hospitals in England. [167415]

Mr. Hutton: The proportion of single rooms in new hospital developments should aim to be 50 per cent., but should not fall below 20 per cent. and must be a higher percentage than the facilities they are replacing. The policy and design guidance for the provision of single rooms in mental health accommodation is 100 per cent.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost of the patient environment and assessment team inspections of hospital food and cleanliness was in each year since the inspections began. [167423]

Mr. Hutton: Since the patient environment action team (PEAT) programme commenced in 2000, over 3,000 inspections have been undertaken involving over 700 assessors. The PEAT programme is a key element of national health service inspection and performance assessment processes, and the results of PEAT feed directly into the star ratings managed by the Healthcare Commission.

With very few exceptions, PEAT assessors are volunteers whose costs are met by their host organisations. Therefore, while there are costs associated with this work, they are not collected centrally.

NHS Staff

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how figures for returners to the NHS will take account of multiple re-entry by some individuals. [168068]

Mr. Hutton: Between 1997 and 2003, the number of nurses and doctors working in the national health service increased by 67,500 nurses and 19,400 doctors. Returners to the NHS form one component of overall growth, including the very few who may return more than once.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many whole time equivalent *(a)* radiologists and *(b)* radiographers were employed by the NHS on 30 September 2003. [168154]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Between September 1997 and 2003, the number of whole-time equivalent clinical radiology consultants has increased by 22 per cent., diagnostic radiographers have increased by 12 per cent. and therapeutic radiographers have increased by 15 per cent.

Hospital, public health medicine and community health service (HCHS): Medical staff in the clinical radiology specialty by grade—England at 30 September 2003—whole time equivalents

Clinical radiology	*Number*
All staff	2,505
of which:	
Consultant	1,669
Non Cousultant Career Grades[1]	28
Doctors in Training[2]	799
Hospital Practitioner/Clinical Assistant	9

[1] Non Consultant Career Grades consists of Associate Specialist and Staff Grade.
[2] Doctors in Training consists of the Registrar Group, Senior House Officers and House Officers.
Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff within the specified areas of work in England as at 30 September 2003

Radiography (diagnostic)	*Number*
Qualified staff (whole time equivalent)	9,642
Qualified staff (headcount)	11,687
Radiography (therapeutic)	
Qualified staff (whole time equivalent)	1,469
Qualified staff (headcount)	1,657

Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce census.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many full-time equivalent cardiologists were working in the NHS in each year since 1999. [168363]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is shown in the table.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS). Staff within the cardiology specialty

England[1]						*whole time equivalents*
	1999	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*December 2003*
All staff	1,065	1,154	1,233	1,395	1,549	n/a
of which						
Consultant	425	483	512	561	609	617

[1] Data as at 30 September each year except December data which is at 31 December.
n/a = not available. This is due to December being a mini census and collecting consultants only.
The number of whole-time equivalent consultants has increased by 192, or 45 per cent. between September 1999 and December 2003.
Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce census.

NHS Trusts

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS trusts in England have equipment libraries. [167426]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not held centrally.

Nightingale Wards

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list NHS trusts which have yet fully to eliminate Nightingale wards. [166655]

Mr. Hutton: In line with "Shifting the Balance" of Power and initiatives to reduce bureaucracy for the national health service, data collections under estates return information collection take place annually. Information for March 2004 is currently being collected and I will write to the hon. Member when the analysis is complete.

Occupational Health

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his Department's policy is on encouraging businesses to invest in occupational health services; and if he will make a statement. [167410]

Ms Rosie Winterton: With over 33 million working days lost each year, the Department's policy, together with that of other Departments, in particular, the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP), the Health and Safety Commission/Executive (HSC/E) and the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI), is extremely supportive of all businesses which invest in occupational health services to improve the health of their employees. For example, in 1999, the Department launched the healthy workplace initiative to promote health in the workplace; and, in November 2001, a new occupational health service, called NHS Plus, a network of 106 national health service occupational health departments which sell a range of occupational health services to small and medium sized enterprises across England.

In addition, the Department fully endorses the cross government commitments to both reducing ill health caused by work and to help people access work espoused in the new HSC/E's "Strategy for Health and Safety 2010 and beyond". The Department also supports other Government Departments' initiatives, which encourage businesses to develop occupational health services, such as the DTI's "Partnership at Work" scheme.

Patient Records

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of patients have online secure access to their electronic patient records. [167702]

Mr. Hutton: Currently, no patients have online or electronic access to their medical records.

This functionality is planned as part of the national health service care records service that will begin to be rolled out from summer 2004, with phased implementation up to 2010.

The Department is exploring different ways that patients can access their own records through the "HealthSpace" project, which is supported by NHS Direct Online. In future, the intention is to provide "HealthSpace" as the gateway through which users can access a summary of their NHS care record when it becomes available electronically. The facilities in "HealthSpace" required to do this will build over time,

with full implementation expected by the end of 2008. The secure authentication, access and review of any electronic patient records is of paramount concern and will be both proven and robust before any system can go live.

Potassium Chloride Solution

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures his Department is taking to persuade manufacturers of potassium chloride solution to redesign packaging to avoid adverse incidents in hospital; and if he will make a statement. [167406]

Mr. Hutton: The National Patient Safety Agency has worked with practitioners, the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the pharmaceutical industry to agree new labelling standards for strong potassium chloride solutions requiring a distinctive red 'K' on these products, with suitable warnings.

Labelling standards have also been agreed for potassium chloride infusion products to help distinguish them from infusions that do not contain potassium.

The National Health Service Purchasing and Supply Agency has already written to all current contracted suppliers of medicinal products to say that it will, in future, award contracts to reflect the application of MHRA guidance on labelling of products, including potassium chloride solutions.

Pressure Ulcers

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department is taking to cut the cost of pressure ulcers in the NHS. [167404]

Dr. Ladyman: A pressure ulcer risk assessment and prevention guideline was published by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) in April 2001. An updated version of the guideline was published on 22 October 2003. The guideline outlines best practice for health professionals caring for individuals who are vulnerable to or at risk of developing pressure ulcers.

A wound care package of guidelines is also currently being developed by NICE, which will include a guideline on pressure ulcer treatment.

Short Notice Appointments Guidance

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which NHS trusts do not follow Department of Health guidance on short notice appointments; and what action he plans to take. [167709]

Mr. Hutton: We expect all national health service organisations to comply with waiting times guidance on reasonable offers of an appointment or an offer of admission, issued in dataset change notice 07/2003, February 2003. As part of its recent spot-check exercise, the Audit Commission found a small number of trusts were not fully complying with this guidance. Issues identified by the spot-checks will be addressed in action plans agreed between local auditors and trusts.

Stationery

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on (1) what date his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste; and what measures he has put in place to ensure that the targets are met; [165446]

(2) what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [165447]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department procures all its printing needs, including the provision of paper, from its supplier roster. All of these providers are aware of the Government commitment to supply publications on recycled paper and the Department makes the supplier selection based on the most cost-effective quotation—as such the actual brand of recycled and environmentally friendly paper and its specifications is left to the printer. Therefore the Department is unable to make a detailed statement on the information requested.

The Department's standard copying paper is 100 per cent. recycled, using 80 per cent., post consumer waste. This exceeds the Quick Wins target of a minimum of 75 per cent., post consumer waste.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167631]

Mr. Hutton: The Department welcomes the establishment of the central point of expertise on timber (CPET), and believes it will be a spur for widening the demand for legal and sustainable timber. Tenders for operating the first phase of CPET have been received by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs and a contract should be in place before the end of May. Improved guidance, including advice on certification schemes, should be available by the end of August.

Waiting Lists

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what recent analysis has been carried out of waiting times for child and adolescent psychology services; and if he will make a statement. [168666]

Dr. Ladyman: Information is not collected in the format requested. Children and young people receive treatment for mental health problems in a wide range of health care settings. We are aware that in some areas, and in some specialities, waiting times for child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) are unacceptably long. The development of CAMHS is one of our priorities. In the three years to March 2006 we will be investing an additional £300 million in CAMHS, which will help reduce waiting times.

In 2004–05, we are allocating a total of £67 million to local authorities for CAMHS and £20 million to primary care trusts (PCTs) to further develop CAMHS. Derbyshire county council will receive £521,000 and the Derby Dales and south Derbyshire PCT will receive £27,000.

HOME DEPARTMENT

NHS (African Workers)

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the maximum period of time is that nationals of sub-Saharan African countries are permitted to work in the NHS. [164761]

Mr. Browne: Immigration regulations do not place an upper limit on the amount of time that a non-EEA national may work in the NHS, provided relevant requirements of the Immigration Rules are met. NHS employers who wish to employ any non-EEA nationals in the UK may apply for a work permit for a maximum period of five years. A non-EEA national that completes four years in continuous work permit employment may qualify for indefinite leave to remain in the UK.

Afghan Asylum Seekers

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether it is his policy to remove failed Afghan asylum seekers; and if he will make a statement. [161620]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 15 March 2004]:* The Home Office determines asylum and human rights applications from Afghan nationals on their individual merits according to the UK's obligations under the terms of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and the European Convention on Human Rights.

If an application is refused, there is a right of appeal to the independent appellate authorities against that decision. Should a claim be refused and any appeal be unsuccessful that means that, for that individual, return to Afghanistan would be safe. We consider it reasonable to expect an individual in that position to return to Afghanistan.

The Government's preferred option for repatriating Afghan asylum applicants whose asylum claims have been rejected and appeal rights exhausted is assisted voluntary return, in line with the Tripartite Memorandum of Understanding on Voluntary Return between the UK, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and the Afghan Transitional Administration. There are two voluntary return programmes operated by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) which are available to Afghans wishing to return to Afghanistan. The Return to Afghanistan Programme (RAP) offers financial assistance of £600 for individuals and up to £2,500 for families in addition to a flight and the offer of a training and employment package in Afghanistan. The Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VARRP) is the UK's generic voluntary returns programme which is also open to Afghans. VARRP provides a flight for returnees and in kind reintegration assistance in the country of origin. This may include help to access initial housing, employment, education or health services. IOM can also provide assistance in setting up a small business.

The Explore and Prepare Programme for Afghanistan was launched on 28 October 2003. This programme allows Afghans with status in the UK to return to Afghanistan to explore the possibility of making a permanent return without affecting their immigration status in the UK.

On 28 April 2003 in line with our stated intentions and as agreed with the Afghan authorities we commenced enforced returns to Afghanistan. We are returning those not found to be in need of international protection or granted any other form of leave to remain who do not depart voluntarily. Those individuals or groups identified as vulnerable are excluded from the programme of enforced returns.

Asylum/Immigration

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what *(a)* targets and *(b)* performance indicators he has set for the time taken to process fast track applications for asylum in respect of claimants accommodated at the Oakington Reception Centre; and what the performance against them was in 2003. [161030]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 12 March 2004]:* Details of Home Office targets are given in the Spending Review 2002 Public Service Agreement Technical Notes, a copy of which is available from the Library of the House. The targets relate to financial years. There is no specific target for the speed of processing cases dealt with via the Oakington process.

The overall target for new substantive asylum applications received in 2003–04 is to ensure that 75 per cent. are decided and served within two months and we are on track to exceed the target. 80 per cent.[1,2] of applications received in the period April to

[1] *Source:*
A-CID database as at 30 January 2004.

September 2003 had initial decisions reached and served within two months[3].

There is a target for the fast turnaround of non-suspensive appeal (NSA) cases where the claimant is detained throughout the process, most of which are decided at Oakington. For 2003–04 this is to process 60 per cent. of new, detained, non-suspensive appeal cases within 14 days.

It is planned that performance against PSA targets relating to 2003–04 will be published in due course (once the data are judged sufficiently reliable) in the regular quarterly asylum statistics, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House and from theHome Office's Research Development and Statistics web site:
http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

[2] excludes withdrawals and 3rd country cases which may be the responsibility of other EU member states under the Dublin Convention. Home Office's Public Service Agreement target for 2001–02 was 60 per cent. and for 2002–03 was 65 per cent.. The target for 2003–04 is 75 per cent.. Excludes asylum applications lodged by Iraqis between 1 February and 31 May 2003.

[3] "Two months" is defined as 61 days; "Four months" is defined as 122 days; "Six months" is defined as 182 days.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 2 March, *Official Report*, column 896W, on asylum and immigration, if he will publish the terms of bilateral and Community readmission agreements as to the process and evidence required for the re-documentation of returning nationals in respect of each of the countries to which the Answer refers. [161159]

Mr. Browne: The UK's readmission agreements with Albania and Romania have been laid before Parliament. The Command Papers will be available on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office web site, upon completion of the ratification process. Both agreements provide that identity and citizenship or right of abode of a person is to be proved, or may be reasonably presumed through a number of valid documents specified in the agreements, or any other evidence acceptable to both Parties. The agreements set out how the request and response for readmission should be made, together with the timescales for the procedure.

The readmission agreements between the European Community and Sri Lanka and Albania have now been concluded. Those with Algeria, China, Pakistan, Russia and Ukraine have not been concluded. The ratification process for the agreement with Sri Lanka is advanced and the process for Albania has just commenced with the issue of Council Decisions to sign and conclude the agreement. Both documents have been deposited with the Parliamentary Scrutiny Committees and will be published following ratification, in the *Official Journal* of the European Community.

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many unsuccessful asylum applicants have been returned to *(a)* Somalia and *(b)* Somaliland in the past year; and what monitoring of the safety of the situation there he has undertaken. [153946]

Mr. Browne: Although Somaliland declared its independence from the rest of Somalia in 1991, it is not recognised internationally and asylum applicants received from those originating from that part of Somalia are not recorded separately.

Estimates of the number of Somali nationals who had sought asylum at some stage and who were removed from the UK in the period July 2002 to June 2003 (the latest available figures) are shown in the table. Information on the destination of these removals is not available. These figures include persons departing 'voluntarily' after the initiation of enforcement action against them, and persons leaving under Assisted

Removals and voluntary[1] departures of principal asylum applicants (excluding dependants)—June 2002 to June 2003[2,3,4]

Month/Year	*Number of Departures*
July 2002	5
August 2002	*
September 2002	5
October-2002	5
November 2002	5
December 2002	5
January 2003	*
February 2003	5
March 2003	*
April 2003	*
May 2003	5
June 2003	5
Total	45

[1] Includes persons departing "voluntarily" after enforcement action had been initiated against them, persons leaving under Assisted voluntary return programmes run by the International Organisation for Migration, and removals on safe third country grounds.

[2] Figures rounded to the nearest five with * denoting one or two and may not sum to total due to rounding.

[3] Data have been estimated due to data quality issues.

[4] Provisional figures.

All asylum (and human rights) claims made by Somalis are considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Should a claim be refused and any appeal before the independent Immigration Appellate Authority be unsuccessful, it means that for that individual it is safe to return.

In making decisions about removing failed asylum seekers, the Home Office takes full account of up to date information from a wide range of sources about the situation in the country of origin. These sources include intergovernmental organisations (such as the UN), governmental sources (including the Foreign and Commonwealth Office) and human rights organisations (for example, Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch).

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the number of people claiming asylum in the UK in 2004. [164972]

Mr. Browne: Information on asylum applications is published quarterly. The publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May 2004 on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

In 2003, there were 49,370 asylum applications—a drop of 41 per cent. when compared to 2002 (84,130) and much more than in the rest of Europe (down 10 per cent.[1] when compared with 2002). Several recent new initiatives are continuing to impact on intake, including juxtaposed border controls, roll out of new detection technology, and the expansion of the non-suspensive appeals provisions (NSA). (In July 2003 the list of NSA countries was expanded further and now stands at 24 countries.)

The reductions in unfounded claims must be sustained—we are not looking for one-off or temporary falls in claims in any one month or year, but consistently lower numbers over the long term. However intake does also depend on world events and the important point is to reduce the number of unfounded claims to ensure that the system is not abused and those with well founded claims receive fair and fast treatment.

[1] Figures are provisional and exclude Italy.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the proportion of asylum seekers claiming to be Somali who are *(a)* Tanzanian and *(b)* from other nearby countries. [160207]

Mr. Browne: As with all asylum seekers, we rigorously assess those claiming to be Somali for evidence of Somali nationality. A significant proportion of Somali asylum seekers are refused asylum on grounds of disputed nationality. However, information on exactly how many Somali asylum seekers are believed to be Tanzanian or of other East African nationalities is not readily available. This could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

Therefore we cannot definitively say what proportion of Somali asylum seekers are Tanzanian or from other nearby countries. However, operational and intelligence sources suggest that a considerable percentage of Somali asylum seekers are in fact from surrounding East African countries, including Tanzania. In particular, the introduction of language testing has provided strong evidence that many asylum seekers claiming to be Somali are of other nationalities. We are working in co-operation with the Tanzanian government to identify their nationals who have claimed asylum as Somalis.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants were arrested by the authorities in the UK other than at points of entry into the UK in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [160376]

Mr. Browne: Detailed figures are not kept nationally of the number of illegal immigrants detected in the UK other than at points of entry.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the cost to the Government of illegal immigrants who avoid detection at points of entry into the UK in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [160378]

Mr. Browne: Illegal immigrants who avoid detection at points of entry into the UK, and who do not subsequently leave the country, form part of the illegally resident population.

Official estimates of the size of the illegally resident population in the United Kingdom do not currently exist and it is therefore not possible to calculate the costs associated with this group.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many letters were addressed to the Minister of State (Citizenship, Immigration and Counter-Terrorism) from right hon. and hon. Members in each month since he took office; and how many were replied to by *(a)* the Minister and *(b)* the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State (Race Equality, Community Policy and Civil Renewal). [163121]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 22 March 2004]:* Figures are not readily available and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Steinberg: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will *(a)* reply to the three letters from the hon. Member for City of Durham regarding Abbas Mirzael ref: M1009147 and *(b)* return the fee and application form TD 112 requested on 18 November 2003. [165502]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Officials replied to my hon. Friend's letters of 18 November 2003 and 6 February on 2 April. I sent a further reply to my hon. Friend's letter of 9 March on 28 April.

Detention and Removal Centres

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether annual reports of independent monitoring boards of detention and removal centres are published. [157444]

Mr. Browne: Independent Monitoring Board annual reports are not published documents. They are made to the Secretary of State who permits the Board to publish their report if they wish, subject to allowing a period of notice to elapse before publication and the removal of any information which is confidential. Boards are, however, encouraged to publish their reports and the Chairs have indicated that most of the Boards intend to do so this year.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what procedures are in place for the investigation of allegations of assault made by immigration and asylum detainees against *(a)* members of staff of removal and detention centres, *(b)* escorts and *(c)* other detainees. [157448]

Mr. Browne: Rule 48 of the Detention Centre Rules 2001 provides for any complaint made against any member of staff at the removal centre to be investigated promptly by the contract monitor. If the complaint is against a member of the Immigration Service an investigation would be undertaken by the IS Complaints Unit. In all cases where a detainee alleges assault they would be asked if they wished to contact the police.

Where an allegation of assault is made against the escort this is referred to the police as the appropriate investigating authority. On completion of any police action, the allegation will also be investigated under the Immigration Service's internal complaints procedures with the relevant contract monitor conducting the investigation.

Allegations of assaults by one detainee on another detainee are always reported to the police for action.

Eastern European Arrivals

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the requirements imposed on Eastern Europeans seeking to enter or remain in the United Kingdom pursuant to *(a)* European Community Association agreements and *(b)* the BRACE policy. [161619]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 15 March 2004]:* The requirements for entry are set out in the Immigration Rules at Paragraphs 211–216. The requirements to extend stay are set out at Paragraphs 217–221 and the

requirements for settlement are set out at Paragraphs 222–223. The current Immigration Rules are HC 395 (as amended).

I would refer the hon. Member to the Written Ministerial Statement my predecessor, my right hon. Friend, the member for Stretford and Urmston (Beverley Hughes) made on the 12 March.

EU Accession Countries

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his oral statement to the House of 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 24, in what circumstances EU citizens will be considered unable to support themselves; who will make this assessment; and what right of appeal there will be. [160212]

Mr. Browne: Under EC law, the right of residence of certain categories of EU nationals (students, retired persons, and persons not falling within other categories under the EC residence directives) in a member state other than their member state of origin is dependent on their being able to support themselves. Where it is determined, on the facts and in accordance with the principles laid down in ECJ case-law, that persons in these categories are no longer able to support themselves they may be removed under the Immigration (European Economic Area) Regulations 2000 (S.I. 2000/2326). Such decisions will be subject to appeal by an adjudicator in the first instance.

In respect of nationals of Accession states (excluding Cyprus and Malta) who come to the UK to work, their right of residence here will also be subject to satisfying the self-sufficiency test while they are not working. Again, if they do not satisfy this test they will be removable under the 2000 Regulations. The draft Accession (Immigration and Worker Registration) Regulations 2004 thus ensure that a national of an Accession State (other than Cyprus or Malta) will only be able to reside in the United Kingdom while seeking work if he or she is self-sufficient.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his oral statement to the House of 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 24, what steps he intends to take to prevent EU citizens removed from the UK from returning; and at what point they will be allowed to re-enter the country. [160213]

Mr. Browne: Under European Community law, EU citizens may only be refused entry to the UK on grounds of public policy public security or public health. In order to refuse entry on public policy grounds we must be satisfied that that the person poses a genuine and serious threat to one of the fundamental interests of society. Measures taken on these grounds must be based exclusively on the personal conduct of the individual concerned.

Those people who have been deported from the UK for committing serious crimes would be prevented from returning to the UK. Such persons would not be able to return to the UK until any deportation order had been revoked.

Gangmasters

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to monitor the activities of gangmasters employing illegal workers. [157578]

Mr. Browne: All employers in the United Kingdom are subject to the requirements of section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996, the law on preventing illegal working. Any employer who is found to be employing an illegal worker and acting in contravention of their legal obligations under section 8 may face the possibility of a criminal charge and prosecution.

On 16 March we announced changes, via secondary legislation, to strengthen the security of the document checks employers must carry out on prospective employees under section 8 to establish a statutory defence from prosecution.

The changes will make it easier for compliant employers to ensure that their workforce can work in the UK, and for the Immigration Service to identify and prosecute the small minority of non-compliant employers who knowingly or negligently employ illegal workers.

The United Kingdom Immigration Service (UKIS) is responsible for monitoring and tackling illegal migrant working, and conducts regular enforcement and educational visits to employers on section 8. UKIS adopts an intelligence led approach to carrying out illegal working enforcement operations relating to gangmasters, as it does to employers in other sectors.

UKIS are fully involved in regional Operation Gangmaster and more generally have invested greater effort in illegal working enforcement activity, including where agricultural labour providers are concerned.

In terms of overall illegal working enforcement activity across all commercial sectors in the United Kingdom, there were 446 UKIS operations in 2003. In the first nine months of 2003, UKIS reported carrying out 16 operations specifically aimed at farms and packhouses where labour providers were involved.

By the beginning of 2004, UKIS had significantly increased activity in this area. In the four-month period from the beginning of November 2003 to the end of February 2004 UKIS reported carrying out 18 enforcement operations at farms and packhouses where labour providers were involved. These operations led to the removal of over a 100 immigration offenders. A further 11 operations involving labour providers are also scheduled or being planned.

Earlier this month, two major investigations involving the police supported by UKIS resulted in the conviction of gangmasters for very serious criminal offences. In March, six labour providers with the company Ultimate Source were convicted at Kings Lynn Crown court of various offences in connection with the supply of illegal workers. On 16 March, the labour provider and his son were found guilty of charges including conspiracy to defraud and facilitating the entry of illegal immigrants into the UK. Both have been sentenced to seven years imprisonment.

The Government are also working closely with my hon. Friend, the Member for West Renfrewshire (Jim Sheridan) to ensure that the Gangmasters Bill will achieve its objectives and introduce a licensing scheme which we can support. The Government have suggested a number of amendments to enhance the Bill and with those changes we believe it will significantly strengthen our attempts to curb the exploitative activities of gangmasters.

NCIS

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes have been made to the source handling capability of the National Criminal Intelligence Service; and what assessment he has made of the impact of these changes. [166591]

Caroline Flint: The National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) employs a number of means to collect intelligence on the activities of serious and organised criminals. These include the running of Covert Human Intelligence Sources (CHIS).

The NCIS Service Authority has recently approved the NCIS Operating Plan for 2004–05. The plan, which is protectively marked in order to safeguard the operational effectiveness of NCIS, includes the creation of a new Business Area dedicated to CHIS handling. A key aim for this Business Area for 2004–05 is to review the structures, working practices, resource and training requirements for NCIS CHIS activity, and to align this with the national strategies for tackling serious and organised crime in order to make it more effective.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of police officers continuing in employment at the National Criminal Intelligence Service on *(a)* a permanent basis and *(b)* on secondment during (i) 2004–05, (ii) 2005–06 and (iii) 2006–07. [166600]

Caroline Flint: In 2004–05, the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) expects to employ around 100 seconded police officers. Detailed plans for 2005–06 have yet to be formulated, but NCIS expects the number of seconded police officers to be maintained at broadly 2004–05 levels. The Serious Organised Crime Agency (SOCA) is expected to become fully operational from 1 April 2006, at which point NCIS will cease to exist as a discrete organisation. It will be a matter for the new agency to determine how many seconded police officers it will employ, including for those functions currently performed by NCIS.

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his Statement of 29 March, *Official Report*, column 1285, of those police officers seconded to the National Criminal Intelligence Service who have been interviewed regarding the termination of their secondment, how many had completed *(a)* less than six months, *(b)* six to 12 months, *(c)* 12 to 18 months and *(d)* 18 months to two years of their secondment. [166603]

Caroline Flint: The National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS) interviewed all seconded police officers, with the exception of 27 who elected not to be interviewed (having decided to return to force), 14 officers seconded to other agencies under NCIS suspices (for example, in support of United Nations' effort in Kosovo), and five interviews that are outstanding. Of those interviewed, 12 had served less than six months, 23 for 6–12 months, 33 for 12–18 months, 21 for 18–24 months, and 106 for more than 24 months.

Parole

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners who are sentenced to 10 years or more have been released in each of the last 48 months. [168021]

Paul Goggins: The number of prisoners sentenced to 10 years or more who were released from prisons in England and Wales in each of the last 48 months is given in the table.

Discharges of prisoners sentenced to 10 years or more

Discharges England and Wales, April 2000-March 2004	
April 2000	45
May 2000	46
June 2000	54
July 2000	55
Aug 2000	64
September 2000	43
October 2000	49
November 2000	52
December 2000	41
January 2001	56
February 2001	52
March 2001	45
April 2001	72
May 2001	59
June 2001	61
July 2001	52
August 2001	67
September 2001	51
October 2001	52
November 2001	65
December 2001	50
January 2002	40
February 2002	47
March 2002	44
April 2002	54
May 2002	59
June 2002	51
July 2002	74
August 2002	72
September 2002	57
October 2002	77
November 2002	51
December 2002	62
January 2003	54
February 2003	58
March 2003	67
April 2003	54
May 2003	75
June 2003	63
July 2003	90
August 2003	69
September 2003	64
October 2003	103
November 2003	57
December 2003	82
January 2004	62
February 2004	64
March 2004	78

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners were released on home detention curfew in each of the last 12 months. [168024]

Paul Goggins: The number of persons who were released on home detention curfew in each of the last 12 months is given in the table.

Number released on home detention curfew—England and Wales April 2003 to March 2004

	Number
April 2003	1,791
May 2003	1,740
June 2003	1,739
July 2003	2,086
August 2003	2,080
September 2003	1,747
October 2003	1,705
November 2003	1,546
December 2003	1,836
January 2004	1,487
February 2004	1,441
March 2004	1,900

Passports

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many passports sent to applicants by mail went missing in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [163203]

Mr. Browne: The information recorded in each year since 1997 is as follows:

1997—not available

1998—not available

1999—2,359

2000—3,851

2001—2,541

2002—2,982

2003—3,593.

The United Kingdom Passport Service has now addressed this continuing need to increase the security of passports delivered through the postal system by switching to use secure courier. The staged implementation of these new arrangements started on 9 February and was fully in place as of 15 March 2004.

People-trafficking

Mrs Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans his Department has to ratify the UN Convention Against Trans National Organised Crime; what stance his Department will take on the optional protocols on *(a)* trafficking in persons and *(b)* smuggling of migrants; and if he will make a statement. [166472]

Caroline Flint: The United Kingdom was among the first countries to sign the UN Convention Against Transnational Organised Crime on 14 December 2000 and signed the Protocols against People Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling at the same time. We intend to ratify the Convention and both protocols as soon as all legislative requirements to bring our law into compliance with these instruments have been met.

Prisoners

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many adult males given a custodial sentence by courts were assessed as requiring Category *(a)* A, *(b)* B, *(c)* C and *(d)* D security conditions in (i) England and (ii) Wales in each month since January 2003. [168205]

Paul Goggins: The original security category of adult males received under sentence into prisons as *(a)* Category A, *(b)* Category B, *(c)* Category C and *(d)* Category D prisoners in (i) England and (ii) Wales in each month since January 2003 is given in the table.

Original security category of sentenced receptions of adult males in prisons in England and Wales

England	*A*	*B*	*C*	*D*	*Unrecorded*
January 2003	5	236	3,370	554	467
February 2003	4	236	3,304	533	417
March 2003	3	247	3,445	603	481
April 2003	4	231	3,097	653	511
May 2003	3	228	3,272	647	500
June 2003	6	237	3,327	682	464
July 2003	11	227	3,713	674	612
August 2003	7	169	3,118	518	473
September 2003	1	181	3,502	734	548
October 2003	2	231	3,696	728	510
November 2003	2	202	3,307	582	508
December 2003	6	180	2,937	485	709
January 2004	3	174	3,499	650	550
February 2004	2	216	3,660	625	608
March 2004	1	200	3,716	630	762
Wales					
January 2003	0	1	139	23	39
February 2003	0	2	126	39	35
March 2003	0	3	144	31	22
April 2003	0	3	145	29	29
May 2003	0	5	139	39	29
June 2003	0	2	150	36	27
July 2003	0	1	164	42	37
August 2003	0	0	108	32	25
September 2003	0	2	135	34	29
October 2003	0	5	165	46	42

Original security category of sentenced receptions of adult males in prisons in England and Wales

England	*A*	*B*	*C*	*D*	*Unrecorded*
November 2003	0	0	109	42	36
December 2003	1	2	129	32	45
January 2004	0	5	132	43	33
February 2004	0	2	136	52	43
March 2004	0	1	145	42	49

Sangatte Camp Refugees

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what has been done to recognise the educational background of the 1,000 refugees from the Sangatte camp in 2003 in order to integrate them into the UK workplace. [157364]

Mr. Browne: JobCentre Plus interviewed the majority of arrivals and made an assessment of their skills, taking their reported educational attainments fully into account. Where appropriate, those who had not entered employment were offered English language training to assist them in their search for work.

Self-employed Tradesmen

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what criteria are used to determine whether self-employed tradesmen who are not UK nationals may enter the UK; and in what circumstances these criteria may be waived in *(a)* part and *(b)* full. [161814]

Mr. Browne: The requirements for entry under the European Community Association Agreements (ECAA) are set out in the Immigration Rules at paragraphs 211–216. The current Immigration Rules are HC395 (as amended).

Persons already legally in the UK can "switch" into the ECAA category. In these cases the above requirements do not apply. Instead, applicants must comply with the after entry requirements set out at Paragraphs 217–221 of the Immigration Rules.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for work permits from self-employed businessmen from EU accession countries were successful in each month of the last three years, broken down by country of origin. [161815]

Mr. Browne: Work permits are not issued in respect of self-employment. The work permit arrangements are employer-driven, and applications can only be made by UK-based employers on behalf of the individual they wish to employ.

Sentence Costs

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average cost of administering *(a)* a supervision order (juvenile), *(b)* an action plan order (juvenile), *(c)* a referral order (juvenile), *(d)* a reparation order (juvenile), *(e)* a parenting order (juvenile), *(f)* an intensive supervision and surveillance order (juvenile), *(g)* a probation order with accreditated programme condition, *(h)* a place in an approved hostel, *(i)* a dispersal prison, *(j)* a category B prison, *(k)* a category C prison and *(l)* an open prison was in the latest year for which figures are available. [167367]

Paul Goggins: The average estimated unit costs of the juvenile and adult orders, hostel and custodial places administered by the Youth Justice Board, National Probation Directorate and Prison Service are as follows:

Average estimated unit costs of juvenile and adult orders

Juvenile Orders	*Unit cost per order 2002 (£)*
Action Plan Order	1,513
Parenting Order	696
Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (six month programme cost)	8,500
Referral Order	982
Reparation Order	1,015
Supervision Order	3,761
Adult Orders	*Unit cost per order 2004–2005 (£)*
Rehabilitation Order with Accredited Programme Condition	4,900
Adult Orders	*Unit cost per Hostel Place 2004–2005 (£)*
Approved Premises Place	30,800
Prison Service Custodial Places	*Unit cost per Custodial Place 2003–2004 (£)*
Dispersal Prison	34,930
Category B Prison	15,218
Category C Prison	18,595
Open Prison	17,015

The Youth Justice Board have commissioned PA Consulting to conduct activity sampling work on Youth Offending Teams which should provide further research data on the unit costs of juvenile orders and interventions. The activity analysis report is due to be completed later this year.

Stowaways

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons concealed in vehicles were detected at border control points in the UK in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [160373]

Mr. Browne: Detailed figures are not kept nationally of the number of illegal immigrants detected in the UK. However locally collated management information indicates that in the Kent area the following numbers were detected at ports of entry

	Detected at port
2001	3,061
2002	3,513
2003	1,777

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many personnel are employed by his Department for the purpose of the detection of stowaways in vehicles at UK points of entry; and if he will make a statement. [160379]

Mr. Browne: During the month of January 2004 there were on average 116 staff engaged daily in the detection of clandestine entrants at UK ports of entry and at the juxtaposed controls.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average inspection time spent per vehicle at UK border checkpoints was when checking for stowaways in each of the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [160381]

Mr. Browne: While records are kept, for vehicles travelling through Calais, Dover and Coquelles, of the number of lorries searched and the technology used, no records are routinely kept of the time taken to conduct the search. However the current average time to search a vehicle is estimated as between one and four minutes depending on the search methods.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the average time that a stowaway has been in a vehicle prior to detection at a border control point in the UK; and if he will make a statement. [160382]

Mr. Browne: Persons who attempt to enter the United Kingdom illegally as clandestine entrants concealed in vehicles, will enter that vehicle at a variety of points in the journey. These can be close to the port of embarkation, or at the start of the journey perhaps in the country of origin.

While the UK Immigration Service systematically interviews clandestine entrants about their routes to the UK, no records are kept of the length of time a person claims to have remained in a vehicle.

The juxtaposed border controls now established in France at Calais, Dunkerque and Coquelles make detections of clandestines much earlier in the journey. This not only maintains the integrity of the United Kingdom border but also helps to prevent injury or death to persons concealed within vehicles while crossing the channel.

TITAN Database

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimates he has made of the *(a)* annual and *(b)* daily cost of installing, operating and maintaining the TITAN database currently being used by the National Criminal Intelligence Service. [166597]

Caroline Flint: Titan, the supplier of the Elementary system, is contracted to provide hardware, software and associated technical support at a cost of £1.75 million in 2004–05 (equivalent to a daily cost of £4,800).

Based on user numbers, the operating costs for the system are expected to amount to £935,000 in 2004–05 (equivalent to a daily cost of £2,560).

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the operational effectiveness of the TITAN database being used by the National Criminal Intelligence Service. [166598]

Caroline Flint: In January 2004, the Elementary system (which is being supplied by the Titan company) successfully passed the Office of Government Commence Gateway 4 (Readiness for Service) Review and is currently being implemented in the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS). NCIS is currently running the old system, Alert, in parallel with Elementary as part of the final phase of implementation of the new system, to deal with issues that naturally arise when a system is taken into full operational use. This includes carrying out regular appraisals and performance reviews to ensure that the system delivers the expected benefits and the service performance that NCIS requires for operational effectiveness. As part of the overall assessment and evaluation strategy, a Gateway 5 Review (Benefits Evaluation) and a Post Implementation Review are also planned.

Visas

Mr. Godsiff: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many nationals of each country from which a visa is required applied for entry clearance to come to the United Kingdom for temporary purposes, including visitor and student applications in 2002; how many visas were issued for temporary purposes; how many recipients of these visas returned to their country of nationality before the visas expired; and how many applied *(a)* to remain permanently in the United Kingdom and *(b)* for political asylum. [162160]

Mr. Browne: I have been asked to reply.

The available information is given in the tables, which will be available in the Library.

Entry clearance data are available by country of application, which is not necessarily the country of the applicant's nationality.

The information on grants of settlement includes persons who entered the United Kingdom with an entry clearance leading to settlement, as well as some asylum seekers granted leave to remain in 2002 and in previous years; and the data on asylum applications is likely to include some persons who held no entry clearance.

No data are available on the number of persons who return to their country of nationality before their leave to enter or remain in the United Kingdom expires, or on the number of holders of visas for temporary purposes who apply for asylum or for settlement.

Information on entry clearance, settlement and asylum applications are published in the quarterly asylum statistics and the annual Command Paper Control of Immigration Statistics 2002. Copies are available from the Library and from the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate web site at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

Work Permits

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for work permits are awaiting decision. [157113]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of cases outstanding in Work Permits (UK) is not available. In 2003, performance in Work Permits (UK) was that 95 per cent. of all completed applications were turned around within 24 hours.

TREASURY

Debt

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his estimate is of the impact of a 1 per cent. rise in world interest rates on the debt of the world's poorest countries; how the extra debt burden would be met; and if he will make a statement. [169147]

John Healey: The bulk of the debt of the world's poorest countries is contracted at fixed interest rates on concessional terms. For example, concessional loans from the World Bank and African Development Bank carry a service charge of three quarters of 1 per cent. This would mitigate any rise in world interest rates.

Nevertheless, the potential for a rise in interest highlights the importance of full implementation of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative, both through postponing or abolishing the HIPC sunset clause to ensure that all eligible countries are able to benefit from debt relief, and through providing additional topping up relief wherever external factors—such as a change in the interest environment—have weakened a country's ability to service its debt, as was the case with Niger and Ethiopia recently.

This is why the International Finance Facility is so important. Ensuring long-term debt sustainability will require donor countries to make available significant additional resources in the form of grants rather than loans. IFF resources could also be used to provide further debt relief.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his policy is towards whether a country's debt burden accumulated under a brutal dictator should be written off; what representations he will make at forthcoming international financial fora meetings on this issue; and if he will make a statement. [169143]

John Healey: The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative is helping to provide a robust exit from unsustainable debt for the world's poorest countries, regardless of how that debt is accumulated. As part of this, the UK is calling for full topping-up to be provided when countries face exogenous shocks, in order to bring their debt ratios back to the agreed HIPC thresholds. The UK also supports consideration of extension of the Initiative so that countries yet to enter it are able to benefit from HIPC debt relief. A number of countries—many of which are in the process of trying to exit conflict have yet to reach Decision Point and benefit from HIPC debt relief. This could deliver an extra US$30 billion in debt relief. HIPC debt relief is delivered through the Paris Club of official creditors.

For countries facing external financing difficulties, but who are not eligible for the HIPC Initiative, the Paris Club's Evian Approach was adopted in October 2003 with the aim of tailoring solutions to each debtor's specific circumstances. Iraq is likely to be one of the first countries to benefit from a comprehensive debt treatment under the Evian Approach.

Aviation Industry Tax Regime

Mr. Best: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent discussions he has had with *(a)* the EU and *(b)* other international partners on reducing or eliminating tax concessions received by the aviation industry; and if he will make a statement. [168776]

John Healey: The Government have on-going discussion with the European Commission, other EU member states and with international bodies, such as the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO), on the tax treatment of aviation and more generally on the most effective way of reducing the environmental impact of aviation.

The Government remain committed to applying the 'polluter pays' principle to civil aviation to reduce its environmental impact. Specific initiatives are set out in the Future of Air Transport White Paper published on 16 December 2003, including the aim of aviation being part of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme from 2008. The Government have been pursuing this with the European Commission and EU member states. At the meeting of ICAO's Committee on Aviation Environmental Protection in February 2004 the UK supported the use of economic instruments such as emissions trading to tackle the climate change impact of aviation. In this year's Budget we announced that we will discuss with the European Commission options for introducing greater flexibility in European legislation regarding the application of economic instruments to aviation.

Business Taxation

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the business-related taxes introduced in each year since 1990, stating the revenue raised by each annually. [169164]

Dawn Primarolo: Changes to taxation are set out in successive Financial Statement and Budget Reports, alongside estimates of the effects on government revenues anticipated at the time of their introduction. Given the difficulties in defining the incidence of tax changes, and the fact that tax measures interact and have complex behavioural and economic effects, it is not generally possible to separately identify the revenue implications of past tax changes for current levels of revenues.

Strategic Rail Authority

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the occasions since December 2001 on which he met the Chairman of the Strategic Rail Authority. [163123]

Mr. Boateng: Treasury Ministers and officials have meetings with a wide range of organisations and individuals as part of the process of policy development and analysis. As was the case with previous administrations, it is not the Government's practice to provide details of all such meetings, as provided for under Exemption *7(b)* of the Code of Practice on

Access to Government Information. Treasury meetings are conducted in accordance with the Ministerial Code and the Civil Service Code, as appropriate.

Tax Credits

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many families in Preston have received child tax credit; [169681]

(2) how many families in Wigan have received child tax credit. [169356]

Dawn Primarolo: I refer my hon. Friends to my answer to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Peace Process

5. **Mr. Carmichael:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the peace process. [167664]

Mr. Paul Murphy: It remains our objective to secure the restoration of devolved government in Northern Ireland on a stable and secure footing. However, as we have repeatedly made clear, all paramilitary activity must come to an end if we are to move forward. We will be talking to the parties in the coming weeks, including in the review of the operation of the agreement, about how this can be achieved.

Special Needs Education

6. **Rev. Martin Smyth:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on funding for education of children with special needs in Northern Ireland. [167665]

Mr. Gardiner: In 2002–03 around £125 million was expended in Northern Ireland for provision for children with special educational needs. In particular,

some £103 million was expended by the Education and Library Boards for special schools and to meet the additional costs of statemented pupils in mainstream schools and units;

some £14 million for special educational needs was distributed directly to schools; and another £8 million supported the implementation of the SEN Code of Practice.

Smuggling

7. **Helen Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action he plans to take to reduce *(a)* smuggling and *(b)* other illegal activities in border areas. [167666]

Mr. Pearson: Whilst cross-border co-operation between law enforcement agencies is already excellent, the Government are fully committed to working with the Government in the Irish Republic to develop a cohesive strategy and structure to maximise our effectiveness against those organised criminals who exploit the border.

In September 2004, it is planned that the two Governments will launch a cross-border organised crime threat assessment and joint strategy for tackling cross-border organised crime.

Antisocial Behaviour

8. **John Robertson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to tackle antisocial behaviour in Northern Ireland. [167667]

Mr. Spellar: The Government have undertaken a public consultation on measures to tackle antisocial behaviour. This closed on 1 April and we will bring forward legislation. A draft Order in Council is currently being drawn up.

Economy

9. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the economy in Northern Ireland. [167668]

Mr. Gardiner: The Northern Ireland economy has performed well in recent years as demonstrated by the performance of the labour market. The latest employee jobs figures indicate there are now 672,150 employees in employment, the highest figure on record. The current unemployment rate of 5.2 per cent. compares well to the EU average of 8.0 per cent. There has also been significant progress in terms of manufacturing productivity, which increased by 9.5 per cent. over the last year, and manufacturing output also experienced an increase over the same period (2.2 per cent.).

Despite the good recent economic performance Government recognise the need for the Northern Ireland economy to become more competitive in the global market place and is committed to creating a more innovative and entrepreneurial economy.

Crime

10. **Helen Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in tackling organised crime in Northern Ireland. [167669]

Mr. Pearson: The partner agencies of the Organised Crime Task Force continue to have considerable success against organised criminal gangs in Northern Ireland. I pay tribute to the commitment and effectiveness of the PSNI, Her Majesty's Customs and Excise and the Assets Recovery Agency in tackling this problem.

Innovation and Enterprise

11. **Mr. Luke:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the contribution of higher education to innovation and enterprise in Northern Ireland. [167670]

Mr. Gardiner: The higher education sector makes a vital contribution to a knowledge based, enterprise driven and innovation led economy. A range of initiatives promote enterprise and entrepreneurship including the Northern Ireland Centre for Entrepreneurship which enhances skills of graduates through a series of modules and master classes for both staff and students.

Economic Regeneration (North-West)

12. **Mr. Hume:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the Government's plans are for the economic regeneration of the north-west of Northern Ireland. [167671]

Mr. Pearson: The Government have been very active in planning for the regeneration of the North West.

Invest NI has developed an Action Plan for the North West. The aim of this plan is to implement a series of strategic and operational actions to address the weaknesses and vulnerability of the North West. The plan focuses on addressing issues which are constraining business growth/performance and which are within the scope of Invest NI's remit.

The NITB's Strategic Framework for Action will drive the tourism agenda for the next three years and will provide a focus and impetus to the growth and delivery of tourism to all areas of Northern Ireland, including the North West. The framework identifies the "Walled City of Derry" as one of the five signature projects.

The Ilex Urban Regeneration Company is taking the lead in building an agreed way forward for the wider economic, social and physical regeneration of the area. This will include the development of a master plan that will form the framework for the company's future work.

Ilex recently submitted an interim bid to the Integrated Development Fund, setting out an initial list of projects for consideration. This information is being urgently examined with a view to confirming as soon as possible those projects that should be fully worked up for final consideration.

Security (Older People)

13. **Mr. Bailey:** To as the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, if he will make a statement on measures to improve the security of older people in Northern Ireland. [167672]

Mr. Spellar: The personal safety of older people is a central issue within Government's Community Safety strategy. The Lock Out Crime Programme will install home security measures in 10,000 persons' households over the next three years.

I also intend to bring forward a Community Safety Strategy for Older People for consultation near future.

Provisional IRA

14. **David Burnside:** To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on criminal activities by the Provisional IRA in *(a)* Northern Ireland, *(b)* the Republic of Ireland and *(c)* internationally in the last 12 months. [167673]

Mr. Pearson: The Independent Monitoring Commission's first report, published on 20 April, provided a clear assessment of the criminal activities of the Provisional IRA. The Organised Crime Task Force has also undertaken detailed analysis and its appraisal is that the Provisional IRA is engaged in serious and organised crime, including large-scale smuggling and counterfeiting operations. There is no question that Northern Ireland based organised criminals engage in activities outside Northern Ireland.

The political process cannot flourish while the threat of paramilitarism persists and I call on all groups to end paramilitary and criminal activity.

Political Situation

15. **Mr. Dodds:** To ask the Secretary of Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the political situation in Northern Ireland. [167674]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave earlier to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Carmichael) at column 1115W.

A26

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to dual the A26 between Ballymoney and Coleraine; and what assessment he has made of recent figures on relevant traffic volumes. [168299]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Dr. Malcolm McKibbin to Mr. Gregory Campbell, dated 26 April 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about what plans he has to dual the A26 between Ballymoney and Coleraine; and what assessment he has made of recent figures on relevant traffic volumes. I have been asked to reply as these issues fall within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

Roads Service currently has no plans to dual the A26 between Ballymoney and Coleraine. Information available from the Department for Transport in Great Britain concludes that a single carriageway trunk road will operate satisfactorily with traffic flows of up to 18,000 vehicles per day (vpd), with a maximum flow capacity of approximately 22,000 vpd. You will be aware from my letter dated 5 April 2004, in response to your recent Parliamentary Question that traffic volumes for the A26 Ballymoney By-pass and the A26 Ballymoney to Coleraine fall below the 18,000 threshold.

You will recall that during the preparation of the Major Works 10-Year Forward Planning Schedule (FPS), Roads Service wrote to all MPs, MEPs, MLAs and Councils, in October 2001, enclosing a list of road schemes that Roads Service intended to appraise for possible inclusion in the schedule. Priority was to be given to the Key Transport Corridors. Public representatives were asked to identiiy and justify any further schemes that they felt should be included in the list for appraisal.

A scheme to dual the A26 from Glarryford to its A44 Ballycastle junction was included in the list however no reference was made to the dualling of the section between Ballymoney and Coleraine and no submissions in support of this scheme were received during this consultation exercise. Coleraine Borough Council did submit a request for the provision of additional overtaking opportunities on the A26 between the A44 Ballycastle junction and Coleraine and a scheme to provide these at three locations on the A26 between the junction with A44 and Ballymoney is included in the Emerging Regional Strategic Transport Network Transport Plan.

I would reiterate the importance that Roads Service attaches to the A26 route, having designated it as a Key Transport Corridor within the Regional Development Strategy. Approximately £1.2 million has been spent over the past three years on the A26 between the A44 Ballycastle junction and Coleraine, introducing safety features including differential acceleration lanes, climbing lanes, speed limits, improved road markings and junction improvements. You will appreciate however, that public resources available for the roads programme are limited and that improvements must therefore be prioritised to ensure optimum value for money. Funding is finite and the number of worthwhile schemes competing for inclusion in the roads programme far exceeds the resources available to Roads Service for major schemes. It is, therefore, essential that we target the funding available on the most beneficial schemes for the country as a whole.

Unfortunately, there are many major schemes with higher priority than the dualling of the A26 from Ballymoney to Coleraine, and it is anticipated that future improvements in the medium term are likely to include the provision of further overtaking opportunity schemes, such as climbing lanes or widened carriageway (2 + 1) schemes.

I hope this information is helpful.

Animal Cruelty

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to review the sentences available to the courts in Northern Ireland when dealing with those convicted of cruelty to animals. [168294]

Mr. Pearson: In Northern Ireland the main provisions relating to animal welfare and cruelty to animals are contained in the Welfare of Animals (NI) Act 1972. The powers available and the penalties provided for in that Act are broadly in line with those contained in GB animal welfare legislation. The maximum penalty is a fine not exceeding £5,000 or a term of imprisonment not exceeding three months, or both.

A review of animal welfare legislation is currently being undertaken in Great Britain.

If this review results in increased penalties for cruelty to animal offences, the Department of Agriculture and Rural Development will wish to bring the relevant provisions in Northern Ireland into line with whatever new standards may be adopted in Great Britain.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to amend animal welfare legislation to introduce higher maximum sentences for those convicted of ill-treatment of an animal in Northern Ireland. [168713]

Mr. Pearson: I refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave today to the hon. Member for East Londonderry (Mr. Gregory Campbell) (Question Reference 168294).

Anti-TNFs

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether the Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety plans to give anti-TNFs to all patients for whom they are considered appropriate; and if he will make a statement. [168631]

Angela Smith: The degree to which the health and social care system can respond to presenting needs is limited by the level of resources available. However the Department remains committed to the introduction of specialist drugs, such as anti-TNFs, where they will clearly result in a significant improvement in patient care. It has consequently made provision to allow 100 addition patients to receive anti-TNF drugs during 2004–05.

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff are employed in mainstream schools in Northern Ireland specifically to assist with the needs of children with autistic spectrum disorders. [167717]

Mr. Gardiner: I have been advised that the total number of staff employed in mainstream schools in Northern Ireland specifically to assist with the needs of children with autistic spectrum disorders is 596. A detailed breakdown across the school sectors in each Education and Library Board area is set out as follows.

Staff employed in mainstream schools in support of children for whom ASD is a special educational need

	Controlled and maintained	*GMI*	*VGS*
BELB	[1]79	4	5
NEELB	[2]69	9	4
SEELB	[3]130	25	6
SELB	[4]153	19	4
WELB	74	10	5
Total	505	67	24

[1] In addition the BELB has an ASD Advisory Support Service to mainstream schools and also pre-school which includes home visits for very young children. Currently there are two and a half teachers and five classroom assistants employed giving additional support to identified pupils and school staff.

[2] In addition to the 69 classroom assistants the NEELB has advised that following additional funding from the Department, the board has now a newly appointed ASD team working in support of children with autism. The team consists of a Senior Educational Psychologist and two Assistant Advisory Officers.

[3] The SEELB has advised that the 130 staff comprises 126 classroom assistants and four peripatetic teachers.

[4] Within Learning Support Centres in mainstream schools the SELB advises that there are further staff employed to work with pupils with a variety of special educational needs: while they may not work on a one to one basis with pupils with ASD, they may be providing a degree of support to them. The board also has an Autism Intervention Team which provides specific support on a board wide basis.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what training is provided routinely to parents following the diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders in children; [167721]

(2) what steps he is taking to assist parents in dealing with behavioural challenges that arise in caring for children and young adults with autistic spectrum disorders; and if he will make a statement. [167727]

Angela Smith: The Department for Health, Social Services and Public Safety (DHSSPS) provides funding for PAPA (Parents and Professionals and Autism), which provides training and support for parents.

DHSSPS's Priorities for Action 2004–05 requires Boards and Trusts to enhance diagnostic, assessment and early intervention services for children with autism. An additional £0.5 million has been allocated to Boards for this purpose. The enhanced service will provide additional support for parents following initial diagnosis.

In addition, Health and Social Services Boards provide a range of training and support for parents, following the diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders in children, through a number of specialist services, including those provided by voluntary organisations.

Bombings (Dublin and Monaghan)

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will hold a public inquiry into the extent of British security service involvement in the Dublin and Monaghan bombings of 1974. [169130]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The Government have always condemned the bombings in Dublin and Monaghan, and offers its sympathy to the families of the victims, whose pain still continues today. The Government have noted the report by the Justice Committee of the Oireachtas (Irish Parliament), following Mr. Justice Barron's investigation. We understand that the Dail and the Seanad will now debate the Committee's report and the Oireachtas will then make recommendations to the Irish Government. The British Government awaits the outcome of this process.

Christian Education Movement

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will list the representations he has received in relation to the decision not to provide funding for the Christian Education Movement (NI) through the Community Relations Core Funding Scheme 2004 to 2007; and from what organisations they originated. [168628]

Mr. Gardiner: The following is a list of representations made on behalf of the Christian Education Movement (NI):

Christian Education Movement (England)

Mr. P. Fishpool (two representations)

Canon John Eardley (one representation)

Dr. A. J. McCafery (one representation)

Baroness Richardson of Calow (one representation)

Christian Education Movement (Wales)

Mr. Reinhalt Thomas (one representation)

Miss Sali Roberts (one representation)

Christian Education Movement (NI)

Dr. John Morrow (one representation)

Dr. Roger Purce (three representations)

Council of Christians and Jews

Rabbi Jonathan Gorsky (one representation)

Council for Religious Education

Mr. Blaylock (one representation)

Church of Ireland Board of Education

Rev. I. W. Ellis (one representation)

Four Church Leaders (Ireland)

Most Rev. Sean Brady[1]

Most Rev. Robin Eames[1]

Right Rev. Dr. McKay[1]

Rev. W. Rea[1]

Dean of Belfast Cathedral

Dr. H. McKelvey (one representation)

Member of Parliament

Lady Hermon (1 representation) (North Down constituency)

[1] One joint representation.

Dromore Central Primary School

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will provide funding for a new school building for Dromore Central Primary School. [168479]

Mr. Gardiner: I have approved funding for Dromore Central Primary School and the school was included in my capital allocations announcement on 27 April.

Electricity

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what he will make a decision with regard to proposals to generate electricity from wind power off the north coast of Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement on these proposals. [164056]

Mr. Pearson: A private sector consortium, with consent from the Crown Estate, is currently investigating the technical, environmental and financial feasibility of the Tunes Plateau site. It is only on completion of this work that the exact size, configuration and location of any potential wind farm can be determined.

If, having completed the feasibility studies, the consortium wishes to proceed with a project, it will be required to apply to the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment for consent as required by Article 39 of the Electricity (Northern Ireland) Order 1992 and support this application with a detailed description of the project and a full statement on the impact which their proposals will have on the environment.

If an Article 39 consent is sought for this project, the Department will consult widely on the application and the environmental statement provided. This process is likely to take a considerable time and it is only after it has been completed that a decision would be made.

Gas Prices

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to contain gas price rises in Northern Ireland over the next few years. [168296]

Mr. Gardiner: Following my meeting with Phoenix Natural Gas on 8 April 2004 the company agreed to suspend its proposed increase in gas prices to domestic and small industrial consumers. I am maintaining close contact with Phoenix, its wholesale gas supplier Centrica and the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation and have urged all parties to work together to reach early resolution of the outstanding issues. My aim is to secure an equitable pricing structure for consumers and a stable long-term future for the gas industry in Northern Ireland.

Health Care (Young People)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to reduce levels of *(a)* substance abuse, *(b)* alcohol abuse, *(c)* suicide, *(d)* mental illness and *(e)* eating disorders among young people in Northern Ireland. [168275]

Angela Smith: Since 1999, over £22 million has been allocated to initiatives to help deliver the aims of the drug and alcohol strategies, both of which place particular emphasis on targeting young people. They include education and awareness raising in schools, public information campaigns, information and research, harm reduction, substitute prescribing, and counselling services for young people.

The Department issued a Promoting Mental Health Strategy and Action Plan last year. The strategy aims to improve people's mental and emotional well-being and in particular that of people at risk. It includes a specific section on preventing suicide. A range of preventative

measures are being taken as part of the strategy including promoting coping skills among the general population, suicide awareness and outreach work with young people in areas of need and especially young men.

A Regional Eating Disorders Working Group was established in June 2003, to consider essential service development. The model of service proposed by the working group is one of local services complemented by a regional service comprising a specialist regional consultant post with a supporting team. £1 million has been secured for 2004–05 to develop these services and it is hoped to advertise for these posts shortly.

Invest Northern Ireland

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what public meetings Invest Northern Ireland has attended which involved a single political party over the last five years; and if he will make a statement. [166709]

Mr. Gardiner: Since Invest NI was established in April 2002, its officials have attended no public meetings which involved a single political party. Information on the activities of the former economic development agencies that pre-dated Invest NI prior to April 2002 is not available.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Invest NI grants have been awarded; which companies benefited; and what amount of finance was provided through each respective award, broken down by constituency, in each of the past two years. [166745]

Mr. Gardiner: Almost 4,400 companies have been offered assistance in the last two years. To provide a list of all these companies would require a major administrative exercise, which could only be carried out at disproportionate cost. Table 1 following details the number of offers and amount of assistance offered to businesses, by Parliamentary Constituency over the past two years.

Table 1: Invest NI assistance by parliamentary constituency 2002–04

	Number of offers		*Total assistance offered (£)*	
	[1]2002–03	*[2]2003–04*	*[1]2002–03*	*[2]2004–04*
Belfast East	56	125	1,988,355	10,553,086
Belfast North	39	102	4,159,212	3,909,854
Belfast South	130	239	14,431,684	24,514,181
Belfast West	40	88	3,369,594	7,996,055
East Antrim	63	167	5,988,209	3,698,718
East Londonderry	57	110	4,113,042	735,628
Fermanagh And South Tyrone	67	211	4,920,677	3,860,934
Foyle	83	211	13,503,444	6,775,914
Lagan Valley	54	179	1,462,738	1,595,612
Mid Ulster	138	291	4,058,250	4,989,297
Newry And Armagh	81	175	5,363,098	1,543,146
North Antrim	70	195	2,177,964	5,594,554
North Down	44	83	1,347,025	3,921,590
South Antrim	86	196	22,877,977	4,008,124
South Down	70	154	2,439,960	1,023,657
Strangford	58	110	1,498,130	1,466,028
Upper Bann	77	241	16,436,700	5,772,790
West Tyrone	51	179	4,441,343	5,637,857
Grand Total	1,264	3,056	114,577,402	97,597,025

[1] In 2002–03 an additional £21.2 million was offered to approximately 1,000 clients for which this level of detail is not available.
[2] Offers in 2003–04 include 733 companies receiving broadband support under a scheme that was unavailable in 2002–03.
Notes:
1. 2003–04 figures are provisional and may be subject to change.
2. Although these businesses have been offered assistance, some may not as yet have received any grant.
3. Assistance includes repayables such as loans as well as grants.

Table 2 following shows the list of offers where more than £75,000 assistance has been offered in the last two years for business development projects. In addition to this 45 large projects that have been offered almost £40 million of assistance have not yet been announced to the public. The details of these projects are not included in table 2 to ensure that these investments are not compromised through the release of commercially sensitive information.

Table 2: Invest NI clients offered assistance over £75,000 2002–04

Client name	*Parliamentary constituency*	*Total assistance offered (£)*	*Financial year*
Datactics Ltd.	Belfast East	100,000	2003–04
Heartsine Technologies Inc	Belfast East	500,000	2003–04
Abbey National Contact Centre	Belfast North	768,000	2003–04
Latens Systems Ltd.	Belfast South	700,000	2002–03
Alien Systems Group Inc	Belfast South	2,016,000	2003–04
Dimex Ltd.	Belfast South	82,525	2003–04

Table 2: Invest NI clients offered assistance over £75,000 2002–04

Client name	*Parliamentary constituency*	*Total assistance offered (£)*	*Financial year*
Double Band Films Ltd.	Belfast South	106,680	2003–04
Graham and Heslip Ltd.	Belfast South	75,000	2003–04
Memsis Ltd.	Belfast South	75,000	2003–04
Relay Business Software Ltd.	Belfast South	100,000	2003–04
Andor Technology Ltd.	Belfast West	989,500	2002–03
Mobile Cohesion Ltd.	Belfast West	400,000	2002–03
Digesters Silos and Tanks Ltd.	Belfast West	200,000	2003–04
Icemos Technology Ltd.	Belfast West	3,529,410	2003–04
Kiel Pharma Ltd.	East Antrim	1,562,500	2002–03
Finlay Bme Ltd.	Fermanagh and South Tyrone	500,000	2002–03
Quinn Direct Insurance Ltd.	Fermanagh and South Tyrone	2,100,000	2002–03
Cabragh Engineering Ltd.	Fermanagh and South Tyrone	75,000	2003–04
Tyrone Fabrications Ltd.	Fermanagh and South Tyrone	199,300	2003–04
Glenaden Shirts Ltd.	Foyle	80,000	2002–03
Seagate Technology (Ireland) Ltd.	Foyle	10,000,000	2002–03
Western Connect Ltd.	Foyle	125,000	2002–03
Exus Energy Ltd.	Foyle	177,000	2003–04
Foyle Food Group Ltd.	Foyle	180,000	2003–04
Hml	Foyle	3,200,000	2003–04
Mechanical Installation And Maintenance (NI) Ltd.	Foyle	97,000	2003–04
Singularity Ltd.	Foyle	89,000	2003–04
Boomer Industries Ltd.	Lagan Valley	119,563	2002–03
Kelman Ltd.	Lagan Valley	99,000	2002–03
Pressfold Ltd.	Lagan Valley	98,284	2002–03
Lagan Technologies Ltd.	Lagan Valley	108,000	2003–04
McMullen Architectural Systems Ltd.	Lagan Valley	217,500	2003–04
Chieftain Trailers Ltd.	Mid Ulster	375,000	2002–03
McErlains Bakery (Magherafelt) Ltd.	Mid Ulster	186,590	2002–03
Oakwood Door Designs Ltd.	Mid Ulster	99,000	2002–03
T E S (NI) Ltd.	Mid Ulster	95,426	2002–03
Tobermore Concrete Products Ltd.	Mid Ulster	250,000	2002–03
Maghera Joinery Works Ltd.	Mid Ulster	95,000	2003–04
Peadar Hughes T/A General Cabins and Engineering	Mid Ulster	93,750	2003–04
Roll Formed Fabrications Ltd.	Mid Ulster	385,300	2003–04
S D C Trailers Ltd.	Mid Ulster	100,000	2003–04
Steelweld Fabrications Ltd.	Mid Ulster	81,603	2003–04
The McAvoy Group Ltd.	Mid Ulster	450,000	2003–04
Viper International Ltd.	Mid Ulster	180,500	2003–04
Answercall Direct Ltd.	Newry and Armagh	2,841,000	2002–03
E-Blana Enterprise Group Ltd.	Newry and Armagh	140,000	2002–03
N C Agricultural Engineering Ltd.	Newry And Armagh	275,000	2003–04
Francis Dinsmore Ltd.	North Antrim	171,250	2003–04
Hubert Brown-Kerr	North Antrim	100,000	2003–04
Joseph Hughes	North Antrim	85,927	2003–04
Me Keown Fine Foods Ltd.	North Antrim	109,519	2003–04
Anderson Manning Associates Ltd.	North Down	550,000	2002–03
Mm Group Ltd.	North Down	224,200	2002–03
Donaghadee Carpets Ltd.	North Down	2,000,000	2003–04
Gray and Adams (Ireland) Ltd.	South Antrim	102,500	2002–03
McNeill-McManus Facades Ltd.	South Antrim	99,500	2002–03
Randox Laboratories Ltd.	South Antrim	16,200,000	2002–03
Consilium Technologies Ltd.	South Antrim	85,000	2003–04
M D F Engineering Ltd.	South Antrim	100,000	2003–04
Springfarm Architectural Mouldings Ltd.	South Antrim	95,000	2003–04
Ulster Weavers Apparell Ltd.	South Down	1,552,500	2002–03
Coulter Windows Ltd.	South Down	250,000	2003–04
Hill Engineering Ltd.	South Down	75,000	2003–04
Image Investments Ltd.	Strangford	75,000	2002–03
Fortress Diagnostics Ltd.	Strangford	95,982	2003–04
B D G Group Ltd.	Upper Bann	81,400	2002–03
Franklins International Ltd.	Upper Bann	172,000	2002–03
Glanbia Cheese Ltd.	Upper Bann	2,490,000	2002–03
Nacco Materials Handling Ltd.	Upper Bann	6,500,000	2002–03
Thos W McDonagh Limied	Upper Bann	100,000	2002–03
Evron Foods Ltd.	Upper Bann	97,198	2003–04
Kestrel Foods Ltd.	Upper Bann	91,868	2003–04
Adria Ltd.	West Tyrone	2,350,000	2002–03
McColgans Quality Foods Ltd.	West Tyrone	950,000	2002–03

Table 2: Invest NI clients offered assistance over £75,000 2002–04

Client name	*Parliamentary constituency*	*Total assistance offered (£)*	*Financial year*
P T Me Williams	West Tyrone	91,204	2002–03
Portapig Ltd.	West Tyrone	80,375	2002–03
Raymond and Elaine Boyd	West Tyrone	150,000	2003–04

Notes:
1. Although these businesses have been offered assistance, many of the businesses may not as yet have drawn down any grant.
2. Assistance includes repayable assistance such as loans as well as grants.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many persons were employed by Invest Northern Ireland on *(a)* 1 April 2002, *(b)* 1 April 2003 and *(c)* 1 April 2004. [168218]

Mr. Gardiner: On its establishment in April 2002, Invest NI had a formal staff allocation of 738 full time equivalent (FTE) posts. At that time, however, there were only 657 staff in post as Invest NI's legacy agencies had adopted a policy of not filling vacancies in the run up to the establishment of the new body. On the other specified dates the numbers employed were:

Numbers employed on specified dates

	Numbers employed	*Full time equivalents*
1 April 2003	709	689
1 April 2004	703	681

Invest NI also engages a varying number of contracted staff in its overseas offices and also to deliver specific programmes. These currently number 43 in total and are separately funded.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many persons employed by Invest Northern Ireland have chosen permanently to transfer from the Northern Ireland Civil Service to Invest Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [168219]

Mr. Gardiner: To date, 39 former Northern Ireland civil servants have transferred permanently to Invest Northern Ireland.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when he expects to make a decision regarding the new headquarters for Invest Northern Ireland. [168220]

Mr. Gardiner: Having assessed the high quality bids received for the provision of Invest NI's new HQ accommodation and completed the process in line with European Procurement Law, a clear decision as to a preferred bidder has been reached. Final negotiations are being entered into with MRDE (McAleer & Rushe/ Dunloe Ewart) the preferred bidder consortium who offered the Bedford Street site as a location. The contract should be awarded by end June 2004.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much she estimates the new headquarters for Invest Northern Ireland will cost; and from what source of funds it will be paid for. [168221]

Mr. Gardiner: Final negotiations are on-going with the preferred bidder McAleer and Rushe Limited/Dunloe Ewart Ltd. (MRDE Ltd.) and as a result no final figures are available. The project is however estimated to be worth approximately £50 million, representing a construction value of around £20 million with the remaining value earmarked for the provision of related accommodation services over a 25-year period. Funding will come from a reallocation of existing accommodation savings and from the Strategic Investment Programme.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost of staff was at Invest Northern Ireland in each of the last two financial years. [168222]

Mr. Gardiner: The total cost of staff for Invest Northern Ireland in each of the last two financial years was:

	£ million
Year ended 31 March 2003	19.6
Year ended 31 March 2004	21.2

Inward Investment (East Londonderry)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many visits have been made under the auspices of Invest Northern Ireland by potential inward investors to the East Londonderry constituency within the past 12 months; and how many jobs have been created as a result. [168295]

Mr. Gardiner: Over the past year (April 2003 to March 2004) there have been two visits by potential inward investors to the East Londonderry constituency area. While these have not led to investment to the area, Invest NI continually seeks to build on the recent successes, which has seen a re-investment by Seagate Limavady, and will work closely with other companies in the area, for example Stream, Northbrook and Raytheon.

Lottery Funding (Sport)

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much Lottery funding has been allocated to *(a)* the Gaelic Athletic Association and *(b)* all other sporting organisations in Northern Ireland since the introduction of the Lottery. [167397]

Angela Smith: Since the Lottery began the Sport Council for Northern Ireland's Lottery Fund has awarded £14,350,488 to the Gaelic Athletic Association and £39,888,402 to all other sporting organisations in Northern Ireland.

Multiple Sclerosis

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what consideration he has given to extending the guidelines published by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence on the management of multiple sclerosis to Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [168080]

Angela Smith: Guidelines produced by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) are only applicable to England and Wales; there is no statutory requirement to implement NICE guidelines in Northern Ireland. The Department advises health and social services boards and trusts on the local applicability of NICE guidance, and is considering how guidelines issued by NICE can be fully assessed and applied in the context of Northern Ireland's health and social services.

Following the issue of NICE guidelines on the use of disease modifying medicines for people with multiple sclerosis, the Department agreed to participate with the other UK Departments in a scheme for monitoring patients to evaluate the cost-effectiveness of supplying these treatments. Over 500 Northern Ireland multiple sclerosis patients are currently taking part in the UK-wide scheme.

NHS Staff (Assaults)

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* verbal and *(b)* physical assaults against (i) nurses and (ii) other health care staff in each Northern Ireland health trust area there were in each of the last three years. [168271]

Angela Smith: The information is not available in the format requested. However, the number of recorded assaults (both verbal and physical) on Health and Personal Social Services staff in all disciplines, during the financial years for which figures are currently available, is detailed in the following table:

	Number
2002–03	5,065
2001–02	2,438
2000–01	1,956

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* arrests were made, *(b)* people were charged, *(c)* cautions were issued and *(d)* convictions were reached for assaults on NHS staff in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years. [168272]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Nurses

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what formal training is provided to assist nurses from overseas in adapting to and integrating into a new *(a)* working and *(b)* cultural environment. [167714]

Angela Smith: HPSS employers provide comprehensive support by means of induction and adaptation training to help overseas nurses integrate into their new work force and cultural environments.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the need to assign a single body with responsibility for recruiting overseas nurses to hospitals and health facilities in the Province. [167716]

Angela Smith: This matter has been included in discussions with HPSS employers about overseas recruitment but the concept of establishing a single body with responsibility for recruiting overseas nurses does not have support and would not represent cost effective use of valuable resources.

Collaboration already exists between local employers in the recruitment of overseas nurses resulting in more effective use of resources.

While I greatly value the contribution of overseas nurses in providing healthcare to our population, I expect the need for overseas recruitment to diminish as the investment in providing additional nurse training places over the last few years shows results.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many nurses in each Northern Ireland health trust area have left the profession within two years of registration in each of the last five years. [168267]

Angela Smith: This information is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* full-time, *(b)* part-time and *(c)* student nurses were employed in each Northern Ireland health trust area in each of the last five years. [168268]

Angela Smith: Figures for the number of full-time and part-time nurses employed in each Northern Ireland health trust area in each of the last five years have been placed in the Library.

Student nurses are no longer employed during their pre-registration training but HPSS employers facilitate practice placements as part of their training programme.

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many specialist *(a)* theatre, *(b)* coronary care, *(c)* children's nursing, *(d)* diabetes, *(e)* intensive and *(f)* palliative care nurses were employed in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years; and what resources are being made available to train nurses in specialist areas. [168269]

Angela Smith: Figures for the number of theatre, coronary care, children's nursing, diabetes, intensive and palliative care nurses employed in Northern Ireland in each of the last three years have been placed in the Library.

The Department currently allocates in excess of £10 million per annum for the provision of post registration nurse training to meet identified service needs. This includes commissioning of "specialist practice" training.

Phoenix Natural Gas

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the outcome of the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation's investigation into the proposed price increase by Phoenix Natural Gas. [168629]

Mr. Gardiner: Following consideration of the Northern Ireland Authority for Energy Regulation (NIAER) report, I met senior representatives of Phoenix Natural Gas on 8 April 2004 when the company agreed to suspend its proposed 20 per cent. increase in gas prices. I met Centrica, the wholesale supplier of gas to Phoenix on 19 April 2004 to emphasise the importance of the gas industry to Northern Ireland. I have subsequently urged all parties to work together to reach early resolution of the outstanding issues in order to secure a stable long-term future for the gas industry in Northern Ireland.

R and D Spending

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what has been the change in *(a)* real and *(b)* nominal terms in private sector research and development spending in Northern Ireland in each year since 1998. [168211]

Mr. Gardiner: The expenditure on research and development (R&D) in real and cash terms that was carried out within companies in Northern Ireland (intramural) each year between 1998 and 2002, and the annual percentage change, is shown in the table.

	Real terms (2002 prices)		*Nominal (cash) terms*	
Period	*Intramural R&D spend (£ millions)*	*Annual percentage change*	*Intramural R&D spend (£ millions)*	*Annual percentage change*
1998	88.8	—	80.9	—
1999	104.5	17.6	97.2	20.2
2000	147.0	40.7	138.6	42.6
2001	155.0	5.4	149.9	8.2
2002	149.3	-3.7	149.3	-0.4

Source:
DETI (1999, 2001 and 2002 data); Office for National Statistics (1998 and 2000 data)

Rail Freight

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to provide *(a)* grants and *(b)* other incentives to logistics companies in Northern Ireland to encourage the movement of freight via rail rather than road; and if he will make a statement. [168214]

Mr. Spellar: There are currently no plans to provide grants or other incentives to encourage the investment of freight via rail in Northern Ireland.

Water Charging

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to protect *(a)* those on low incomes and *(b)* other vulnerable people from the impact of the introduction of water charging in Northern Ireland. [168641]

Mr. Spellar: The Government are committed to introducing household water and sewerage charges that are fair and affordable. We are currently developing proposals for the basis and form of household charges to be introduced within the government's wider policy and resources framework. This work is currently examining how we might best protect those on low incomes and other vulnerable people from any excessive impact, or hardship, that may arise from the introduction of water and sewerage charges. The results of this analysis will be set out in an Integrated Impact Assessment, which will be published for consultation later this year.

Water/Sewage Pipes

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the state of Northern Ireland's water and sewage pipe infrastructure. [168192]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has been asked to write to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Mr. Roy Beggs, dated 26 April 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question (168192) about the state of Northern Ireland's water and sewage pipe infrastructure. I have been asked to reply as Chief Executive of the Water Service.

Water Service recently completed a comprehensive Asset Management Plan that identified the investment needs for all water and sewerage assets over a twenty year period. This required an assessment of the performance of the current assets and future performance requirements to meet more stringent and demanding statutory obligations and standards of service. The Plan concluded that some £3 billion was required to improve the water and sewerage infrastructure over the 20 year period and approximately half of this was required to upgrade watermains and sewers.

The conclusion of the Asset Management Plan demonstrates that the overall condition of the water and sewerage infrastructure is not satisfactory. To address this Water Service is investing £590 million over the three year period to 2006 on water and sewage infrastructure as part of its programme to comply with EU directives, protect the environment and deliver customer service improvements. In addition, a substantial Public Private Partnership programme, involving a number of large wastewater and water treatment works valued at £269 million, is also being taken forward.

A series of discrete watermain and sewerage networks rehabilitation studies are currently on-going to identify specific capital investment requirements to achieve compliance with EU directives and provide for existing and future demand for services. This approach will enable Water Service to target current and future capital investment on watermains and sewers to areas of greatest need, thereby attaining best value for money.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Attachment of Earnings Orders

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what estimate he has made of the number of attachment of earnings orders issued on employers in each year since 1997, broken down by reasons for the orders. [168156]

Mr. Leslie: Figures relating to the number of attachment of earnings orders are provided in the table. Information relating to the breakdown by reasons for the orders is not available centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	Attachment of earnings orders	
	Judgments	Maintenance
1997	65,669	1,194
1998	43,440	876
1999	34,399	190
2000	35,545	156
2001	42,011	150
2002	39,855	141
2003	40,384	855

Court Fines (Merseyside)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the collection of fines imposed by magistrates' courts in Merseyside. [167964]

Mr. Leslie: There has been a steady improvement in the fine collection performance of the Merseyside Magistrates' Courts Committee (MCC) over the last year. The rolling payment rate stands at 52 per cent. at the end of February, which is a 13 per cent. point increase on the quarter one figure of 39 per cent., with further improvements planned for 2004–05.

Referendum Costs

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the estimated costs associated with holding a national referendum are. [167828]

Mr. Leslie: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Dunfermline, West (Rachel Squire) on the 1 April.

Small Claims

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many money claims issued against *(a)* travel operators and *(b)* tour operators were taken to the Small Claims Court in each year since 1997, broken down by circuit; how many of these (i) were disputed, (ii) found in favour of the claimant and (iii) found in favour of the defendant; and how much was awarded to the claimant in each year, broken down by circuit. [168868]

Mr. Leslie: The information requested is not collected centrally and can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Commercial Leases

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what representations the Department has received on proposals to ban upward-only rent reviews in commercial leases; and if he will make a statement. [168904]

Keith Hill: The issue of upwards-only rent reviews in commercial leases has been of longstanding concern, and prompted the introduction in April 2002 of a new Code of Practice by the property industry. Over the last year, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received seven letters, from the British Retail Consortium and certain companies and individuals, expressing concern about upwards-only rent reviews in commercial leases. The issue was also discussed at a meeting of the Property Consultative Group, which I chaired on 3 December 2003.

The Under-Secretary, my hon. Friend the Member for Pontefract and Castleford (Yvette Cooper) announced the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's decision to go out to consultation on legislative options in a written statement on 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 32WS.

Empty/Second Homes

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list all authorities in England and Wales showing the *(a)* number of empty homes, *(b)* yield of council tax from empty homes, *(c)* number of second homes, *(d)* council tax discount applied to second homes and *(e)* council tax yield from second homes. [166886]

Mr. Raynsford: The most recent available figures for the numbers of long-term empty and second homes within the area of each English billing authority relate to 1 November 2002 have been made available in the Library of the House.

If all billing authorities reduced their second homes discount to the minimum possible figure of 10 per cent., we estimate that about £65 million could potentially be raised in England. If all English authorities removed their discount for long-term empty homes completely, this could raise a further £160 million.

Information on changes to discounts made for second or long-term empty homes for 2004–05 in England is still being collected from individual local authorities and so is not yet available.

Initial information provided on budget returns suggests, however, that almost half of the 1.2 per cent. increase between 2003–04 and 2004–05 in the total tax base for English authorities is due to reductions in second homes discounts and reductions or removals of discounts for long-term empty homes. This is equivalent to about 100,000 Band D properties.

Figures for Welsh local authorities are a matter for the Welsh Assembly Government.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many households received an empty homes council tax discount in England in each year since 1997. [169494]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not collect information in the form requested. Returns by local billing authorities show the number of dwellings subject to a discount as at 16 October each year, rather than the total number of dwellings which have received a discount in the year. Authorities have only been asked to identify long-term empty property discounts separately from other discounts since 2001. The reported figures for dwellings subject to a long-term empty discount are:

16 October 2001: 340,000

16 October 2002: 376,000.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not yet have all the necessary returns from authorities to calculate a figure for 16 October 2003.

Fire Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what discussions his Department has held with the Ministry of Defence on ensuring that the modernisation agenda for fire services is an integral part of the solution for the Airfield Support Services Project. [167253]

Mr. Raynsford: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given by my right hon. Friend the Minister of State, Ministry of Defence on 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 685W.

Green Belt

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the target is for each region for increasing the area of green belt; and what allowance the targets make for the sustainable communities plan areas. [168375]

Keith Hill: The Government's commitment, set out in Part 4 of "Sustainable Communities; building for the future", is to protect the countryside through a target for each region to maintain or increase the current area of land designated as greenbelt land in local plans. This commitment applies to all English regions, including those containing the four growth areas identified elsewhere in "Sustainable Communities".

Housing (Stalybridge and Hyde)

James Purnell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the Starter Homes Initiative has affected the residents of Stalybridge and Hyde. [168788]

Keith Hill: Between September 2001 and 31 March 2004, the Starter Home Initiative helped key workers into home ownership in areas where the high cost of housing was undermining recruitment and retention of skilled staff in our key public services. The programme was not available to key workers in Stalybridge and Hyde.

The new Key Worker Living programme which started on 1 April 2004 superseding the Starter Home Initiative is helping key workers in London, the South East and the Eastern regions.

Housing and Planning

Mr. Hayes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the UK spent on implementing EU mandates in the housing and planning sectors of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2003–04. [166313]

Keith Hill: There has been no requirement to implement new EU mandates affecting the housing and planning sectors of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister in 2003–04.

Housing Corporation

Martin Linton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what powers the Housing Corporation has to investigate the actions of shareholder-tenants of a housing association. [168857]

Keith Hill: The Housing Corporation does not have any powers, which are directed specifically towards the shareholder-tenants of a housing association. Shareholding groups may, but often do not, include tenants. In the case of some associations, shareholders have specific constitutional duties, and as such they are part of the overall structure of accountability. In such cases they bear some responsibility for the overall governance and management of an association.

The Housing Corporation has a statutory duty to regulate those housing associations that are registered with it. Under paragraph 20 of schedule 1 to the Housing Act 1996, the corporation also has a specific power to direct a statutory inquiry into the affairs of a registered housing association where it appears that there may have been misconduct or mismanagement. This could be limited to certain specific matters or could extend across the whole range of activities, including the duties and actions of shareholders.

Martin Linton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the Housing Corporation's duties of disclosure to hon. Members under the Housing Act 1996, Part 1, Chapter 4(33)(2). [168858]

Keith Hill: Under section 33 of the Housing Act 1996, the Housing Corporation has the power to disclose information to the bodies and persons specified. This is a discretionary power, rather than a duty.

Land Use

Norman Baker: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what total area in England was designated in each land use class one to seven in *(a)* 1974, *(b)* 1984, *(c)* 1994 and *(d)* 2003 (i) in total and (ii) broken down by county. [165754]

Keith Hill: At present there is no comprehensive information on land use classes in England. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, with other Government departments, is investigating the options for deriving a full land use dataset in a cost-effective way.

Local Government Finance

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister which local authorities raised the level of council tax by less than 3 per cent. when setting the rate for 2004–05; and if he will make a statement. [167235]

Mr. Raynsford: The following authorities increased their Band D council tax by less than 3 per cent. between 2003–04 and 2004–05:

London boroughs

Camden
Southwark
Wandsworth

Metropolitan districts

Birmingham
Bury
Coventry
Dudley
Kirklees
Knowsley
Manchester
Sandwell

Solihull
St. Helens
Tameside
Wakefield
Walsall
Wigan
Wirral
Wolverhampton

Shire districts

Alnwick
Amber Valley
Ashfield
Babergh
Basingstoke and Deane
Bassetlaw
Blyth Valley
Carlisle
Castle Morpeth
Cheltenham
Chesterfield
Chichester
Craven
Dartford
Derwentside
Easington
East Lindsey
Eastleigh
Fareham
Forest of Dean
Hart
Malvern Hills
Mansfield
Mid Devon
North Warwickshire
Preston
Redditch
Ribble Valley
Rugby
Rushmoor
Sedgemoor
South Cambridgeshire
South Oxfordshire
Stafford
Stroud
Teignbridge
Tewkesbury
Three Rivers
Tynedale
Wansbeck
Watford
Wear Valley
West Lancashire
West Somerset
Worcester
Wychavon
Wycombe

For shire counties and unitary authorities, an asterisk indicates that the percentage increase in the authority's Band D council tax is not less than 3 per cent. when expressed as an increase over its indicative Band D council tax for 2003–04.

An authority's indicative council tax for 2003–04 is the level of council tax consistent with its alternative notional amount, as published in "The Limitation of Council Tax and Precepts (Alternative Notional Amounts) Report (England) 2004/05". Alternative notional amounts have been issued to take account of the change in the financing arrangements for combined fire authorities (CFAs) between 2003–04 and 2004–05, whereby each CFAs has set its own council tax for the first time for 2004–05, instead of receiving a contribution towards its expenses from its constituent authorities.

Indicative council taxes for 2003–04 are available on the ODPM local Government finance website, from the 'Alternative Notional Amounts' menu at http://www.local.odpm.gov.uk/finance/ct.htm.

Shire counties

Bedfordshire*
Buckinghamshire*
Cambridgeshire*
Cheshire*
Derbyshire
Devon*
Dorset*
Durham*
East Sussex*
Essex*
Hampshire*
Kent*
Lancashire*
Leicestershire*
North Yorkshire*
Nottinghamshire*
Shropshire*
Staffordshire*
Wiltshire*
Worcestershire*

Unitary authorities

Bath and North East Somerset*
Blackburn with Darwen
Bournemouth*
Brighton and Hove*
Bristol*
Darlington*
Derby*
East Riding of Yorkshire*
Halton*
Hartlepool*
Kingston-upon-Hull*
Luton*
Middlesbrough*
Milton Keynes*
North East Lincolnshire *
North Lincolnshire*
North Somerset*

Peterborough*
Plymouth*
Poole*
Portsmouth*
Reading*
Redcar and Cleveland*
Slough*
South Gloucestershire*
Southampton*
Southend-on-Sea*
Stockton-on-Tees*
Stoke-on-Trent*
Swindon*
Telford and Wrekin*
Thurrock*
Warrington*
Wokingham*
York*

Management and Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Betts: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the amounts of outturn prices of *(a)* management and maintenance allowances, *(b)* major repairs allowances, *(c)* guideline rent (assumed HRA rental income), *(d)* actual Housing Revenue Account (HRA) rental income, *(e)* subsidy to the HRA including housing benefit subsidy, *(f)* HRA housing benefit subsidy entitlement and *(g)* subsidy to HRA net of contributions from HRA to housing benefit costs were for (i) each housing revenue account in England and (ii) England as a whole for (A) 1990–01, (B) 2000–01, (C) 2001–02, (D) 2002–03 and (E) 2003–04. [166639]

Keith Hill: The information has been made available in the Library of the House. Item *(a)* is management and maintenance allowances; item *(b)* is major repairs allowances; these did not exist in 1990–91 and 2000–01; item *(c)* is guideline rental income; item *(g)* is the "housing element entitlement" of HRA subsidy; where positive, this is the subsidy paid to the authority prior to consideration of rent rebate subsidy; where negative, this is the contribution by the HRA to the cost of rent rebates and also occasionally includes a payment to the General Fund; item *(f)* is the "rent rebate element entitlement" of HRA subsidy; this is the subsidy paid to the authority towards the cost of rent rebates; item *(e)* is HRA subsidy entitlement and is the sum of item *(g)* and item *(f)*.

The above are subsidy items. Item *(d)* is the actual HRA rental income. This is not available for 1990–91 and is not yet available for 2003–04.

Property Consultative Group

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* total budget, *(b)* funding from his Department, *(c)* administration budget, *(d)* staff costs, *(e)* location of staff and *(f)* number of staff were for the Property Consultative Group for the financial years (i) 2002–03, (ii) 2003–04 and estimated for (iii) 2004–05 and (iv) 2005–06. [167844]

Keith Hill: The Property Consultative Group does not have its own budget, but is funded from the administrative resources of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). It is serviced by staff working for the Land and Property Division in the Urban Policy Directorate of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, based in Westminster.

The Property Consultative Group began work in September 2003, and there were no staff costs in 2002–03. Staff costs in 2003–04 were £9,438 and estimated full-year costs for 2004–05 are £50,389. The number of staff working for the Group was just over one fifth of a person year in 2003–04 and is estimated to be just under one person year in 2004–05. The level of staff support and administrative costs for 2005–06 will depend on the workload of the Group, but we expect it to continue at broadly the same level as for 2004–05.

Public Bodies (Costs)

Matthew Green: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to his answer of 29 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1267W, on public bodies, what the internal costs to his Department were of *(a)* the Property Advisory Group, *(b)* the Advisory Panel on Standards for the Planning Inspectorate, *(c)* the Advisory Panel on Beacon Councils, *(d)* the Building Regulations Advisory Committee, *(e)* the Community Forum and *(f)* the Residential Property Advisory Group. [166794]

Yvette Cooper: The internal costs to the Office for the Deputy Prime Minister for 2003–04 are estimated to be in the region of:

Advisory non-departmental public body (NDPB)	*£000*
(a) and (f) Property Advisory Group[1]	24
(b) Advisory Panel on Standards for the Planning Inspectorate	70
(c) Advisory Panel on Beacon Councils	190
(d) Building Regulations Advisory Committee	70
(e) Community Forum	160
Total	514

[1] The Property Advisory Group was wound up in July 2003.

This includes the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's staff costs associated with sponsorship of the body and providing the secretariat for the body as appropriate; fees and travel and subsistence payments to members; publications; and other miscellaneous costs.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the total *(a)* administration and *(b)* staff costs were for the Building Regulations Advisory Committee in financial year 2003–04; and what the estimated costs are for financial years (i) 2004–05 and (ii) 2005–06; [169109]

(2) what the *(a)* total budget, *(b)* departmental funding and *(c)* internal costs to his Department of the Building Regulations Advisory Committee were in financial years (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04; and what the estimated costs are for financial years (iii) 2004–05 and (iv) 2005–06. [169113]

Phil Hope: The Building Regulations Advisory Committee does not receive Government funding other than costs internal to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of sponsoring it.

For 2002–03 these costs were estimated to be in the region of £21,000 for administration and £49,000 for staff, and for 2003–04 £19,000 for administration and £51,000 for staff. These estimates include the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's staff costs associated with sponsorship of the committee and providing the secretariat for it; fees and travel and subsistence payments to members; publications; and other miscellaneous costs.

Costs in 2004–05 and 2005–06 are not expected to rise significantly.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* total budget, *(b)* departmental funding and *(c)* internal costs to his Department were of the Property Advisory Group in financial year 2003–04. [169110]

Keith Hill: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1499W.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what the *(a)* total budget, *(b)* departmental funding and *(c)* internal costs to his Department were of the Home Ownership Task Force in financial years (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04; [169111]

(2) what the *(a)* total administration and *(b)* staff costs were for the Home Ownership Task Force in financial year 2002–03. [169112]

Keith Hill: No administration and staff costs were incurred in relation to the Home Ownership Task Force in 2002–03. For 2003–04, I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1498–99W.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* total budget, *(b)* departmental funding, *(c)* internal costs to his Department, *(d)* total administration costs and *(e)* staff costs to his Department of the Advisory Panel on Beacon Councils were for the financial years (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04; and what the estimated costs are for financial years (iii) 2004–05 and (iv) 2005–06. [169117]

Mr. Raynsford: The Advisory Panel on Beacon Councils does not receive Government funding other than the internal costs to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister of sponsoring it. For both 2002–03 and 2003–04, this was estimated to be in the region of £190,000. We do not expect costs to change significantly in 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* total budget, *(b)* departmental funding, *(c)* internal costs to his Department, *(d)* total administration costs and *(e)* staff costs to his Department of the Advisory Group on Home Buying were for the financial years (i) 2002–03 and (ii) 2003–04; and what the estimated costs are for financial years (iii) 2004–05 and (iv) 2005–06. [169118]

Keith Hill: The Advisory Group on Home Buying and Selling has been in existence since 1997. Membership includes representatives of central and local government, the Consumers' Association and the main professional and trade bodies involved in the home buying and selling process. The group has assisted with steering research, providing advice on options for reforming the home buying and selling process and helping consideration of responses to wide-ranging consultation on measures to improve the process. The main focus of the group's future work will be to assist with the development, implementation and co-ordination of measures, including home information packs, aimed at making the home buying and selling process easier and more efficient in the interests of buyers and sellers.

There is no central budget for the Advisory Group. Membership and participation is voluntary and unpaid. The cost of the group to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is minimal, comprising attendance of ODPM officials, accommodation for meetings, production and circulation of papers, and refreshments.

Sustainable Development

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what steps he is taking to deliver sustainable development within Government; [165652]

(2) what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [165653]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is working closely with Defra, other Government departments and the Devolved Administrations to deliver sustainable development. The UK Government and Devolved Administrations are currently consulting on creating a new UK strategic framework for sustainable development.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister 's central aim is to create sustainable communities—places where people want to live—by promoting economic growth, social progress and environmental protection.

The Sustainable Communities Plan, "Sustainable Communities; Building for the Future", sets out a programme of action for delivering sustainable communities in all our towns, cities and rural areas. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has recently published "Making it Happen: The Northern Way", which provided an update on the delivery of the Sustainable Communities Plan, with a particular emphasis on the North and the Midlands.

In line with all government departments, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is actively working to manage the sustainable development impacts of the operation of its estates and to deliver the targets outlined in the "Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate".

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill, currently before the House, sets out contributing to the achievement of sustainable development as an objective for regional spatial strategies and local development documents. We have backed this up with new guidance on

sustainable development and planning in Planning Policy Statement 1—Creating Sustainable Communities—which was issued for consultation on 24 February.

In addition, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister actively promotes sustainable development and action to tackle climate change internationally.

Urban Development Corporation

Andrew Selous: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what responses he has received to the consultation about the creation of an urban development corporation for South Bedfordshire; and what progress there has been towards the creation of an urban development corporation for South Bedfordshire. [168793]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend Lord Rooker wrote to all local authorities in the Luton-Dunstable-Houghton Regis (LDHR) growth area in early May 2003 asking them to explore options for a local delivery vehicle to manage the growth envisaged in and around Luton and adjoining areas. Local partners have now proposed that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister establish an urban development corporation for the growth area and we are considering this as one of the options. Alongside this is work to establish the location and level of growth in this area, and the testing of growth proposals set out in the Milton Keynes/South Midlands sub regional strategy is part of this process. There has been no decision on the vehicle or the area it might cover at this stage.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Arms Exports

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his letter to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South dated 14 April, which countries his Department considers to have a stricter and more transparent arms exporting system than the UK. [168596]

Mr. MacShane: The United Kingdom has one of the strictest arms export licensing systems in the world. The Government are not aware of any countries which overall operate a stricter export control policy, other than the case of countries such as Japan, which do not export any military equipment at all. We know of no other country that publicly reports more information on arms exports than the United Kingdom.

Economic Community of Central African States

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the proposals for the establishment of a regional peace force, announced by the Economic Community of Central African States (CEEAC) on 29 October 2003; what discussions he has had with members of the governments of *(a)* EU member states, *(b)* EU candidate countries, *(c)* CEEAC member states, *(d)* South Africa and *(e)* the USA on this matter; and if he will make a statement. [168555]

Mr. Mullin: The UK welcomes the support shown by CEEAC and other African regional organisations for the setting up of regional brigades as part of the African Standby Force (ASF).

The UK's support for the establishment of the ASF is currently directed towards developing strategic management capacity at the African Union and establishing regional brigades in east and west Africa. We also support efforts at the national level in South Africa, Kenya, Nigeria and Ghana. We are discussing these initiatives with a range of international and African partners.

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether his Department sent observers to the meeting of the Economic Community of Central African States' meeting in Brazzaville, Republic of Congo, on 28 and 29 October 2003; what key issues have been reported to him; and if he will make a statement. [168556]

Mr. Mullin: A UK representative did not attend the meeting of Defence Chiefs of Staff in Brazzaville in October 2003. The meeting looked at the creation of a brigade-size peace-keeping force for central Africa, in line with the African Union's plans for the African Standby Force. We welcome the support shown by the Economic Community of Central African States and other regional organisations for the African Standby Force and we continue to encourage governments in the region to support regional peace-keeping initiatives.

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what protection is offered to British journalists reporting the military activities in Fallujah in Iraq. [167375]

Mr. Rammell: Fallujah is in the US military's area of operations. Arrangements for media reporting of US military activities are a matter for the US Government.

We encourage British journalists to read Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) Travel advice before planning visits to Iraq. We advise against all but the most essential travel to Iraq. The security situation is dangerous and April has seen widespread outbreaks of violence. Our travel advice states that even the most essential travel to Iraq should be delayed, if possible. FCO travel advice makes clear that Fallujah is a particularly dangerous place at the moment. FCO travel advice is available on the FCO website: www.fco.gov.uk.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the Government has submitted all documentation on which its claim that Iraq tried to procure uranium from Niger was based to the Butler Inquiry. [168282]

Mr. MacShane: As my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has made clear, the Government will co-operate fully with the Butler Review, which has access to all intelligence reports and assessments and to other relevant Government papers.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when the Government first learned that Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan had visited countries in sub-Saharan Africa between 1998 and 2002 to procure uranium. [168283]

Mr. MacShane: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Linlithgow (Mr. Dalyell) on 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 757W. It is the practice of successive Governments not to comment on intelligence matters. The security and intelligence agencies are not within the scope of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (Part 1, paragraph 6).

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 30 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 581W, on Iraq, whether the intelligence referred to is the intelligence upon which the United Kingdom Government based its claim in the September 2002 dossier, Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction, that Iraq sought the supply of uranium from Africa. [168325]

Mr. MacShane: The intelligence upon which the Government based their claim in the September 2002 dossier that Iraq sought to procure uranium from Africa is described in paragraphs 89–93 of the Intelligence and Security Committee's report "Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction" (Cmnd 5972).

Jean Helene

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with members of *(a)* the French Government and *(b)* Prime Minister Seydou Diarra's transitional government in Ivory Coast concerning the nature of the death of French journalist Jean Helene in Abidjan; what advice his Department has issued to UK aid workers (i) in Ivory Coast and (ii) looking to travel to Ivory Coast; and if he will make a statement. [168554]

Mr. Mullin: Along with our other EU partners we condemned the murder of the French journalist, Jean Helene, in Abidjan in October 2003. We urged the Ivorian authorities to re-establish rule of law to protect Ivorians and foreign nationals. The policeman charged with Jean Helene's murder was found guilty and sentenced in January 2004. We are also concerned at reports of the recent disappearance of another journalist, a French/Canadian national.

We advise UK nationals against non-essential travel to Cote d'Ivoire. More detailed advice is provided on the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) website: www.fco.gov.uk.

As I made clear in a press release on 21 April, we urge all Ivorian parties to make progress in implementing the Linas Marcoussis Agreement. A copy of the press release is available on the FCO website: www.fco.gov.uk/policy/news/press-releases.

Middle East

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the Government's policy is on the insistence by the Israeli Government that the Palestinians should abandon their right of return to what is now Israel. [168459]

Mr. Rammell: Return of refugees is a final status issue. It must therefore form part of a negotiated settlement between the two parties. Phase Three of the roadmap provides for this. To get back to negotiations, both parties must fulfil their commitments under Phase One of the roadmap.

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* Israel and *(b)* the United States on the Israeli Government's policy of targeted assassinations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip. [168460]

Mr. Rammell: On 26 April, my right hon. Friend the Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean made clear to the Israeli Charge, Mr. Rav-ner, that the Israeli policy of targeted assassinations is illegal, unjustified and counter-productive. Both parties must refrain from actions that may further escalate tensions, including any more such killings. We are in regular contact with the US Administration, at all levels, about the situation in the Middle East, including targeted killings.

Mordechai Vanunu

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will seek to arrange a meeting with Mordechai Vanunu to discuss ways to implement a nuclear weapon-free zone in the Middle East. [168616]

Mr. Rammell: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary currently has no plans to arrange such a meeting.

Nuclear Weapons

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs by which *(a)* governments and *(b)* organisations it was decided to send (i) surplus highly enriched uranium from Libya to Russia and (ii) nuclear technology components and missiles to the United States following the decision of Libya to halt its programmes of weapons of mass destruction. [168728]

Mr. MacShane: On 19 December Libya declared that it intended to dismantle completely and verifiably its weapons of mass destruction programmes, and to limit the range of Libyan missiles to under 300 kms.

The UK and US offered full support to Libya in helping to declare its programmes to the relevant international bodies, as well as assistance in dismantling Libya's WMD programmes.

The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), and the United States' and Russian Governments assisted Libya with the removal of High Enriched Uranium (HEU) fuel stored at the Tajura research reactor facility. IAEA inspectors monitored and verified the packing of the HEU for transport and removal on 8 March. The HEU was airlifted from Libya to the Russian Federation.

Russia agreed to take back the HEU. The fuel-removal was funded by the United States Department of Energy under a co-operative US-Russia-IAEA

programme called the Tripartite Initiative, which addresses safety and proliferation risks. The Tripartite Initiative returns fresh and spent fuel from Russian designed reactors abroad.

Following discussions between the UK, US and Libya, it was agreed that sensitive nuclear technology and missile components should be removed to a secure location in the United States. This was done in close co-operation with the IAEA. There is no equivalent international organisation in the area of missile technology.

Pastor Khalid Babaev

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Azerbaijan Government concerning the threats made by Islamist extremists against Pastor Khalid Babaev, a Seventh Day Adventist pastor in Nakhichevan. [168428]

Mr. Rammell: Promotion of human rights, including freedom of thought, conscience and religion is at the heart of our foreign policy. We condemn instances where individuals are persecuted because of faith or belief, wherever they happen and whatever the religion of the individual or group concerned.

British embassy staff in Baku keep in close contact with human rights NGOs in Azerbaijan and have raised issues of religious persecution with the State Commission for Religious Organisations. In March 2003 the British ambassador to Azerbaijan hosted a series of round table talks with NGOs to discuss current concerns, including issues of religious freedoms.

We have not made any specific representations to the Azeri Government about Pastor Khalid Babaev.

Sudan

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what steps are being taken to bring the Janjaweed militia within the peace agreement in Sudan. [167819]

Mr. Mullin: We have made numerous representations to the Government of Sudan about the need to rein in the Janjaweed militias. In the 8 April humanitarian ceasefire agreement the Sudanese Government committed itself to neutralising the armed militias, which we understand to mean the Janjaweed.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has held with the National Islamic Front Government of the Sudan on the implementation of Sharia law in the south of the country. [168249]

Mr. Mullin: We had extensive consultations with the parties at the peace talks in Kenya as part of the negotiations which led to the Machakos Protocol in July 2002. The Machakos Protocol largely resolved the question of the application of Sharia law in the south of Sudan.

Mr. Ancram: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether the people of Gibraltar will be able to vote in the forthcoming referendum on the proposed EU Constitution. [169015]

Mr. Straw: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. MacShane) on 27 April 2004 (UIN 168824) to the hon. Member for Romford (Mr. Rosindell).

Swaziland

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the impact that the proposed new constitution in Swaziland will have on *(a)* democracy and *(b)* human rights in that country. [168908]

Mr. Mullin: The proposed constitution provides improved rights for women, which will be enshrined in a bill of rights, and a basis for improvements in democracy and human rights. The Commonwealth Secretariat provided expertise during the drafting of the constitution to align it with the Commonwealth's own core principles.

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Swaziland about the proposed new constitution of that country; and if he will make a statement. [168909]

Mr. Mullin: Our High Commissioner in Mbabane regularly discusses the draft constitution with the Government of Swaziland. The proposed constitution is also on the agenda of the EU's regular political dialogue with the Government of Swaziland.

Uganda

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance his Department has *(a)* offered and *(b)* provided to the Government of Uganda to (i) initiate, (ii) facilitate and (iii) co-ordinate talks with the Lord's Resistance Army; and if he will make a statement. [168552]

Mr. Mullin: The Ugandan Government has not requested direct assistance from the UK. However, we continue to support mediation initiatives by the Ugandan Government and local leaders, who we believe are best placed to achieve a sustainable peace. Since 2001, we have spent nearly £1 million on conflict reduction and peace initiatives in Uganda. This includes the development of Mega FM Radio, which is playing an important part in attempts to develop dialogue. A further £1.6 million has been set aside up to March 2005.

United Arab Emirates

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the *(a)* social, *(b)* economic and *(c)* cultural links between the United Arab Emirates and the United Kingdom. [168569]

Mr. Rammell: The ties between the United Kingdom and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) are deep and long-standing. We are building on them. HRH the Duke of York, the Lord Mayor of London, the House of Commons UAE All Party Parliamentary Group and my right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary have all visited UAE in recent months. The UAE is the UK's most important trading partner in the region with commerce

between the two countries totalling over £3 billion. British companies contribute significantly to the UAE's rapidly modernising economy. About 50,000 British citizens live and work in the UAE and over 500,000 visited in 2003. Many Emiratis visit the UK regularly and have houses here. There are growing cultural links, reflected in the presence of British Council offices in four of the Emirates. Our links in these fields are thriving.

United States

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the visitor visa requirements are for US visitors to the UK. [168253]

Mr. Mullin: Nationals of the United States of America do not require a visa to visit the United Kingdom for less than six months. However, on arrival in the UK, they must be able to satisfy an Immigration Officer that they qualify for entry as a visitor under the UK Immigration Rules. From 13 November 2003 an additional entry clearance requirement was introduced for nationals of 10 countries, including the United States, who intend to stay in the UK for more than six months or who are work permit holders. Further information is available at UK visas website, www.ukvisas.gov.uk.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Child Care

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Minister for Women how many working mothers use child care for *(a)* children under five and *(b)* children over five years. [167879]

Ms Hewitt: The estimates from the autumn 2003 Labour Force Survey, the most recent information available, are around 750,000 working mothers using child care for under fives and around 1,050,000 for over fives.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Draft Age Discrimination Regulations

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether draft regulations on age discrimination will be published in 2004. [168157]

Jacqui Smith: We are in the process of reviewing the timetable for further consultation. We are doing so in the light of our clear commitment to give those with responsibilities and with rights as much time as possible to prepare for the new legislation coming into force in 2006, and to do so with regulations that are clear and effective. We shall announce the new timetable as soon as possible.

Employment Rights

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Heywood and Middleton have taken 26 weeks maternity leave since 1997. [168529]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of paternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). However, figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

BT

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reasons her Department has undertaken a review of apparent disparities between the Valuation Office Agency's calculation method of business rates for BT in comparison with other telecom companies; when she will publish her Department's findings; whom is being consulted; and if she will make a statement. [167268]

Mr. Timms: The Government said last year, in response to representations made by members of the telecommunications industry, that they would review the rating system as it applied to the industry to ensure that it is working fairly.

The Department has appointed a contractor to carry out the review. On completion of the review the Department will present the report to the Broadband Stakeholders Group (BSG), which is representative of the communications industry.

We expect initial findings in the summer and subject to progress, to produce a report in the autumn.

Business Link

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what funds have been allocated to raising awareness of Business Link branded services among small businesses in each year since its inception; what the target was for the awareness level for each year; and what her estimate is of the current level of awareness among small businesses. [168448]

Nigel Griffiths: The following measures were used to raise awareness of Business Link.

In 1996–97, £2,527,747 was allocated to raising awareness of Business Link, through press, radio and poster advertising. Awareness of Business Link among small businesses in February 1997 was 72 per cent.

In 1997–98, expenditure was £1,331,702 on press advertising. Awareness of Business Link in December 1998 was 77 per cent.

In 1998–99, expenditure was £1,021,352 on press, radio and poster advertising. Awareness of Business Link in March 1999 was 65 per cent. Between 1996 and 1999 there were no specific targets set for awareness raising.

Between March and November 2001, expenditure on Business Link advertising was £2,600,000. Advertising tracking showed spontaneous awareness at the end of this period was 17 per cent. and prompted awareness was 81 per cent. The targets set for this period were for 20 per cent. unprompted and 80 per cent. prompted awareness.

Between September 2002 and April 2003 expenditure on Business Link advertising was £6,000,000. Results were measured in two ways: tracking of advertising and direct mail activity showed spontaneous awareness at 11 per cent. and prompted awareness at 77 per cent., whilst a National Omnibus Survey showed overall awareness of Business Link at 74 per cent. The targets set for this period were for 20 per cent. unprompted and 80 per cent. prompted awareness.

Business Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 6 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 72W, on regulatory impact assessments, how many regulatory impact statements were issued separate from regulatory impact assessments by the Small Business Service in each year since its inception, with particular reference to the Evaluation of Regulatory Impact Assessments Compendium Report 2003–04, March 2004, pages 25–26. [168712]

Nigel Griffiths: I am advised that the Small Business Service has not issued any regulatory impact statements. Such statements are prepared by the lead Department to explain the impact on business of proposals involving new or amended regulations, and take into account discussions with the Small Business Service and Cabinet Office.

Central Lobby Consultants

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the work she has commissioned from Central Lobby Consultants since 1 June 2001. [163974]

Ms Hewitt: Our records indicate that no such work has been commissioned.

Chemicals Industry

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with her US counterparts concerning European regulations on the chemicals industry; and if she will make a statement. [168896]

Jacqui Smith: My officials have participated in discussions with US counterparts about EU regulations on the chemicals industry. This has included proposals for new regulations controlling the manufacture, use or import of chemicals into the EU, known as the REACH system (Registration, Evaluation and Authorisation of Chemicals). The Government consider it essential that the new system be compatible with member state and EU commitments under the World Trade Organisation (WTO), relevant multilateral environment agreements such as the Stockholm and Rotterdam Conventions, the Globally Harmonised System of classification and labelling and with other existing complimentary legislation. The Government are committed to continuing dialogue with our trade partners on this issue.

Civil Partnerships

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry whether the Civil Partnership Bill allows *(a)* religious ceremonies for same-sex civil partnerships and *(b)* partnerships to be registered in religious premises. [169016]

Ms Hewitt: Clause 2 of the Civil Partnership Bill would ensure that no religious service is to be used while the civil partnership registrar is officiating at the signing of a civil partnership document. Clause 6 would prohibit same-sex couples registering as civil partners of each other in religious premises.

It would be open to individual religious faiths to decide for themselves if they wished to offer a service of blessing after the formation of a civil partnership.

Coal Industry

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money has been provided in subsidy to the UK coal mining industry in each of the last 10 years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [168057]

Mr. Timms: The following table shows Government financial support for the coal industry in the financial years from 1994–95 to 2003–04. These figures exclude the impact of debt write-offs and proceeds at the privatisation of British Coal and payments made in respect of inherited liabilities following that privatisation, such as health claims.

As shown, almost £165 million was paid to eligible coal producers under the UK Coal Operating Aid Scheme between 2000 and 2002. In June 2003, the Government introduced Coal Investment Aid (CIA), which aims to create or safeguard jobs within socially and economically disadvantaged areas in the UK by supporting investment projects, which will maintain access to viable reserves. It has a total budget of £60 million available for award over three years. Offers of CIA worth £40 million were accepted by coal producers following the first period for receipt of applications. This will be paid in stages as the projects proceed. The first £0.4 million of payments were made before the end of the financial year. The second application period is now open; it will close on 1 June 2004.

Government financial support to the coal industry

Financial year	*Total grants (£ million)*
1994–95	205
1995–96	0
1996–97	0
1997–98	0
1998–99	0
1999–2000	0
2000–01	76.5
2001–02	61.6
2002–03	26.6
2003–04	0.4

Construction Industry

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if her Department will carry out an investigation into the insolvency of Ballast UK to determine whether there have been breaches of insolvency law. [168917]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There is no UK company registered as Ballast UK. There is a company called Ballast plc, which is a wholly-owned subsidiary of a Dutch company, Ballast Nedam NV, and which went into Administration on 15 October 2003.

The administrator has a statutory duty to report to the Secretary of State on the conduct of the directors, and this is usually received by the Insolvency Service within six months of the appointment date. In the case of Ballast plc the administrator has not yet submitted his report. However, once this is received it will be reviewed by The Insolvency Service to ascertain whether disqualification proceedings are in the public interest.

Disqualification can be for a period of up to 15 years and bars individuals from taking part in the management of a limited company.

Departmental Budget

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* DEL resource budget, *(b)* AME resource budget and *(c)* total resource budget of her Department were for each year between 1997 and 2007. [168608]

Ms Hewitt: These figures are published in "Central Government Supply Estimates 2004–2005 Supplementary Budgetary Information" (April 2004, Cm 6133) for the period 1998–99 to 2005–06. Figures on a resource basis are not available for years prior to 1998–99. Budgets for 2006–07 and 2007–08 will be published later in the year after the conclusion of the 2004 Spending Review. All figures shown exclude capital.

£000

	DEL resource budget	*AME resource budget*	*Total resource budget*
1998–99	3,008,248	232,462	3,240,710
1999–2000	3,822,508	770,790	4,593,298
2000–01	5,860,121	822,572	6,682,693
2001–02	5,298,002	1,189,072	6,487,074
2002–03	3,832,749	3,223,632	7,056,381
2003–04	4,817,597	2,251,743	7,069,340
2004–05	4,808,961	281,569	5,090,530
2005–06	5,325,511	535,657	5,861,168

Notes:

1. The increase in the DEL resource budget in 2000–01 and 2001–02 compared to earlier years represents additional provisions for coal health claims. Part of the 2001–02 increase resulted from change in the rate used for discounting liabilities from 6 per cent. to 3.5 per cent. From 2002–03 these liabilities were reclassified as AME resource budget.
2. The increase in the DEL resource budget from 2002–03 represents increased spending on science as well as the regional development agencies. This trend continues into 2005–06.
3. The changes in the AME resource budget in 2001–02, 2002–03 and 2003–04 mainly represent additional provisions for nuclear clean-up. Part of the 2001–02 increase resulted from a change in the rate used for discounting liabilities from 6 per cent. to 3.5 per cent.
4. Changes in provisions are, by their nature, unknown until they occur. Consequently the 2004–05 and 2005–06 AME resource budget figures are much lower.

Energywatch

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what training Energywatch staff receive; and what assessment is made of their energy knowledge *(a)* before being able to advise consumers and *(b)* throughout their employment. [168871]

Mr. Timms: The management of its staff is a matter for Energywatch. I understand that the Chief Executive of Energywatch will write to the hon. Member about the matters he has raised.

Equal Pay

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to require businesses to carry out equal pay reviews. [168889]

Ms Hewitt: The Government have adopted a voluntary approach to pay reviews outside of the civil service and believes it is in firms' best interest to do pay reviews. We believe that the best way to achieve lasting change is through working alongside the business community to promote voluntary equal pay reviews.

We are working with the Equal Opportunities Commission, Opportunity Now, trade unions and employers to meet our target of 35 per cent. of large organisations completing pay reviews by 2006. We have provided funding for the EOC to develop equal pay toolkits for both large and small employers and funding for trade unions to train representatives in equal pay issues. We are also supporting the EOC's sectoral approach to promoting pay reviews.

The EOC's latest findings show that 45 per cent. of large employers had completed an equal pay review, were in the process of completing one or were planning to do so in 2004. Among those that had carried out a pay review or were planning to do one, 41 per cent. said that Government policy and publicity had influenced them.

EU Social Chapter

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Stalybridge and Hyde. [168744]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Stalybridge and Hyde have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to parental leave, which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the fixed term work directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

in addition, the information and consultation of employees directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

European Directives

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has carried out on the implementation of European Directives by other member states; and if she will make a statement. [169177]

Jacqui Smith: The DTI has not done any recent research on this subject. Information on transposition of EU Directives in all member states can be found on the European Commission's website at: www.europa.eu.int/comm/secretariat_general/sgb/droit_com/index_en.htm# transpositions.

In November 2003, the Foreign and Commonwealth Office published a report by Mr. Robin Bellis (an independent consultant) that compared transposition of EU legislation in the UK, France, Spain and Sweden—please refer to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs' statement to the House on 11 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1417.

Flexible Working

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has to extend legislative provisions on flexible working. [168893]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The current Employment Relations Bill includes a technical clause to address original drafting oversights to the flexible working law concerning protections against unfair dismissal.

The Government are committed to reviewing the impact of the flexible working law and has no plans to extend the provisions of the law until after the review in 2006. Currently, the law provides eligible parents of children under six and disabled children under 18 with a legal right to apply to work flexibly. An issue that the review will consider, which my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister has indicated should be a priority, is extending the law to wider groups of carers, such as carers of elderly or sick relatives.

Fund Managers

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to require fund managers to disclose how they vote at annual meetings. [168894]

Jacqui Smith: The Government are committed to improving the voting processes in public companies as an important means of promoting better engagement by all shareholders in the companies in which they invest. We therefore welcomed Paul Myners' report to the Shareholder Voting Working Group, published on 3 February 2004.

As we stated in the White Paper on Modernising Company Law, while in principle we believe that it would be in the public interest to require institutional investors to disclose how they have voted their shares, there are practical difficulties in implementing such a requirement through company law. We are therefore still giving detailed consideration to the Company Law Review proposals in this complex area and will set out our position in due course.

Funeral Directors

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints were made to the Director General of Fair Trading concerning the conduct of funeral directors in each year since 1997; how many such complaints were investigated by the Director General in each year; how many were upheld in each year; how many funeral directors have been banned as unfit to practise by the Director General of Fair Trading since 1997; and if she will publish the list of banned funeral directors. [168665]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I will ask the Chairman of the Office of Fair Trading to write to the hon. Member.

Gas Supplies

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment she has made of how much gas the UK will import in each of the five years from 2006; and if she will make a statement; [168052]

(2) what assessment she has made of the UK's total gas requirements in each of the five years from 2006; and if she will make a statement; [168053]

(3) what assessment she has made of the likely level of production of indigenous gas in each of the five years from 2006; and if she will make a statement. [168054]

Mr. Timms: The Department periodically produces projections of UK gas production and demand. Recent projections of both were published in the third report of the Joint Energy Security of Supply Working Group (available for download from http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/jess/index.shtml). Chart 3 shows of projection of annual gas production from the UK Continental Shelf together with demand projections by both DI and National Grid Transco. Later production projections for the years through to 2009 have been made and are available on the Department's Oil and Gas website at http://www.og.dti.gov.uk/information/bb_updates/chapters/section4_17.htm. These and updated projections of gas demand, which are currently being prepared by DTI for publication in a working paper next month, are expected to be included in the fourth JESS report, which is also expected to be published in May 2004.

We currently export gas to Ireland, from the Markham and Windermere fields directly to The Netherlands and, at time of low UK demand, through the Bacton-Zeebrugge Interconnector to the Continent. However, at times of peak demand, the UK is already a net importer of gas, with imports direct from Norway and through the Interconnector. Recent projections indicate that we are likely to be net importers of gas on an annual basis by around 2006 with a growing import

requirement thereafter. The Department has not made a projection of gross imports, which will be significantly higher than net imports.

Libya

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many British companies are still owed money from projects in Libya; and what estimate she has made as to the amount of money still owed. [166738]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Officials are not aware of any significant cases of British companies who are still owned money from projects in Libya. However, we are ready to provide whatever assistance we can to British companies who find themselves in this position.

Miners' Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much has been paid in fees, and for how many individual cases, under the miners' compensation scheme for *(a)* vibration white finger and *(b)* chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, broken down by solicitor. [168473]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The information is as follows:

Respiratory Disease

Claimants representative[1]	*Cost paid (£ million)*[2]	*Number of claims*
Beresfords	8.9	79,964
Thompsons	38.5	57,340
Hugh James Ford Simey	38.6	56,828
Raleys	27.5	50,164
Avalon	0.6	36,604
Browell Smith & Co.	15.3	32,188
Mark Gilbert Morse	13	25,917
Union of Democratic Mineworkers	9	17,252
Watson Burton	8.8	14,154
Barber & Co.	0.09	13,769

[1] Top 10 solicitors are in descending order and based on the number of claims received.

[2] Solicitor's costs include VAT on solicitor's costs and disbursement but exclude generic costs.

Vibration White Finger

Claimants representative[1]	*Cost paid (£ million)*[2]	*Number of claims*
Thompsons	9	29,968
Browell Smith & Co	8.6	16,476
Beresfords	3.1	11,648
Union of Democratic Mineworkers	5.5	11,610
Raleys	6.5	11,282
Hugh James Ford Simey	5.8	10,640
Graysons	3.7	8,683
Moss	2.9	7,279
Watson Burton	3.1	5,937
AMS Law	1.8	5,327

[1] Top 10 solicitors are in descending order and based on the number of claims received.

[2] Solicitor's costs include VAT on solicitor's costs and disbursement but exclude generic costs.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action has been taken to claw back payments to solicitors who have imposed additional charges on their clients for work under the miners' compensation scheme for vibration white finger and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. [168474]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* I have written to solicitors twice asking them to repay any fees taken from clients on top of the fee they received from the DTI. Those who have failed to reply were removed from the DTIs list of solicitors and were referred to the Law Society.

The Government welcome the decision taken by the Law Society, as the solicitors regulator, that it was against their code of practice for solicitors to charge clients for making compensation claims where the DTI is meeting solicitors' costs. DTI officials continue to meet with the Law Society to progress matters.

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry which *(a)* solicitors and *(b)* claims handlers have been notified to her Department in relation to additional charging for dealing with vibration white finger and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease miners' compensation cases. [168480]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Complaints regarding double charging by solicitors who are processing claims under the British Coal health schemes are the responsibility of the solicitors' regulator, the Law Society.

I am informed that some 173 complaints have been notified to the Law Society. Of these 63 have been concluded, which have led to repayments being to made to 23 claimants.

In addition I have informed the Law Society of those solicitors who failed to respond satisfactorily to my letters relating to double charging.

National Allocation Plan

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what involvement she has had and what position she has taken on the setting of the carbon dioxide reduction target relative to 1990 levels within the National Allocation Plan to implement the EU Emissions Trading Directive. [167752]

Mr Timms: I have been closely involved in and fully support the decision published in the draft National Allocation Plan (NAP) on setting the overall allocation of allowances for the first phase of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) on the projected level of UK emissions, taking into account the Climate Change Programme's planned reduction from emissions trading. While the modelling used for the draft NAP indicated this approach would be equivalent to a 16.3 per cent. reduction in emissions of carbon dioxide over 1990 levels by 2010, the draft NAP indicated that emissions projections were continuing to be refined and the overall level of allowances to be included in the final NAP to be submitted to the Commission would be reviewed in the light of the latest projections. Revisions to projections will be reflected in the NAP to be submitted to the European Commission. We further expect to publish a working paper on the overall emissions projections in May and a final set of emissions projections in June which will be used for calculating final allocations. As a result, the overall percentage

reduction in the carbon dioxide emissions over 1990 levels covered by the NAP will almost certainly change to reflect that work.

New Businesses

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167351]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 1,000 in Manchester local authority (which contains the constituency of Gorton), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 4,800 business start-ups in Manchester local authority in 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Manchester local authority (which contains the constituency of Gorton) are shown for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004

VAT registrations: 1997–2002

	Manchester
1997	1,595
1998	1,580
1999	1,585
2000	1,465
2001	1,335
2002	1,275

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167352]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for Manchester (Chamber Business Enterprises) has provided assistance to 164 businesses in the Gorton constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government Support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the Small Business Service does not have access to this data.

The assistance provided to the 164 companies include, Business Finance, High Growth start up, Supply chain, Workforce Development, Micro start up assistance, E-Services, Innovation technology and design, International, Environmental advice, and other account Management assistance.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses were created in Liverpool, Walton in each year between 1997 and 2003. [166971]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in the fourth quarter of 2003. There were 3,500 business start-ups in Liverpool and Knowsley local authorities (Liverpool local authority contains the constituency of Walton) in 2003.The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003. Data for Liverpool local authority are not available separately.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Liverpool local authority (which contains the constituency of Walton) are shown in the table for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997–2002

	Liverpool
1997	910
1998	960
1999	870
2000	900
2001	805
2002	835

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many new businesses have started up in Heywood and Middleton since 1997; [168523]

(2) how many new businesses have been established in Heywood and Middleton since 1997. [168525]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 400 in Rochdale local authority (which contains the constituency of Heywood and Middleton), in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 1,400 business start-ups in Rochdale local authority in 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Rochdale local authority (which contains the constituency of Heywood and Middleton) are shown for the period 1997 to 2002. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997–2002

	Rochdale
1997	480
1998	455
1999	440
2000	430
2001	455
2002	465

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many new businesses have started up in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997. [168747]

Nigel Griffiths: Barclays Bank's latest survey of business creation includes non-VAT registered firms and shows that there were 115,000 business start-ups in England and Wales, including 400 in Tameside local authority (which contains the constituency of Stalybridge and Hyde) in the fourth quarter of 2003. The latest yearly figures show 465,000 business start-ups in England and Wales in 2003. This represents a 19 per cent. increase on the year before. There were 1,900 business start-ups in Tameside local authority in 2003. Data for local authorities are not available for before 2003.

DTI figures based solely on VAT registrations for Tameside local authority (which contains the constituency of Stalybridge and Hyde) for the period 1997 to 2002 are shown in the table. Data for 2003 will be available in autumn 2004.

VAT registrations: 1997 to 2002

	Tameside local authority
1997	500
1998	550
1999	445
2000	530
2001	470
2002	460

Source:
Business Start-ups and Closures: VAT Registrations and De-registrations 1994–2002, Small Business Service

VAT registrations do not capture all start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to be registered if they fall below the compulsory VAT threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. Only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises were registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Northwest Development Agency

Andy Burnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how much money the Northwest Development Agency has spent in total since its creation in *(a)* each local authority in the North West and *(b)* each parliamentary constituency in the North West. [167656]

Jacqui Smith *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The Northwest Development Agency does not collate data by local authority area or parliamentary constituency.

The total NWDA funding for each year since its creation is as follows:

	£ million
1999–2000	234
2000–01	176
2001–02	292
2002–03	306

Oil Prices

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on her assessment of the impact of the oil price on business investment in the UK. [168890]

Mr. Timms: The price of oil is just one of many factors that affects the level of business investment in the UK economy, and for most sectors is a less important factor than, for instance, the cost of capital or profitability. Moreover, although international oil prices have been relatively high over the last year, the fall in the value of the US dollar has helped the sterling oil price rise less steeply.

The Department's assessment therefore is that high recent international oil prices have impacted little on overall investment levels within the UK. Indeed the most recent investment data show business investment in the UK rising during each of the last three quarters of 2003.

Procurement Policy

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the corporate social responsibility requirements of her Department's procurement policy. [168670]

Ms Hewitt: As the sponsoring Department for business the DTI vision for corporate social responsibility is to see companies take account of their economic, social and environmental impact in the way they operate, maximising the benefits and minimising the downsides. Naturally, the Department is keen to reflect these practices. We are working closely with Defra to push forward the sustainable development in procurement agenda and through our Small Business Service and in partnership with the Office of Government Commerce, we seek to improve accessibility of Government contracts to small and medium enterprises, including those owned by ethnic minorities and women.

Regional Development Agencies

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to make Regional Development Agencies democratically accountable to the community in which they operate. [167289]

Mr. Raynsford: I have been asked to reply.

The Government's policy on regional governance, including the role of Regional Development Agencies, was set out in the White Paper, "Your Region, Your Choice" published in May 2002 (cm 5511).

In those regions which vote to establish an elected regional assembly, the Regional Development Agency will become a functional body of the elected assembly and so, directly accountable to it.

In those regions which do not have an elected assembly, the existing regional chambers, made up of local authority representatives and social and economic partners, will continue to scrutinise the work of the Regional Development Agency.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of recent trends in investment in renewable energy upon residents of Birkenhead. [166614]

Mr. Timms: As I far as I am aware recent trends in investment have not led directly to new renewables capacity in Birkenhead itself. However, there are a number of development not far from Birkenhead.

In 2003 my Department awarded a capital grant of £10 million to Seascape Energy towards the costs of developing the Burbo Bank offshore wind farm in Liverpool Bay.

In 1999, Mersey Docks and Harbour Company were awarded a contract under the Non Fossil Fuel Obligation (NFFO) arrangements for electricity to be generated from six 600 kW wind turbines in Seaforth Dock.

A grant of £11,759.50 was awarded to Cosmopolitan Housing Association under stream 1 of the DTIs Photovoltaic (PV) Major Demonstration Programme for a project in Liverpool.

A grant of £94,647 was awarded under the DTIs PV Domestic Field Trial to CDS Housing for a project at Pinehurst Estate, Liverpool.

A grant of £1,250 was awarded to Liverpool county council under the DTIs Clear Skies scheme for a community project in Liverpool.

Some initiatives relating to the North West region as a whole may result in benefits for Birkenhead. In 2000–01, the DTI contributed £50,000 towards a study of the potential for renewable energy throughout the North West region. Between 2002–04, the DTI contributed £208,060 towards a regional renewable energy planning facilitation fund administered through the Government Office for the North West.

Rogue Recruitment Agencies

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action her Department is taking to tackle the activities of rogue recruitment agencies; and if she will make a statement. [168895]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTIs Employment Agency Standards Inspectorate enforces the legislation regulating the activities of the private recruitment industry. Inspectors visit agencies' premises to examine their records. The Inspectorate can prosecute an agency found to be in breach of the legislation and the maximum fined is £5,000 for each offence. It can also apply to an employment tribunal for an order prohibiting an individual from operating an agency or employment business for up to 10 years.

I remain committed to tackling the problem of those agencies and employment businesses that breach legislation governing their industry. To this end, we have recently completely overhauled the Conduct Regulations the Inspectorate enforce and undertaken a number of innovative activities to help ensure migrant workers do not fall victim to rogue employment agencies. Moreover, Employment Agency Standards Inspectors follow up every complaint received concerning breaches of the employment agency legislation and also undertake spot checks.

Rural Post Offices

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) when the Government will announce the level of financial assistance they are to provide to rural post offices after April 2006; [169128]

(2) when her Department will publish the report completed by Postcomm in July 2003 on funding for postal services in rural areas after 2006; and if she will make a statement. [169129]

Mr. Timms *[holding answers 27 April 2004]:* The Cabinet Office Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU) report on the future of the post office network recommended that the Postal Services Commission should advise the Government on the main options for the policy framework after 2006. The Government are currently considering that policy advice, which was submitted in confidence, and will take decisions on the shape of the rural post office network after 2006 in good time to allow for a smooth transition from the current support arrangements. The Government have no plans to publish Postcomm's advice at present.

Scottish Power

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what meetings Ministers in her Department have had with representatives of Scottish Power to discuss its proposed gas storage plant at Byley, Cheshire. [168715]

Mr. Timms: Ministers meet energy companies from time to time to discuss the evolving energy scene and development of energy policy.

I met the chief executive of Scottish Power in March. We did not discuss the Byley proposal.

Shareholders

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans her Department has for new legislation to protect shareholder investors from misrepresentations by company executives. [168900]

Jacqui Smith: It is already an offence under existing legislation for directors who, recklessly or knowingly, approve annual accounts which do not comply with the requirements of the Companies Act 1985. Directors can also be guilty of an offence where a directors' report is prepared which does not comply with the Companies Act 1985. Directors may, of course, also be liable to the company if accounts and reports are approved which do not represent a true and fair view.

The Companies (Audit, Investigations and Community Enterprise) Bill currently before Parliament also strengthens audit and accounting requirements, including the ability of auditors to acquire information.

In addition, the Financial Services Authority (FSA) has the power to issue a private warning, public censure and unlimited fine on companies for breaches of the Listing Rules and on their directors who were knowingly concerned in such breaches. The FSA also has the power to publicly censure or impose an unlimited fine on anyone, whether they are authorised or not, who engages in market abuse as defined under the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000. The FSA can also take action under Section 397 of Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (Misleading Statements and Practices), which makes it a criminal offence to engage in the following activities: *(a)* making a statement, promise or forecast which he knows to be misleading, false or deceptive; *(b)* dishonestly concealing any material facts whether in connection with a statement, promise or forecast made by him or otherwise; or *(c)* recklessly makes (dishonestly or otherwise) a statement, promise or forecast Which is misleading, false or deceptive.

Small Business

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in Heywood and Middleton since 1997. [168524]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for North Manchester has provided assistance to 499 businesses in the Heywood/Middleton constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises form April 2001. Before this date Government Support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to this data.

The assistance provided to the 499 companies include; Business Finance, Environmental, E services, High Growth, International, Innovation, Micro support, supply chain, Workforce development and other account management assistance.Under the Research and Development Scheme (R&D) four offers have been made and accepted to the value of £264,930.

Under the Enterprise Grant Scheme (EGS), which has now come to a close (April 2004) nine offers of grant were made and accepted with a value of £355,100.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997. [168746]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link for Greater Manchester (Chamber Business Enterprises) has provided assistance to 688 businesses in the Hyde and Stalybridge constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link operators (seven in the North West) to provide business support to small and medium-sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date government support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the SBS does not have access to this data.

The Business Link operator has provided business start-up advice to over 113 companies in the Stalybridge and Hyde area; in addition they have provided assistance in the following areas, business finance, environmental, E services, high growth, international, innovation, technology and design, supply chain, micro support and workforce development and other account management assistance.

Under the research and development grant (R&D) two offers have been made and accepted to the value of £99,900.

Social Entrepreneurship

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what support her Department is giving to schemes to encourage social entrepreneurship. [168360]

Ms Hewitt: The Department's support for social entrepreneurship is set out in "Social Enterprise: a strategy for success", published in 2002, and last year's "Progress Report".

Support for social enterprises is, for example, one element of the Phoenix Fund which promotes enterprise in disadvantaged communities and under-represented groups. It helps social enterprises to gain better access to business support and to finance through Community Development Finance Institutions.

Help and advice for those interested in setting up social enterprises is available through Business Link and specific programmes such as the Phoenix Development Fund, which supports a Social Enterprise Visit Programme that facilitates shared learning through the exchange of ideas and experience across the sector.

The Department also supports awards schemes, such as "Enterprising Solutions: the National Social Enterprise Award", that aim to inspire others by showcasing the exceptional entrepreneurial talents harnessed for public benefit by successful social enterprises. .

Software Piracy

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what steps she is taking to combat computer software piracy by businesses; and if she will make a statement; [168910]

(2) what plans she has to implement the EU Enforcement Directive to control business software piracy; [168911]

Ms Hewitt: Rights holders in the UK have a comprehensive range of civil remedies to pursue enforcement activity against businesses that make and use illegal copies of computer software. The EC Directive on enforcement of intellectual property rights will ensure that similar provision exists throughout the Community. However, reducing illegal use of copyright material, including software, within businesses can be addressed in the first instance by improved awareness and understanding about intellectual property. In this respect, the awareness-raising activity the Patent Office undertakes is valuable. This should complement the awareness-raising activity undertaken by trade bodies such as the Federation Against Software Theft and the Business Software Alliance.

Sub-Post Offices

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list by region, the amounts of compensation paid in the last 12 months to sub postmasters and mistresses connected with the closure of their establishment; [168852]

(2) how many sub-post offices which in the past 12 months the organisation Postwatch has recommended be kept open, have subsequently been closed, broken down by region. [168988]

Mr. Timms: These are operational matters for Post Office Ltd. and I have asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many sub-post offices closed in the UK in the past 12 months, broken down by region. [169136]

Mr. Timms: Post Office Ltd. produces statistics on post office closures on a quarterly basis. The latest data on net closures by region currently available is to the end of December 2003. Data for the quarter to end March 2004 is expected shortly.

Net post office closures by country/region for the nine months to end December 2003

Country/region	*Number*
North East	32
North West	99
Yorkshire and Humberside	62
West Midlands	58
South West	75
South East	122
London	89
East of England	61
East Midlands	66
Northern Ireland	18
Scotland	43
Wales	49

Trade (United Arab Emirates)

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps are being taken to improve trade between the United Arab Emirates and the UK. [168573]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK has a substantial trading relationship with the UAE. UK exports of visible goods to the UAE totalled £2,080.6 million in 2003, an increase of 29 per cent. over the previous year. UK Trade and Investment works closely with all Posts in the country (in Abu Dhabi and Dubai) to support British companies wishing to expand their activities in this market. For example, there are plans to support 35 exhibitions and trade mission to the UAE this financial year. This will allow over 1,200 UK companies to access the market with UK Government support.

UK Trade and Investment has also worked with industry to identify eight priority sectors in which bespoke sector specific activities will be undertaken.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 29 April 2004

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Members' Salaries

Mr. Burnett: To ask the Leader of the House how much was paid in salaries and allowances to hon. Members *(a)* including and *(b)* excluding payments to Ministers in each year since 1996–97. [169457]

Mr. Woolas: The cost of salaries and allowances, excluding ministerial payments are as follows:

£000

	MP salaries and related costs[1]	*Allowances*[2]
Cash basis		
1996–97	28,883	45,894
1997–98	39,060	49,368
1998–99	32,436	47,237
1999–2000	34,167	47,647
2000–01	35,117	49,066
Resource basis		
2001–02	40,856	66,745
2002–03	39,801	75,412

[1] This includes: Members' salaries; salaries of the Chairman of Ways and Means and deputies; social security costs; and the London supplement.

[2] Allowances include: office costs allowance; incidental expenses provision; Members' staffing budget; additional costs allowance; travel (including to EU institutions); winding-up allowance.

Information is not yet available for 2003–04. Following the introduction of resource accounting, figures for 2001–02 and 2002–03 are not directly comparable with those for 2000–01 and earlier years.

Ministerial salaries are paid directly by their respective Government Department. Records of ministerial pay are not held centrally and do not distinguish between Lords and Commons Ministers. The information requested could therefore be provided only at disproportionate cost.

TRANSPORT

A43

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will close the A43 between Brackley and Towcester on Friday 9 July. [169643]

Mr. Jamieson: We are examining carefully the arguments that have been made both for and against closure of the A43 trunk road on the pre-race day of Friday 9 July to facilitate access in and out of the Silverstone circuit.

The Inter Agency Working Group that is looking at all the issues involved is due to meet again on the 4 May and the Chairman of that group has been asked to give specific attention to the traffic management, travel and cost implications of a Friday closure.

A decision will be announced once I have received the report of that meeting and am in a position to make a decision.

Mobile Phone Use

Mrs. Betty Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the level of compliance of motor vehicle drivers with the legislation forbidding the use of a mobile telephone when driving; and what further steps he will take to improve compliance. [168867]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department has been undertaking regular surveys of the use of mobile phones while driving. The last survey carried out in October 2003 before the new offence was introduced showed that 1.9 per cent. of drivers were using a hand-held phone, and 0.5 per cent. a hands-free phone. The results from the most recent survey this month are not yet available.

The Department will continue to publicise the dangers of using mobile phones when driving. Radio advertising is planned for May, July, August and November and cinema advertising in September and January 2005. The message will be reinforced through the Department's sports sponsorship programme. The police are responsible for enforcing the law.

Road Deaths/Injuries (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Manchester, Gorton has been since 1997. [167306]

Mr. Darling: The available information relates to local authority areas. For the Manchester metropolitan district (which includes the constituency of Manchester, Gorton) the number of deaths in road accidents fell by 53 per cent. from 32 in 1997 to 15 in 2002, the latest year for which information is available. The number of serious injuries rose by 3 per cent., from 244 in 1997 to 252 in 2002. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituencies will become available in the summer and I shall write to my right hon. Friend with figures for Manchester, Gorton and place a copy of my letter in the Libraries of the House.

Road Schemes (South-West)

Mr. Walter: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much money has been committed to date by the Government Office for the south west for the Bristol/Bath to South Coast Roads Study. [168829]

Mr. Jamieson: Up to 5 April 2004, the amount committed on the Bristol/Bath to South Coast Study was £247,682.77.

Transport Infrastructure (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of Manchester, Gorton. [167309]

Mr. Darling: Residents of Manchester will benefit from the new TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February. The franchise secures investment of around £260 million which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region. A new northern franchise, which will include local and regional services through Manchester, is out for tender. Work continues on the west coast main line upgrade, which will see a reduction in journey times on services to/from Manchester and an increase in service frequency.

US Air Travel

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will hold urgent talks with the US Administration on the exchange of private details, with particular reference to credit card numbers, for British passengers travelling to the USA by air. [168258]

Mr. Darling: The European Commission is leading the negotiations on the processing and transfer of airline Passenger Name Record data. We are in close discussions with our EU partners to consider how to proceed following referral of the proposed EU-US agreement to the European Court of Justice. I have also raised this with the US Secretary for Transportation at a meeting with him in March.

TREASURY

Administration Costs

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made in lowering administration costs as a proportion of total spending since the 2004 Budget Statement. [168600]

Mr. Boateng: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer I gave him on 19 April 2004 in answer to his question 165021 showing that administration costs are to fall to a planned 3.7 per cent. of total spending by 2008.

Central Lobby Consultants

Norman Baker: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the work he has commissioned from Central Lobby Consultants since 1 June 2001. [163973]

Ruth Kelly: There is no payment to Central Lobby Consultants in HM Treasury records for this period.

Heavily Indebted Poor Countries

Mr. Battle: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what representations he has made to the *(a)* World Bank, *(b)* IMF and *(c)* Paris Club creditors on increasing the debt cancellation available to the world's poorest countries, with particular reference to Iraq, through the heavily indebted poor countries process. [168609]

John Healey: The spring meetings of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank were held on 24–25 April 2004. All Paris Club creditors were represented at the meetings.

At the meetings, the UK stressed the importance of the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative in helping to provide a robust exit from unsustainable debt for the world's poorest countries. As part of this, the UK called for full topping up to be provided when countries face exogenous shocks, in order to bring their debt ratios back to the agreed HIPC thresholds. The UK also supported consideration of extension of the Initiative so that countries yet to enter the Initiative are able to benefit from HIPC debt relief. A number of countries—many of which are in the process of trying to exit conflict—have yet to reach Decision Point and benefit from HIPC relief. This could deliver an extra $30 billion in debt relief. Iraq is not eligible for the HIPC Initiative, and so will have relief for its external debt considered under the auspices of the Paris Club's Evian Approach. However, the Government's view is that Iraq's debt position is unsustainable and that a substantial reduction will be needed to restore them to sustainability. That is likely to require writing off the vast majority of Iraq's debts.

Public Expenditure/Taxation

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much *(a)* public expenditure there was and *(b)* tax revenue was raised per head of population in each of the last seven years. [168430]

Mr. Boateng: Data on tax revenue and public expenditure over the past seven years are available in the public finances databank on the HM Treasury website. (www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/economic_data_and_tools/pubfinance/data_pubfinance_databank.cfm).

Population estimates are contained in the ONS publication, Population Trends 115, available on the ONS website (www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_population/PT115.pdf).

Treasury Building (Union Flag)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reason the Union Flag was not flown above the Treasury on the Queen's Birthday on 21 April. [168801]

Ruth Kelly: The Union Flag was raised above the Treasury on the Queen's Birthday on 21 April.

UK Covered Bonds

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans his Department has to draft legislation which would enable UK covered bonds to be put on an approved list that is compliant with the European Directive on Undertakings for Collective Investments in Transferable Securities; and if he will make a statement. [168892]

Ruth Kelly: The Financial Services Authority is considering the best way to enable covered bonds issued in the UK to be compliant with the UCITS Directive.

DEFENCE

Droitwich Spa Army Medal Office

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the role of the Droitwich Spa Army Medal Office in the issuing of the Jubilee medal. [168919]

Mr. Caplin: The Army Medal Office (AMO) at Droitwich issues the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal to those serving and discharged Army personnel who meet the qualifying criteria. The AMO assess eligibility and determine entitlement to the Jubilee Medal and, to date, it has issued 95,332 medals. The majority of those entitled to receive the medal have now received it.

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the medals being issued by the Droitwich Spa Army Medal Office. [168921]

Mr. Caplin: The Army Medal Office at Droitwich is currently responsible for the issue or replacement of some 332 medals or awards. I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Medals

Mr. Luff: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many *(a)* Iraq and *(b)* GSM Canal Zone medals have been issued; and how many are expected to be issued during 2004. [168923]

Mr. Caplin: The information is as follows.

(a) Six.

(b) 6,30 land 777 clasps.

Note:
All figures as at 23 April.

It is difficult to estimate how many Iraq or Suez medals will be awarded in the coming months as it depends on applications. However, I can assure the hon. Member that medal offices will deal with applications as speedily and efficiently as possible.

MOD Sites (Portsmouth)

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will make available information regarding contamination of land *(a)* owned and *(b)* formerly owned by his Department in the City of Portsmouth to Portsmouth City Council; [169409]

(2) what records his Department holds regarding contamination under the sites of former Ministry of Defence houses in Portsmouth. [169404]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Parliamentary Questions

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answer of 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1480W, on public perceptions, when he will write to the hon. Member for North Norfolk. [169731]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to the hon. Member within the next week.

Service Detainees (Far East)

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many ex-servicemen who were detained by the Japanese have received ex-gratia payments under the terms of the 1951 San Francisco Peace Agreement; how many have not received ex-gratia payments; and if he will make a statement. [168051]

Mr. Caplin: The payment scheme under the 1951 Peace Treaty remains open, and claims in respect of eligible individuals who have not yet applied may still be made. Some 51,000 British Service personnel were detained by the Japanese during WW2. The payment records are held individually, and it would incur disproportionate cost to analyse them to provide the information requested.

As a result of the Ex Gratia Payment Scheme which this Government established in November 2000, 8,430 payments have been made to British Servicemen detained by the Japanese during the Second World War and 12,973 payments have been made to the widows or widowers of former servicemen or former civilian internees who qualify for the scheme.

Wind Farms

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of interference with Ministry of Defence navigational instruments from wind farms placed in UK territorial waters. [168234]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to my hon. Friend and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the risk to defence interests from the placement of wind farms around the UK coast. [168235]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to my hon. Friend and a copy of my letter will be placed in the Library of the House.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department has been asked to fund navigational aids to prevent his Department's vessels colliding with windmills. [168238]

Mr. Caplin: There has been no formal requirement placed on the Ministry of Defence to fund navigational aids to prevent Royal Navy vessels and other MOD owned or operated vessels colliding with offshore wind farms. The cost of correctly marking these structures by navigational buoys and lights is the responsibility of the owner and, as such, must comply with standards defined by the Maritime Coastguard Agency in conjunction with the General Lighthouse Authorities (Trinity House, Northern Lighthouse Board and Irish Lights).

HOUSE OF COMMONS

North West Food

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chairman of the Catering Committee whether the House plans to source

more food from North West food producers following the North West Food and Drink promotion in the House on 22 April. [168709]

Mr. Dennis Turner: In conjunction with North West Fine Foods, the Refreshment Department launched the two week North West Regional Food and Drink Promotion on 20 April. This is the second in a series of planned regional promotions.

I recognise the strong interest in the provenance of food and drink sold in the House. Regional promotions give small businesses a chance to raise awareness of their produce with wholesalers supplying the House, and other potential customers. I hope that some of the products that prove popular during the course of the promotion will, in future, be available for regular supply to the House.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Departmental Expenditure

Mr. Burnett: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what the total expenditure incurred by the Commission was in each year since 1996–97. [169458]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The total expenditure for each year as set out in the House's published annual accounts was:

£000

	Net cash expenditure	*Resource outturn*
1996–97	130,192	n/a
1997–98	145,228	n/a
1998–99	173,550	n/a
1999–2000	165,905	n/a
2000–01	162,538	n/a
2001–02	132,508	165,426
2002–03	138,328	180,006

Full information is not yet available for 2003–04. Prior to 2001–02 all reporting was on a cash basis only.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Recycling

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [166662]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: All contracts issued in respect of DFID stipulate that the copying paper provided is to be 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [166663]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: 100 per cent. of the copying paper used in DFID came from recycled sources. It is not possible to say how much post-consumer waste this contained. Our current recycled paper is made up from at least 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [166664]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) routinely requires that the designers and printers under contract to produce DFID publications source paper that has a minimum of 75 per cent. recycled content.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [166665]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development does not hold this information centrally, and due to disproportionate cost we cannot supply this information.

However, DFID routinely requires that the designers and printers under contract to produce DFID publications source paper that has a minimum of 75 per cent. recycled content.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development when his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [166666]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID has already met the quick win targets set by DEFRA in that all of our copying paper is 100 per cent. recycled with at least 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content.

DFID routinely requires that the designers and printers under contract to produce DFID publications source paper that has a minimum of 75 per cent. recycled content. We are in the process of amending design and print contracts, and are investigating joining the Department for Transport framework agreement for purchasing recycled paper, ensuring that we meet the quick win target for paper in printed publications.

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the Department's

main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports, in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [166667]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The information in the following table shows the details of the main suppliers to my Department for paper (separate suppliers for the two headquarter locations), stationery and envelopes.

Type	*Supplier*	*Comment*
Copier Paper (DFID London)	David John Papers Ltd. Unit 1A Middlegreen Trading Estate Middlegreen Road Langley Slough Berks SL3 7BL	Diplomat Recycled Paper. A4 80gsm 100 per cent. recycled of 100 per cent. post-consumer waste.
Copier Paper (DFID, Scotland)	Glenmore Dunfermline Business Park Rosyth Fife KY 2RN	Evolve Business Paper. 100 per cent. recycled. Minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.
Stationery	Banner Business Supplies PO Box 560St. Crispins Duke Street Norwich NR3 1SQ	No paper products supplied, only stationery.
	Guilbert Guilbert House 68–72 St John's Road Corstorphine Edinburgh EH12 SAT	No paper products supplied, only stationery
Envelopes	Banner Business Supplies Ltd. PO Box 560 St Crispins Duke Street Norwich NR3 1SQ	Banner Envelopes. 60–85 per cent. post consumer waste.
Paper for Reports (AH)	Glenmore Dunfermline Business Park Rosyth FIFE KY11 2RN	Evolve Business Paper. 100 per cent. recycled. Minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste.
Paper for Reports (PS)	David John Papers Ltd. Unit 1A Middlegreen Trading Estate Middlegreen Road Langley Slough Berks SL3 7BL	Diplomat Recycled Paper. A4 80gsm. 100 per cent. recycled of 100 per cent. post-consumer waste
Paper for reports		The Department for International Development does not procure paper for its reports directly from paper merchants. However we routinely require the designers and printers of DFID publications to source paper that has a minimum of 75 per cent. recycled content.

St. Helena

Mr. MacDougall: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development whether a new constitution for St. Helena has been agreed. [165508]

Mr. Rammell: I have been asked to reply.

A new constitution for St. Helena has not yet been agreed. Discussions are ongoing between Foreign and Commonwealth Office officials and St. Helena Councillors with a view to having a new constitution in place in time for the next dissolution of the Legislative Council in July 2005.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Libraries (Digitisation)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in Manchester, Gorton since 1997. [167345]

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in Burnley since 1997. [167902]

Estelle Morris: This information is not held centrally.

The New Opportunities Fund £50 million Digitisation of Learning Materials Programme has delivered 150 projects across the UK to enable resources which support learning of all kinds held in libraries as well as museums, archives and other public-sector institutions, to be made available online through the People's Network and the National Grid for Learning. This initiative has created a body of material containing over 2 million images, tens of thousands of sound and video clips and documents and over 1,000 learning packages. All projects can be accessed via the EnrichUK portal at http://www.enrichuk.net.

Information on grants awarded to individual local authorities and their expenditure can be obtained from the relevant authority.

New Opportunities Fund (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money from the New Opportunities Fund was allocated to Wigan in each year since 1997. [169308]

Estelle Morris: The New Opportunities Fund began making grants in 1999. The awards to Wigan are shown in the table.

Financial year	*Amount (£)*
1999–2000	1,363,608
2000–01	602,721
2001–02	2,204,979
2002–03	1,510,710
2003–04	1,345,981

The information is freely available from the Department's searchable Lottery award database at www.lottery.culture.gsi.gov.uk, which uses information supplied by the Lottery distributors.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport whether her Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167625]

Estelle Morris: DCMS has no plans at present to contribute financially to the establishment of this DEFRA initiative, but DCMS and its NDPBs are active in sustainable development and the matter will be kept under review.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal Welfare

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department is taking to limit the maximum number of hours during which a live animal may be transported to eight hours; and what plans there are for EU regulations on this. [164580]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 31 March 2004]:* The European Commission brought forward proposals in July 2003 for a regulation to replace the current EU rules on animal welfare during transport. In discussing those proposals the Government have sought reductions in overall journey times as part of a range of measures to improve the welfare of animals.

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with other EU ministers about transportation times for animals being exported for slaughter or fattening; and if she will make a statement. [168059]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* The European Commission's proposals (published in July 2003) for a new regulation to replace the current directive were discussed at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in December 2003 and February 2004. I have also taken the opportunity to discuss this important issue with other EU ministers outside of Council meetings. The Commission's proposals were discussed again at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 26 April 2004.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the new Animal Welfare Bill will be published. [166753]

Mr. Bradshaw: I anticipate publication of the proposed Animal Welfare Bill within the next two to three months.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to strengthen animal welfare codes of conduct. [165896]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA is currently reviewing and updating the Codes of Recommendation for the Welfare of Livestock, where necessary. Codes which have recently been updated include the pig code and the cattle code, issued on 11 March and 23 April 2003 respectively.

Under the proposed Animal Welfare Bill there are also plans to introduce codes for non-farmed animals. The codes, which will be subject to parliamentary scrutiny, will be used to support a statutory duty on the owners and keepers of animals to promote good welfare standards. Production of the codes will involve the industry, welfare organisations, veterinarians and officials working in partnership.

Badgers

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will publish the evidence to support the hypothesis that there has been an explosion of the badger population in the UK. [165450]

Mr. Bradshaw: English Nature advises that there are likely to be in the region of 300,000 to 400,000 badgers in Great Britain. This figure is derived from the most recent National Badger Survey which took place in the mid-1990s[1]. The survey also reported that there had been a 77 per cent. increase in badger numbers between the mid-1980s and mid-1990s.

[1] "Changes in the British badger population, 1988 to 1997" by G. Wilson, S. Harris and G. McLaren (1997), published by the People's Trust for Endangered Species (ISBN1 855800187)

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will publish the interim results of the proactive badger strategy. [166881]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB (ISG) undertakes interim analyses of data collected from the proactive treatment areas of the RBCT at six-monthly intervals. The ISG advise that analyses of such data collected so far has not yielded a statistically significant result. Any significant interim findings will be reported to Ministers without delay.

On 6 April, DEFRA announced the publication of a report from an independent scientific panel chaired by Professor Charles Godfray FRS reviewing the progress of the RBCT and associated DEFRA research, as part of a wider review of DEFRA's science. The report recommended that DEFRA policymakers should have access to the the interim results from the RBCT. The recommendation did not encompass full publication. Even so, it was challenged by the ISG and the matter is still under consideration.

We have been advised by the ISG that a full set of trial data from the Randomised Badger Culling Trial (RBCT) should have been gathered by the end of 2006. A full report will follow, with publication as soon as possible thereafter.

Baronsdown Sanctuary

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether the Baronsdown Sanctuary area is a recognised reservoir of TB infection. [165489]

Mr. Bradshaw: We are aware that TB is present in wild deer in parts of Exmoor. This was a factor (together with the disease history of cattle and other wildlife) in the decision to test cattle herds for TB annually over most of Exmoor.

Bass

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the volume of sea bass landings in the United Kingdom was in each of the last five years, broken down by *(a)* market and *(b)* port. [167131]

Mr. Bradshaw: The following table shows details of sea bass landings into the UK by UK and foreign vessels for the years 1999–2003, broken down by port of landing. Fisheries Departments in the UK do not record details of landings by market.

Landings of Sea Bass into the UK 1999–2003

Quantity (tonnes live weight)

Country of landing/ Port of landing	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
England					
North Shields	0.04	0.00	0.04	0.02	0.04
Holy Island	—	—	—	—	0.01
Seahouses	—	—	0.00	0.00	—
Amble	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.02	0.01
Newbiggin	—	—	—	—	0.01
Blyth	0.00	—	0.00	0.01	0.03
Sunderland	—	0.01	0.00	0.01	0.01
Hartlepool	0.01	0.01	0.06	0.04	0.06
Whitby	0.16	0.07	0.43	0.31	0.52
Scarborough	0.12	0.04	0.60	1.49	2.80
Filey	—	0.05	0.05	0.04	0.03
Flamborough	—	0.08	—	—	—
Bridlington	0.55	0.09	0.09	0.12	0.18
Grimsby	0.12	0.26	0.31	0.09	0.59
Boston	0.02	0.00	—	—	—
Lowestoft	0.85	1.72	2.94	4.50	8.20
Brancaster Staithe	—	0.02	—	0.11	—
Sheringham	—	—	—	0.05	0.01
Cromer	—	—	—	0.12	0.05
Great Yarmouth	0.05	1.32	0.51	0.37	0.17
Southwold	0.86	1.28	0.52	0.71	1.02
Dunwich	—	0.00	0.03	—	0.01
Sizewell Beach	—	—	—	—	0.94
Aldeburgh	0.35	0.03	0.11	0.43	0.88
Orford	1.77	1.44	1.12	0.61	1.26
Ipswich	1.11	6.13	2.31	1.73	—
Felixstowe	0.03	0.01	0.05	8.63	1.51
Harwich	0.25	0.15	0.19	0.64	0.10
Walton-on-Naze	1.54	0.57	0.95	1.56	2.38
Clacton	0.02	—	0.09	0.15	0.00
Wivenhoe	0.81	0.31	0.59	0.79	0.58
Brightlingsea	0.31	0.03	—	0.01	0.01
West Mersea	16.24	0.25	0.66	1.33	0.87
Maldon	0.02	—	—	—	—
Bradwell	—	—	—	0.25	0.22
Burnham-On-Crouch	0.06	0.08	—	0.02	0.01
Great Wakering	0.10	0.00	0.01	0.23	0.31
Canvey Island	0.02	0.01	0.01	0.05	0.12
Southend-On-Sea	—	—	—	0.01	—
Leigh-On-Sea	1.33	2.06	0.76	0.83	1.74
Faversham	0.51	1.03	1.54	2.17	1.92
Gravesend	0.00	—	—	—	—
Rochester	0.10	—	—	—	—
Queenborough	0.33	1.09	0.50	0.40	1.99
Whitstable	8.47	7.01	6.23	12.10	18.59
Hastings	3.00	3.77	2.05	3.34	6.39
Poole	64.44	9.33	9.91	0.60	5.33
Margate	4.57	3.69	1.80	2.60	1.91
Broadstairs	0.29	0.56	0.01	0.13	0.07
Ramsgate	27.12	17.29	13.41	26.21	30.60
Dover	2.60	0.95	6.63	2.79	—
Folkestone	6.99	6.66	9.71	7.87	6.93
Hythe	0.93	1.84	0.96	0.46	2.11
Dungeness	2.25	1.48	0.50	2.34	0.51
Rye	4.01	2.32	2.97	3.70	3.40
Eastbourne	16.24	17.75	12.06	17.98	20.41
Newhaven	45.20	27.31	25.02	23.36	11.57
Brighton	2.81	1.85	1.23	4.50	1.87
Shoreham	33.85	18.69	29.23	30.37	42.73
Worthing	5.87	1.35	4.93	2.05	2.75
Littlehampton	2.69	5.28	2.89	3.14	5.94
Bognor Regis	0.05	—	0.02	0.01	—
Selsey	11.37	11.17	2.98	20.77	12.04
Langstone Harbour	4.54	4.61	3.85	2.86	3.36
Itchenor/East Wittering	—	—	—	—	0.07
Emsworth	0.02	0.95	—	—	0.00
Hamble	0.01	1.73	0.42	0.12	0.80
Hayling Island	—	—	0.00	0.02	—
Portsmouth	31.03	36.61	36.45	44.07	44.17
Southampton	16.25	0.16	0.97	0.00	0.56
Christchurch	7.68	2.95	1.47	—	1.94
Cowes	—	—	0.08	—	—
Isle of Wight	—	6.66	5.21	1.49	5.44
Lymington	2.93	5.13	6.04	0.85	2.18
Keyhaven	—	0.00	—	—	0.00
Swanage	1.00	0.02	0.01	—	—
Kimmeridge	0.05	0.02	0.00	—	0.05
Lulworth Cove	—	0.17	0.39	0.70	—
Weymouth	44.26	14.28	3.08	1.08	6.76
Portland	1.12	0.27	0.02	0.12	0.07
Ferrybridge	—	0.00	—	—	—
West Bay	0.14	1.06	0.05	—	—
Lyme Regis	2.92	1.56	1.28	0.96	4.00
Plymouth	161.78	59.73	108.54	122.77	140.69
Newlyn	4.46	8.26	21.34	98.81	12.90
Beer	0.69	0.83	1.04	0.70	0.42
Exmouth	3.09	10.24	10.57	8.66	9.16
Teignmouth	—	0.19	0.01	0.08	0.35
Torquay	0.61	0.33	0.20	0.34	0.51
Brixham	65.23	33.26	20.49	27.27	27.51
Dartmouth	0.50	0.51	0.39	0.33	0.37
River Dart	0.15	—	—	—	—
Kingswear	0.29	—	—	—	—
Salcombe	0.05	0.07	0.06	0.14	0.04
Hope Cove	—	—	0.00	—	—
Looe	3.08	8.67	9.30	32.34	15.02
Polperro	2.08	1.48	2.11	4.43	12.35
River Fowey	0.55	0.08	0.17	0.05	0.37
Mevagissey	3.50	1.39	1.91	3.51	11.95
River Fal—Falmouth	0.56	0.16	0.47	0.35	0.51
Helford River	0.02	0.14	0.14	0.31	0.22
Porthoustock	—	—	—	0.02	—
Coverack	0.03	0.10	0.01	0.01	—
Cadgwith	0.04	0.00	0.01	0.01	—
Penzance	0.02	0.10	0.00	0.08	0.02
Penberth	—	—	1.95	0.07	—
St. Ives	—	0.00	0.00	0.08	—
Hayle	0.01	0.24	0.02	0.51	0.02
Newquay	0.29	—	0.21	0.38	0.03
Padstow	1.29	0.62	2.04	3.22	1.67
Port Isaac	0.05	0.30	0.07	0.89	0.30

Landings of Sea Bass into the UK 1999–2003

Quantity (tonnes live weight)

Country of landing/ Port of landing	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Bude	—	0.01	—	0.04	—
Clovelly	0.10	0.03	—	—	—
Appledore	6.18	6.72	18.23	20.29	19.42
Bideford	2.22	3.19	0.11	1.35	0.15
Ilfracombe	0.79	2.19	0.10	11.31	17.56
Fleetwood	0.27	0.24	0.58	0.12	0.37
Hoylake	0.02	—	—	—	—
Mersey Estuary	—	—	—	0.02	0.01
Liverpool	0.01	0.04	0.05	0.01	0.34
Morecambe	0.10	0.10	0.30	—	3.60
Barrow	0.25	0.54	1.72	0.01	0.12
Whitehaven	0.01	0.00	0.07	0.08	0.57
Maryport	—	—	0.00	0.00	0.04
Wales					
Milford Haven	31.55	19.63	23.01	20.08	9.45
Conwy	0.01	0.03	3.21	0.26	—
Swansea	1.18	1.70	4.30	2.68	1.80
Porthcawl	—	0.17	0.19	0.16	2.21
Tenby	0.21	0.04	6.12	10.03	2.91
Saundersfoot	1.79	1.86	2.02	1.83	2.80
Llanelli	2.14	9.04	6.25	6.73	3.76
Three Rivers Area	—	—	—	—	0.11
New Quay	—	—	0.06	—	—
Pwllheli	—	—	—	0.45	—
Aberdaran	—	—	0.35	—	—
Caernarvon	—	0.04	4.11	0.04	0.00
Holyhead	0.11	0.06	0.03	0.07	0.34
Cemaes Bay	—	0.00	0.00	0.00	—
Bangor	—	0.19	1.02	—	—
Rhyl-Connah's Quay	—	3.27	2.75	3.13	0.16
Scotland					
Eyemouth	0.02	0.00	0.01	5.99	2.59
Dunbar	—	—	—	0.00	0.00
Pittenweem	—	—	0.01	—	—
Aberdeen	0.01	—	0.05	0.01	0.00
Peterhead	0.13	—	—	—	0.02
Fraserburgh	—	—	—	—	0.00
Mallaig	—	—	—	—	0.23
Saltcoats	—	0.03	—	—	—
Girvan	—	—	—	—	0.00
Portpatrick	0.06	0.02	—	—	0.11
Isle of Whithorn	0.07	—	—	—	0.00
Northern Ireland					
Kilkeel	—	—	1.34	1.13	8.52
Portavogie	—	—	—	—	0.01
Bangor (Co. Down)	—	—	—	0.01	—
Co. Antrim	—	—	—	—	0.03
Total UK landings	677.97	408.45	463.41	635.62	582.79

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the value of sea bass landings within the United Kingdom was for each of the last five years, broken down by market. [167132]

Mr. Bradshaw: Fisheries departments in the UK do not record details of sales by market. The following table shows details of the value of sea bass landings into the UK by UK and foreign vessels for the years 1999 to 2003, broken down by port of landing.

Landings of sea bass into the UK, 1999 to 2003

Value (£000)

Port of landing	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
England[1]					
North Shields	2	2	2	2	2
Holy Island	3	3	3	3	3
Seahouses	3	3	2	2	3

Landings of sea bass into the UK, 1999 to 2003

Value (£000)

Port of landing	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Amble	2	2	2	2	2
Newbiggin	3	3	3	3	2
Blyth	2	3	2	2	2
Sunderland	3	2	2	2	2
Hartlepool	2	2	2	2	2
Whitby	1	2	2	1	2
Scarborough	1	2	3	6	11
Filey	3	1	2	2	3
Flamborough	3	2	3	3	3
Bridlington	3	2	2	1	1
Grimsby	1	1	2	2	2
Boston	2	2	3	3	3
Lowestoft	5	11	15	22	40
Brancaster Staithe	3	2	3	1	3
Sheringham	3	3	3	2	2
Cromer	3	3	3	1	2
Great Yarmouth	2	9	4	2	1
Southwold	5	9	3	4	7
Dunwich	3	2	2	3	2
Sizewell Beach	3	3	3	3	4
Aldeburgh	2	2	1	3	8
Orford	10	9	7	3	5
Ipswich	6	35	13	10	3
Felixstowe	2	2	2	1	7
Harwich	1	1	1	4	1
Walton-on-the-Naze	9	3	6	9	14
Clacton	2	3	1	1	2
Wivenhoe	5	2	3	5	3
Brightlingsea	2	2	3	2	2
West Mersea	94	1	4	8	5
Maldon	2	3	3	3	3
Bradwell	3	3	3	1	1
Burnham-on-Crouch	2	2	3	2	2
Great Wakering	1	2	2	1	2
Canvey Island	2	2	2	2	1
Southend-on-Sea	3	3	3	2	3
Leigh-on-Sea	8	11	4	5	10
Faversham	3	5	8	12	10
Gravesend	2	3	3	3	3
Rochester	1	3	3	3	3
Queenborough	2	6	3	2	10
Whitstable	43	42	28	58	94
Hastings	21	24	13	21	41
Poole	325	48	54	2	23
Margate	23	19	9	13	10
Broadstairs	1	3	2	1	2
Ramsgate	138	89	68	135	153
Dover	13	5	34	14	3
Folkestone	46	40	48	50	37
Hythe	6	11	6	3	11
Dungeness	15	10	3	13	3
Rye	27	15	18	23	22
Eastbourne	96	110	69	109	132
Newhaven	226	134	120	112	56
Brighton	14	10	7	24	10
Shoreham	169	101	156	156	191
Worthing	39	9	14	10	14
Littlehampton	18	35	15	14	30
Bognor Regis	2	3	2	2	3
Selsey	63	48	11	70	44
Langstone Harbour	33	24	18	13	17
Itchenor/East Wittering	3	3	3	3	2
Emsworth	2	6	3	3	2
Ramble	2	7	2	1	4
Hayling Island	3	3	2	2	3
Portsmouth	206	178	176	182	213
Southampton	85	1	4	2	3
Christchurch	39	15	8	3	8
Cowes	3	3	2	3	3
Isle of Wight	3	32	23	7	25
Lymington	15	25	35	4	9
Keyhaven	3	2	3	3	2
Swanage	5	2	2	3	3
Kimmeridge	2	2	2	3	2
Lulworth Cove	3	1	2	2	3
Weymouth	286	73	16	6	32

Landings of sea bass into the UK, 1999 to 2003

Value (£000)

Port of landing	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Portland	6	1	[2]	[2]	[2]
Ferrybridge	[3]	[2]	[3]	[3]	[3]
West Bay	1	9	[2]	[3]	[3]
Lyme Regis	22	10	7	6	18
Plymouth	1,208	357	662	787	808
Newlyn	31	59	123	562	73
Beer	5	7	9	5	3
Exmouth	23	76	72	63	67
Teignmouth	[3]	2	[2]	1	3
Torquay	5	3	2	3	4
Brixham	386	277	174	223	206
Dartmouth	4	4	3	3	3
River Dart	1	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Kingswear	2	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Salcombe	[2]	[2]	[2]	1	[2]
Hope Cove	[3]	[3]	[2]	[3]	[3]
Looe	23	45	58	181	87
Polperro	15	8	12	23	69
River Fowey	4	1	1	[2]	2
Mevagissey	25	9	13	23	73
River Fal—Falmouth	4	1	3	3	2
Helford River	[2]	1	1	2	1
Porthoustock	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]	[3]
Coverack	[2]	1	[2]	[2]	[3]
Cadgwith	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[3]
Penzance	[2]	1	[2]	1	[2]
Penberth	[3]	[3]	12	1	[3]
St. Ives	[3]	[2]	[2]	1	[3]
Hayle	[2]	2	[2]	4	[2]
Newquay	2	[3]	1	2	[2]
Padstow	8	5	13	18	9
Port Isaac	[2]	2	[2]	7	1
Bude	[3]	[2]	[3]	[2]	[3]
Clovelly	1	[2]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Appledore	41	45	123	138	115
Bideford	16	21	1	9	1
Ilfracombe	6	15	1	79	104
Fleetwood	2	1	3	1	2
Hoylake	[2]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Mersey Estuary	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]	[2]
Liverpool	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	1
Morecambe	[2]	[2]	1	[3]	17
Barrow	1	2	8	[2]	[2]
Whitehaven	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	2
Maryport	[3]	[3]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Wales[1]					
Milford Haven	187	96	116	105	48
Conwy	[2]	[2]	10	1	[3]
Swansea	8	11	26	15	9
Porthcawl	[3]	[2]	1	1	10
Tenby	1	[2]	30	55	16
Saundersfoot	9	8	10	9	16
Llanelli	13	41	31	34	18
Three Rivers Area	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	1
New Quay	[3]	[3]	[2]	[3]	[3]
Pwllheli	[3]	[3]	[3]	2	[3]
Aberdaran	[3]	[3]	2	[3]	[3]
Caernarvon	[3]	[2]	22	[2]	[2]
Holyhead	[2]	[2]	[2]	[2]	1
Cemaes Bay	[3]	[2]	[2]	[2]	[3]
Bangor	[3]	1	5	[3]	[3]
Rhyl-Connah's Quay	[3]	9	7	15	1
Scotland[1]					
Eyemouth	[2]	[2]	[2]	25	13
Dunbar	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]	[2]
Pittenweem	[3]	[3]	[2]	[3]	[3]
Aberdeen	[2]	[3]	[2]	[2]	[2]
Peterhead	1	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]
Fraserburgh	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]
Mallaig	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]
Saltcoats	[3]	[2]	[3]	[3]	[3]
Girvan	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]
Portpatrick	[2]	[2]	[3]	[3]	[2]
Isle of Whithorn	[2]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]

Landings of sea bass into the UK, 1999 to 2003

Value (£000)

Port of landing	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Northern Ireland[1]					
Kilkeel	[3]	[3]	7	6	32
Portavogie	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]
Bangor (County Down)	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]	[3]
County Antrim	[3]	[3]	[3]	[3]	[2]
Total	4,173	2,352	2,608	3,558	3,165

[1] Country of landing.
[2] Less than half the last digit shown.
[3] Nil.

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment is made of the sea bass catch in relation to *(a)* size, *(b)* maturity and *(c)* reproductive state; and whether this information influences decisions by the Department on closure of fisheries. [167133]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA funds a programme that collects data on the size (length and weight) and age (from scales) of representative samples of sea bass caught annually in England and Wales. Research carried out by the Centre for Environment Fisheries and Aquaculture Science has established the age and size at which male and female bass become mature in UK waters, and reproductive state by area and season. This information is updated as necessary. It is used to provide scientific advice on the conservation status of bass stocks, and informs any decisions taken by this Department on the management of fisheries taking sea bass.

Bio-refinery Technologies

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the use of *(a)* household and municipal, *(b)* industrial and *(c)* agricultural waste streams as potential sources for bio-fuels through bio-refinery technologies; and if she will make a statement. [166906]

Alun Michael: A study by E4tech for the Department of Trade and Industry made the following estimates for the proportion of the UK's electricity demand that could be met by 2020 from various types of waste biomass: 2.2 per cent. from the combustion, gasification and anaerobic digestion of the organic fraction of municipal solid waste; 0.5 per cent. from the gasification and anaerobic digestion of sewage sludge; 1.9 per cent. from the combustion and gasification of straw; and less than 0.2 per cent. each from food waste, wood processing waste, farm waste and forestry residues.

The Waste Implementation Programme was established last year to provide support to local authorities in assessing and establishing alternative new technologies with particular reference to achieving the landfill diversion targets for biodegradable municipal waste. The New Technologies sub-programme aims to establish up to five demonstrator plants by 2005 end with at least five additional plants initiated by 2006.

Tallow derived from rendering animal by-products can be burnt to produce energy. 280,000 tonnes of tallow from animals slaughtered under the over-30-months (slaughter) scheme have already been sold to renderers to power their boilers. The Rural Payments

Agency recently signed a contract to sell 110,000 tonnes of stockpiled tallow to a commercial company for energy production.

Around 120 million litres of waste vegetable oil are produced in the UK each year, which could produce about 115 million litres of biodiesel. 1 million litres of biodiesel from waste vegetable oil are currently sold each month in the UK and it is likely that this will increase once the ban on used cooking oil in animal feed comes into effect in November 2004. Recent advances in biotechnology are opening up opportunities to produce bioethanol from ligno-cellulosic feedstocks such as wood, straw and organic waste, using gasification and hydrolysis, although large-scale commercialisation is unlikely for some years.

Biodiversity

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to ensure sustainable funding for national survey and monitoring schemes in order to *(a)* mobilise and *(b)* support the voluntary effort to gather the data on the state of Britain's biodiversity. [165069]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 1 April 2004]*: The work of volunteers is crucial to gathering data on the current state of our biodiversity. Volunteers have collected around 70 per cent. of all the data about species. This includes existing survey and monitoring schemes, including the Biological Records Centre:

breeding and wintering birds;

bats, otters and other mammals;

butterflies and moths; and

threatened plants.

An organisation called the National Biodiversity Network Trust is currently co-ordinating actions by a range of interested parties to bring together the efforts of volunteers. The work of the NBN Trust is supported by the Government agencies responsible for biodiversity and the Government support this work through the grant-in-aid to these agencies.

DEFRA has provided a direct contribution of £0.25 million per year to support technical elements of this work that were not being funded. Part of this work has been an exploration of how improved access to biodiversity data can improve the cost-effectiveness of delivering our agri-environmental schemes. This has demonstrated the huge importance of securing access to current information as a way of saving costs overall, and improving the outcomes. DEFRA is currently considering how to secure these benefits through increased support for the NBN process.

The work of volunteers is often focused on their local area and the NBN encourages local storage and quality assurance of these data. However, there are many national societies with networks of volunteers throughout the United Kingdom.

In some circumstances it is more effective to bring this information together in national data centres. The NBN provides a mechanism for both local and national data centres to provide access to their data. In May the latest version of this web-based mechanism, called the NBN Gateway, will be launched. Also, English Nature, supported by Treasury Capital Modernisation Funds, has created a public website that links with the NBN gateway to provide information to the public.

In addition to the work on the NBN, the Government will be considering this year how best to improve the co-ordination of the current monitoring and surveillance activities. This will ensure that the UK's state of nature is sufficiently monitored and that we make the best use of the voluntary sector and ensure that the sector receives the full support it needs to be fully effective.

While DEFRA is supporting the NBN process, and considering where further assistance may be needed, a major block to progress is the patchy support for local centres by local authorities. Information is critical to better development planning decisions through both local and regional processes.

DEFRA is seeking co-operation from other Departments over how to ensure that the information sources, underpinned by volunteer effort, are funded in a sustainable way.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the cost was of the Thornbury trial. [158598]

Mr. Bradshaw: The answer can be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the optimum area in which to conduct a badger culling operation is based on the basis of experience from the Krebs trials. [158669]

Mr. Bradshaw: It is not possible to use the results from the Randomised Badger Culling Trial to describe an optimum area in which to conduct a badger culling operation, as this will depend on the local circumstances and the specific effect the operation is intended to achieve.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average duration of a TB2 restriction notice was in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [159062]

Mr. Bradshaw: Data for TB2 duration for 1997 are available only at disproportionate cost.

In 2003, the average duration of TB2 restriction notices was 90[1] days. This includes TB2 restriction notices served on herds where the routine herd test was overdue, as well as notices served on herds with a TB breakdown. Herds with overdue tests were not placed under restrictions in 1997.

[1] Provisional data downloaded from the State Veterinary Service database on 17 March 2004. This is subject to change, as more data become available.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 11 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 539W on badgers, what assessment she has made of the change in size of the total badger population in the Krebs areas since the commencement of the culling of badgers. [159275]

Mr. Bradshaw: DEFRA assessments are based, principally, on surveys of badger activity carried out before and sometime after culling. Analyses of data from the first three triplets to go live indicate that badger activity levels in trial areas have changed consistent with the treatments applied; levels appearing approximately unchanged in survey only areas, somewhat reduced in reactive cull areas and substantially reduced in proactive cull areas. Such data on field signs, however, give only an approximate index of badger numbers, and Defra is funding two projects looking at ways to enable the estimation of badger populations with greater accuracy.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 8 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 212W, on bovine tuberculosis, what the lowest estimate is of culling efficiency using traps, experienced in the Krebs trial areas. [159282]

Mr. Bradshaw: Subjective estimates on the efficiency of culling, based on post-cull surveys, have indicated that in the poorest conditions, particularly relating to inclement weather and the season of the year, culling efficiency may be as low as 30 per cent.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answers of 20 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 1204W, on bovine tuberculosis and 8 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 212W, what the basis is of her estimate for the efficiency of trapping as a means of badger culling; whether that estimate has been scientifically validated; and what the current estimate is of the efficiency of the culling conducted in the Krebs trial areas. [159284]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no sure way to estimate badger populations accurately. Post cull surveys provide a subjective indication of the level of badger activity and abundance based on field signs and are carried out by ecologists from the Central Science Laboratory. Evidence from post cull surveys suggests that trapping efficiency can vary between 30 per cent. and 80 per cent., dependent on conditions, season and taking into account a proportion of trap shy animals. Comparisons of initial and two-year surveys show changes in badger activity consistent with the treatments applied. DEFRA is funding research into novel and innovative methods of estimating badger numbers.

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has received from the European Commission on the incidence of TB in cattle in the United Kingdom. [159053]

Mr. Bradshaw: The European Commission has made no representations about the incidence of TB in cattle in Great Britain. The United Kingdom provide detailed information on bovine tuberculosis *(Mycobacterium bovis)* to the Commission as part of the annual report on trends and sources of Zoonoses and zoonotic agents in animals, feedingstuffs, food and man, under the requirements of EU Directive 92/117.

The Northern Ireland tuberculosis eradication programme has qualified for a financial contribution from the EU. As part of a series of missions to member states with co-financed bovine tuberculosis eradication programmes, a team of EU Field and Veterinary Office (FVO) inspectors visited Northern Ireland during November 2003. Publication of the FVO report of this inspection is awaited.

Breckland Farmland SSSI

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimate she has made of the size of the stone curlew population within the Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest *(a)* at present, *(b)* five years ago, *(c)* 10 years ago and *(d)* 15 years ago. [165145]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* From the counts of stone curlews within the Breckland Farmland SSSI undertaken by the work of the Breckland Stone Curlew Recovery Project I am able to provide the following information:

(a) The number of pairs proved breeding in the 2003 breeding season was 110 (this does not include parts of the SSSI where access for survey and monitoring was denied);

The Breckland Farmland SSSI was not notified until 2001, so the following figures are for the population nesting on arable and other land within the whole of the Breckland area. This excludes the heathland sites which are the main breeding areas outside the current Breckland Farmland SSSI. These records were used in the assessment of the Breckland Farmland SSSI boundary for breeding stone curlew. The number of pairs proved breeding on arable and other areas within Breckland in the years requested is as follows:

	Pairs
(b) 1998	86
(c) 1993	49
(d) 1988	55

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest takes to encourage appropriate habitat management practice. [165146]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* The conservation of stone curlew in Breckland is encouraged by the work of the Breckland Stone Curlew Recovery Project, jointly funded mainly by English Nature and the RSPB. Project staff locate and monitor breeding sites and advise farmers on appropriate management actions to ensure breeding success. English Nature's funding for the project is from its SSSI management budget. The success of the stone curlew recovery project is due largely to the combined efforts of the project officers and farmers, working together to achieve nest protection, improved habitat management and habitat creation (provision of nest-plots on set-aside land).

English Nature also runs a Wildlife Enhancement Scheme for Breckland Farmland SSSI to assist land managers with their work. Through this scheme English Nature can offer a Management Agreement to provide payment for additional positive management to benefit nesting stone curlews. The scheme provides options for

management designed to improve breeding success and to encourage birds out of crops and on to specially created nest plots.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the *(a)* process and *(b)* timescale are for the implementation of the Breckland Special Protection Area. [165147]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* English Nature has undertaken scientific consultations on the case made for the site. Objections were received and one has resulted in a legal challenge. English Nature expects to submit its recommendations once that has been concluded. Once those recommendations are received Ministers will consider any outstanding issues before taking a decision whether the site merits classification as a Special Protection Area.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the *(a)* boundaries of the Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest and *(b)* proposed boundaries of the Breckland Special Protection Area have been decided. [165129]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information is as follows.

(a) The boundary of the Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) was drawn up by English Nature on the basis of the nest records collected under the Stone Curlew Recovery Project, financed jointly by the RSPB and English Nature, for the years 1995 to 1999 inclusive. Areas regularly containing two or more nest sites over this period were included, conservatively using a foraging range of up to 2 km from each nest site. Other features were also taken into account, in particular the need to have boundaries corresponding to physical features such as roads, drains, ditches, field edges or the boundaries of land holdings.

(b) All or parts of 28 Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) have been recommended as Breckland potential Special Protection Area (pSPA) because together they support breeding bird populations of three species of European importance.

Breckland SPA qualifies under the EC Directive on the Conservation of Wild Birds (79/409/EEC) as it is used regularly by 1 per cent. or more of the Great Britain population of three species of birds listed in Annex 1 of the Directive. They are stone curlew, nightjar and woodlark.

The pSPA boundary was delineated on the basis of records covering stone curlew nests, male woodlarks in forest blocks and in non-forest locations and breeding nightjars. The data spans the period 1992–98, with account taken of 1999 data where available.

Brucellosis

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the *(a)* cause and *(b)* source of the recent brucellosis outbreak in South East Cornwall. [166444]

Mr Bradshaw *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* A specialist epidemiological team has been set up to look into the source of the outbreak. The team, led by veterinary epidemiologist Professor John Wilesmith, includes specialists in surveillance and epidemiology from both the Veterinary Laboratories Agency and DEFRA.

The group is liaising closely with the State Veterinary Service and looking at the brucellosis testing history of the infected herd, the relationship between cows, bulls and youngstock, cattle movements on and off over the past two years, any known unrecorded cattle movements, the herd's breeding programme, any unusual mixing of livestock and imports into Devon and Cornwall over the past three years.

Field investigations and epidemiological analyses of available data are concentrated on two main hypotheses:

(i) the introduction of infection via an imported animal from a known infected country, or an as yet unknown infected country; or

(ii) the recrudescence of infection either from animals in the infected herd or from other GB herds.

Epidemiological investigations are progressing well; however the cause and source of the infection remain unknown at this stage.

BSE

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the US Department of Agriculture decision to use antibody-based tests for the prion protein that causes BSE; and if she will make a statement. [165253]

Mr. Bradshaw: The testing approvals in the USA are currently consistent with those in the EU where all currently approved and potential new surveillance tests are antibody based. It is understandable that the USDA might want to use similar testing to the EU in order to assess BSE prevalence in their cattle population. No specific evaluation of the US approval process is considered necessary.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the BSE tests she has been conducting at High Mowbray in Yorkshire. [166441]

Mr Bradshaw *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* I assume that the hon. Member is referring to BSE research that was conducted between 1989 and 2001 at High Mowthorpe Centre in North Yorkshire as no BSE tests or research have been conducted at High Mowbray. Embryos were derived elsewhere from BSE-infected cattle and transported to High Mowthorpe, where they were transferred to recipient BSE-free dams from New Zealand. A total of 266 live born calves were produced from 347 recipient females and all 613 animals were monitored for seven years. None developed BSE and no sign of BSE was observed when brains were subjected to post-mortem examination. These findings led to the lifting of the import/export ban on cattle embryos in 2002.

Butterflies

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will add butterflies to the list of quality of life indicators. [165068]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 1 April 2004]*: The UK Government in partnership with the Scottish Executive, the Welsh Assembly Government and the Northern Ireland Administration have begun developing new strategy to produce a step change in the delivery of sustainable development in the UK. The public consultation document and process for developing new strategy will be launched later this month. As part of the consultation we will consider the use and scope of indicators for monitoring our progress.

We cannot at this stage pre-empt the outcome of the consultation and the associated review of indicators to comment which indicators may or may not be included in a new set.

Annual information on butterfly populations at monitored sites is available and an indicator covering 1976 to 2002 could be compiled. However, the majority of the sites covered by the monitoring schemes are nature reserves and the index is therefore unlikely to be representative of the country as a whole. This weakness is being addressed in a research project, which the Department is currently putting out to tender.

Carbon Dioxide Reduction Target

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what further steps the Government intend to take to reach the target of a 20 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions, relative to 1990 levels, by 2010; and if she will make a statement. [167757]

Mr. Morley: The Government remain committed to the domestic goal to reduce carbon dioxide emissions to 20 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010. The Department of Trade and Industry intends to publish shortly its updated energy and emissions projections, which will inform the planned review of the UK Climate Change Programme later this year. The review provides an opportunity to introduce new policies and measures to reduce carbon dioxide emissions, or to strengthen existing ones, if the conclusion is that more needs to be done to achieve the domestic goal.

Cervine TB

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will specify the locations at which the deer in the vicinity of the Baronsdown deer sanctuary tested positive for TB; how many of the carcases were sent to the Veterinary Investigation Laboratories, and when; and how many laboratory tests are pending. [165176]

Mr. Bradshaw: Since the beginning of January 1998, there have been nine bacteriologically confirmed cases of bovine tuberculosis (*Mycobacterium bovis*) in the Parish of Dulverton in West Somerset (eight red deer, one roe deer). Other deer submissions were bacteriologically negative.

In 2003, six (from seven) deer submissions from Exmoor proved positive for *M.bovis*.

In February 2004, eight red deer culled near Dulverton, Somerset as part of a routine annual random cull were submitted to the Veterinary Laboratories Agency (VLA) at Langford. After examination by a Veterinary Investigation Officer, tissues from four animals with suspect lesions have been submitted for *Mycobacterium* culture. The results are awaited.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action she takes against *(a)* farms and *(b)* others who fail to notify her Department of TB in deer. [165177]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Tuberculosis (Deer) Order 1989 provides for the compulsory notification of tuberculosis in deer and deer carcasses. Contravention or failure to comply with the provisions of the Order constitute an offence against the Animal Health Act 1981. Prosecution would be carried out by the local authority.

Cockling

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to compensate cockle fishermen affected by the closure of cockle beds. [164286]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department has no plans to provide financial compensation to cockle fishermen affected by the closure of cockle beds.

Dolphins/Porpoises

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action her Department is taking to press for the early implementation of the EU proposals to reduce accidental deaths of dolphins and porpoises from UK fishing activity. [164851]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK has been seeking Community action for some time to address the accidental deaths of dolphins and porpoises from fishing activity. I am pleased therefore that agreement was reached on a new Council regulation to address this problem at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of Ministers Meeting on 22/23 March. The regulation will make the use of acoustic deterrent devices mandatory in certain fixed gear fisheries in the North Sea from 1 June 2005, in the Celtic Sea from 1 January 2006, and in the eastern Channel from 1 January 2007. The regulation also requires member states to implement schemes to monitor bycatch across a range of fisheries from 1 January 2005. This regulation is an important first step in the protection of dolphins and porpoises from the impact of fishing.

Environmental Support

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with *(a)* the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and *(b)* Regional Development Agencies on successor organisations and programme to Vital Villages. [167972]

Alun Michael: The Vital Villages programme was a three year pilot programme which was intended to explore what would best enable village communities to determine their own future. Some commentators have wrongly referred to the scheme as being "cut" when a further £14 million is being invested this year in maintaining the scheme, despite the fact that it is closed to new applicants. With a variety of partners including

the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister we are considering how best to promote the lessons of the programme in seeking to target support for rural communities that need help through mainstream Government programmes such as local authority community planning, Neighbourhood Renewal and other regeneration programmes. We will also consider whether an independent successor arrangement to the Vital Villages scheme is necessary.

Erosion

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what land area in total was affected by problems of soil erosion in each of the last 10 years, broken down by county; and what area of agricultural land in total has become unusable in each case. [165752]

Mr. Bradshaw: All soils that are not sealed, e.g. built on, are potentially at risk of erosion. Whether erosion occurs depends on various factors, especially land management, soil type and weather conditions.

Over the last 10 years very little agricultural land has become unusable due to soil erosion, although a number of watercourses have suffered damage from siltation and/or eutrophication due to soil-borne nutrients.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the volume of soil erosion, as measured in tonnes per hectare per annum was, broken down by country in *(a)* 1975, *(b)* 1985, *(c)* 1995 and *(d)* 2002. [165814]

Mr. Bradshaw: Latest estimates taken between 1996 and 1998 suggest that total erosion from arable land in England and Wales is estimated at 2.9 million tonnes per annum. These losses are concentrated in small and limited areas within catchments where particular land management practices, soil types and weather conditions present the highest risk to erosion. In such risky areas losses range between 0.01 to 12 tonnes per hectare per annum, with a median value of 0.1 tonnes per hectare per annum. We do not have comparable figures broken down by year and country.

EU Environmental Liability Directive

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the status of *(a)* the EU and *(b)* the UK regarding the European Environmental Liability Directive. [168085]

Alun Michael: Following the Council common position in September and the European Parliament's second reading in December, the Council and the Parliament reached agreement on an amended draft. The Council and the Parliament have since adopted the Directive, as amended, at their respective third readings. The Government supported the common position and the agreement reached with the Parliament, both of which delivered our key objectives. When it comes into force, member states will have three years to implement the Directive which will be published in the *Official Journal* shortly, when it will come in to force.

The Government have begun consideration of the implementation of the Directive.

Fauna Distribution

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average number of species in *(a)* grassland and *(b)* woodland was (i) on the latest date for which figures are available and (ii) 10 years ago, broken down by region. [165739]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information is as follows:

(a) Grassland:

Semi-natural grasslands are divided into six main Biodiversity Action Plan priority types. The figures in the table give an indication of the average number of plant species expected in a $4m^2$ quadrat, assuming ideal management. But large variation in species number can occur depending on the different sub-types of grassland within the broad categories.

BAP priority grassland type	*Average number species per $4m^2$ quadrat*
Lowland calcareous grassland	23
Upland calcareous grassland	29
Lowland meadows	26
Upland meadows	26
Purple moor grass and rush pastures	25
Lowland acid grassland	18

The Countryside Surveys were established to monitor changes in land cover, landscape and biodiversity in Great Britain. Data has to date been collected for 1984, 1990 and 1998. This shows a change in mean number of species between 1990 and 1998. In the case of neutral grassland; calcareous and acid grassland in the west lowlands, a small decline in mean number of plant species/plot was recorded. But these changes were not statistically significant. A statistically significant increase in mean number species/plot was recorded for acid grassland in the uplands.

The random sampling approach means that for some rarer habitats, such as calcareous grasslands, the sample sizes were small decreasing the precision of the results.

(b) Woodland:

Woodlands are structurally diverse, and habitat for a vast number of species, including vascular plants, birds, mammals, invertebrates, lichens, fungi and soil microbes. No comprehensive study has been undertaken.

Woodlands can be categorised by broad Biodiversity Action Plan type; whether they are recognised as ancient or recent; semi-natural or plantation. Generally there is higher vascular plant species on ancient, semi-natural woodland. The survey data available over this time span includes all broadleaved woodland.

Average species richness for different woodland types, using 4x4m or 10x10m quadrants. Adapted from Rodwell 1991

Priority BAP Habitat type	*Average number of species per plot*
Wet woodland	25
Upland ash	36
Upland oak	29
Beech	15
Yew	5

The Countryside Survey also covers woodland habitat, and can be used to show relative change over

the same time period. The methodology used did not distinguish between different woodland types shown above, nor did it specify ancient woodland, so figures may be lower than expected.

The following table below shows the mean species richness for a random sample of woods in England and Wales, between 1990 and 1998, using 200m^2 quadrants. From Haines-Young *et al* (2003).

Zone	*Number of samples*	*Mean species richness 1990*	*Mean species richness 1998*
1	57	13.79	11.26
2	43	16.93	15.93
3	18	18.89	16.89

Zones:
1 = Easterly and southerly lowlands
2 = West lowlands
3 = Uplands

Fertilisers

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment has been made of the possible link between the use of chemical fertilisers in agriculture and the health of the wild freshwater fish population in the UK. [165570]

Mr. Bradshaw: No specific study has been undertaken recently of possible links between the use of chemical fertilisers in agriculture and the status of the wild freshwater fish populations in the UK. However, various studies have been undertaken on the effects of increased nutrient loads in rivers and lakes. In addition, water quality, including the effects of contaminants such as chemical fertilisers, is one the factors routinely considered when assessing the state of fish stocks. Water quality is assessed when developing Salmon Action Plans aimed at the conservation and enhancement of salmon in rivers in England and Wales.

Fisheries

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she expects to publish the outcome of the review of fisheries and environmental enforcement; and if she will make a statement. [165197]

Mr. Bradshaw: I am considering the report of the Review and expect to publish it shortly.

Food Promotion

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans her Department has to encourage the local sourcing of food and other products. [167865]

Alun Michael: The Government recognises the benefits of local food and is keen to encourage a flourishing local food sector. Money is available under the England Rural Development Programme for supporting activities such as the establishment of Farmers' Markets, the development of regional and local branding of foodstuffs and the formation of collaborative groups to market quality products. For example, within the last year we awarded £100, 256 to the National Association of Farmers' Markets to raise the profile of farmers' markets across England and to increase public awareness of them.

DEFRA has also helped finance a number of local sourcing workshops organised by the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD) designed to bring together supermarkets and small local producers to explore how barriers to local sourcing can be overcome. Following on from this, we helped fund the Business in The Community (BiTC) and IGD guide for small businesses looking to work with large food retailers and food service companies—"Local Sourcing—Opening the Door for Small Business". In addition to this, our Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative is designed to encourage public sector bodies to procure their food in a manner that promotes sustainable development and to encourage more small and local businesses to compete to supply them with food.

This work will be complemented at a regional level through the regional plans that each Regional Development Agency (RDA) is drawing up to help deliver the Government Strategy for Sustainable Farming and Food. Although the nature of this support will be determined according to regional priorities, issues to be addressed will include the production and supply of locally sourced food by encouraging food hubs and shared facilities and the linking of local producers with local retailers and tourist businesses.

Greyhounds

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the minimum standards for kennels at greyhound tracks are. [165486]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government do not currently set minimum standards for kennelling at greyhound tracks but under the Protection of Animals Act 1911 it is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to a domestic or captive animal. This offence covers welfare at racetracks. It is proposed to consolidate and modernise the legislation relating to domestic and captive animals and a draft Bill is currently being prepared.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what minimum standards breeders of greyhounds must meet. [166752]

Mr. Bradshaw: Commercial greyhound breeding is covered by the Breeding of Dogs Acts 1973 and 1991, and the Breeding and Sale of Dogs Welfare Act 1999. There is also protection under the Protection of Animals Act 1911, under which it is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to a domestic or captive animal. It is proposed to consolidate and modernise this legislation and a draft Bill is currently being prepared.

Harmful Chemicals

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effects on UK citizens of exposure to harmful chemicals, with particular reference to those found in everyday products. [168564]

Alun Michael: The Department carries out and/or evaluates research on a wide range of industrial chemicals through three main routes. In each case, the work focuses on particular chemicals or groups of chemicals of interest irrespective of exposure route (environmental, consumer, etc.). These chemicals have many uses and are present in many everyday products.

Through our commitments to the European Union's risk assessment programme under the Existing Substances Regulation (EEC) 793/93. Details of the programme can be found on the European Chemicals Bureau website at: http://ecb.jrc.it/existing-chemicals/. The programme aims to identify potentially harmful chemicals based on four priority lists of substances drawn up by the European Commission in consultation with member states. The UK has been the sole rapporteur for 21 and joint with other member states on a further five of the 141 substances this programme has identified.

At a national level, through bodies like the Advisory Committee on Hazardous Substances (ACHS) (see http://www. defra.gov.uk/environment/chemicals/achs/index.htm) and the Chemicals Stakeholder Forum (CSF) (see http://www. defra.gov.uk/environment/chemicals/csf/index.htm). These bodies investigate the effects of chemicals on the environment and society as well as providing advice and guidance on dealing with hazardous chemicals. Defra also commissions and evaluates research, often in close co-operation with the Environment Agency, on the hazards and risks of specific chemicals or groups of chemicals of concern such as perfluorooctanyl sulphonate (PFOS), endocrine disrupters, chlorinated and brominated flame retardants and dioxins and dioxin-like substances.

Through the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Chemicals Programme. Defra provides funding to this organisation where risk to human health and the environment posed by chemicals is determined by chemical-specific hazard properties and the amount of exposure to chemicals. The organisation assists member countries in developing and harmonising methods for assessing such risk.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her policy to recommend that the proposed European Chemicals Regulation (REACH) incorporate a legal framework for the substitution of harmful man—made chemicals where safer alternatives exist; and if she will make a statement. [168565]

Alun Michael: The authorisation process under REACH is designed to ensure proper control of substances of high concern and their eventual replacement by suitable substances or technologies. There are practical difficulties in making substitution an absolute legal requirement under REACH. The Government is currently considering the provisions relating to substitution to see whether they are likely to achieve the desired effect of acting as a sufficiently strong incentive—along with other incentives such as market pressure—for industry to develop new and safer substitutes.

In order to make an informed decision, the Government is consulting on proposals for addressing substitution as part of its consultation paper on the New EU Chemicals strategy issued on 30 March 2004 and all contributions are welcome. The closing date for responses is 25 June 2004.

Information is available on DEFRA website: http://www.defra.gov.uk/corporate/consult/reach/index.htm.

Hunting Ban

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans are in place to prevent the destruction of hunting dogs in the event of a hunting ban being introduced. [167758]

Alun Michael: The owners are responsible for the welfare of their animals. The Government would expect organisations such as the Kennel Club and the RSPCA to give advice and help on the best course of action to owners of dogs affected by any legislation such as the proposals on hunting with dogs.

Evidence to the Burns Inquiry suggests that hunts keep some 20,000 dogs for hunting. Several thousand dogs are put down every year after some six or seven years' hunting, when they are considered to have reached the end of their working lives. Some dogs presently involved in hunting are capable of being domesticated or are domestic animals and capable of rehoming. It may be the case that some dogs are pack animals which would not settle and could not be rehomed.

Illegal Meat Imports

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the risks to biosecurity as a result of illegal imports of meat; and what representations she has received about the threat to biosecurity as a result of such imports. [165200]

Mr. Bradshaw: In March 2003, DEFRA published the Veterinary Laboratories Agency "Risk Assessment for the Import of Meat and Meat Products Contaminated with Foot and Mouth Disease Virus into Great Britain and the Subsequent Exposure of GB Livestock".

This estimated that FMD infection of GB livestock due to contaminated illegally imported meat would occur with a mean of one infection in 130 years, with a 90 per cent. certainty interval ranging from one infection in 41 years to one infection in 1,100 years.

A further report updating this risk assessment, incorporating additional data, will be published in the next few months. This report will also include similar risk assessments on three pig diseases—Classical Swine Fever, African Swine Fever and Swine Vesicular Disease.

All seizures of illegal imports are disposed as if they were category 1 material under the Animal By-Products Regulations (2003) and are sent for incineration without undue delay.

We have received many representations from stakeholders on these issues both in meetings and via correspondence and we take account of their views in developing our strategy.

We continue to work with interested groups on projects, such as with countryside user groups to raise awareness of all inland biosecurity issues, and with the Bushmeat Campaign and others in taking forward the message through publicity campaigns aimed at ethnic minority communities.

Insects

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment she has made of the likely effects of climate change on the UK's biodiversity in respect of insects, including butterflies; and what measures she proposes to take to counter such effects. [165308]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department, along with the Devolved Administrations, statutory nature conservation agencies and non-governmental organisations, is contributing to an on-going research programme on the impacts of climate change on biodiversity in the UK. Results suggest that as climate changes, the distribution of species and the composition of habitats will change. With warmer temperatures, some northern species are likely to retreat, while southern species may be able to expand their ranges. At the same time, coastal habitats will be affected by rising sea levels. On land, movement of some species may be impeded by our fragmented landscapes, possibly leading to local extinctions. However, there is already evidence that some butterfly species have expanded their ranges northward in recent years.

The Government's existing policies for nature conservation provide the basis to mitigate the effects of climate change on biodiversity, by protecting and restoring wildlife habitats and concerted action to reverse the decline of threatened species. New evidence from research and monitoring is taken into account in developing these policies and management strategies. However, there remains considerable scientific uncertainty about the implications for individual species.

The Government are fully committed to the Kyoto Protocol and to reducing the UK's greenhouse gas emissions. Through the Climate Change Programme we have put in place a strong programme of policies and measures to ensure that the UK meets its commitments under the Kyoto Protocol and moves towards its domestic goal of reducing carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent. on 1990 levels by 2010. Longer term, the UK aims to strengthen its action further by putting itself on a path to a 60 per cent. reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050.

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to *(a)* survey and *(b)* monitor the UK's future biodiversity in respect of insects. [165309]

Mr. Bradshaw: An organisation called the National Biodiversity Network Trust is currently co-ordinating actions by a range of interested parties to bring together the biological recording efforts of volunteers and agencies. The work of the NBN Trust is supported by the Government agencies responsible for biodiversity and the Government support this work through the grant-in-aid to these agencies.

In addition, DEFRA has provided financial support for specific surveys such as the Millennium Butterfly Atlas and monitoring work on butterflies on land subject to agri-environment schemes. Species of particular concern are subject to individual specific action under the Biodiversity Action Plan and Government support this process through their conservation agencies in England, Wales and Scotland and the Environment and Heritage Service in Northern Ireland. Volunteers, through their relevant national schemes or societies, carry out much of the survey and monitoring work on priority species.

The vast majority of information on the distribution, status and trends of species comes from the activities of volunteers. These are individuals with a special interest in insects who give freely of their spare time. A key part of the work of the NBN Trust is about supporting these people and encouraging the next generation of biological recorders. Replacing the effort of volunteers with contracted survey would be extremely costly and need continued funding. The Government support the work of the NBN Trust as the primary mechanism to secure the continued supply of information from volunteers through capacity building of support networks at national and local scale.

We believe that the short life spans and diverse needs of insects make some of them good indicators of environmental change. Information on the status and trends in insects, and other plants and animals, would be extremely helpful in both detecting adverse change and identifying sustainable practices. We recognise that some groups of insects do not have the resources necessary to provide a comprehensive baseline of information and more resources are needed. DEFRA is currently exploring options for improving surveillance and monitoring of species, including insects, and will consider future funding in the light of discussions with the conservation agencies and representatives of voluntary conservation organisations.

Land Distribution

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many hectares were classified as *(a)* grassland, *(b)* land for crop growing, *(c)* woodland, *(d)* urban, *(e)* suburban and *(f)* semi-natural vegetation in each year since 1974 in the UK, broken down by (i) region and (ii) county. [165805]

Mr. Bradshaw: Estimates of the area of farmland in England which is classified as grassland, crops and bare fallow, and other agricultural land is available from the Agricultural Census for the years 1990, 1995, 2000, 2001 and 2002. Estimates of the area of woodland in England in 1995–99 is available from the Forestry Commission, while information on the extent of urban areas (including suburban land) in England in 1981, 1991 and 2001 is available from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. No separate information is available on the extent of semi-natural land in England. A copy of the available information will be made available in the

Library of the House. Information about the area of land in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland falls under the jurisdiction of the devolved authorities.

Market and Coastal Towns Initiative

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress by each Regional Development Agency on the Market and Coastal Towns Initiative; and what the budget for each RDA was for each year of the initiative. [167859]

Alun Michael: When the announcement of the funding was made, it was envisaged that 100 towns would benefit but I am pleased to report that, through the innovative methods used in each of the regions, 227 towns are currently receiving support.

The Rural White Paper offered funding of £37 million to enable the Regional Development Agencies and the Countryside Agency to support market town regeneration in the regions over a period of three years (2000–01 to 2003–04).

£32 million was allocated to the Regional Development Agencies and £5 million to the Countryside Agency. The funding for the Regional Development Agencies was incorporated in the DEFRA contribution to their Single Programme, to enable regional partnerships to target towns in their region according to selection criteria agreed regionally. The initiative was not established as a national funding programme with an annual budget for each agency.

The start of the initiative was delayed in many of the regions due to the foot and mouth crisis, with some regions not launching their own initiatives or incurring spend until last year. For this reason data from the Regional Development Agencies on their expenditure is unlikely to be available until the initiative is evaluated, which DEFRA is currently discussing with the Regional Development Agencies.

Parliamentary Questions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she intends to take to ensure that questions tabled for a named day response are answered on the specified day. [167789]

Alun Michael: I have explained to officials at DEFRA the importance attached by parliamentarians to receiving a full and prompt reply to formal questions. I have asked for further steps to be taken to make sure that this is fully understood in every part of the Department. It must be understood that there is a cost to providing answers, both in financial terms and in the time of officials that has to be diverted to providing answers or to meeting a deadline in the case of "named day" questions and that some information is simply not available in the form requested. I and my Ministerial colleagues are always willing to discuss the needs of Members.

Salmon

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what systems are in place to regulate the operational activities of commercial salmon farmers in the UK. [165565]

Mr. Bradshaw: All fish farms are subject to EU and national legislative controls to prevent the introduction and spread of serious fish disease. Under these arrangements all farms must be registered or licensed as required by the appropriate Fisheries Department and keep a record of the movement of fish for disease control purposes. Controls also apply to the import and export of farmed fish.

All salmon farms require a Crown Estate lease and development consent, and are subject to conservation and environmental measures. The use of medicines on fish farms and welfare of farmed fish are also subject to control.

David Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent assessment has been made of the health of the wild salmon population in the UK. [165569]

Mr. Bradshaw: Assessments of the current state of wild salmon stocks in UK have been compiled in the last month in Scotland (by Fisheries Research Services), in England and Wales (by CEFAS and the Environment Agency) and in Northern Ireland (by DARDNI). These reports have been submitted to the North Atlantic Salmon Working Group of the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas (ICES), which is meeting currently, and will be used to provide an overall assessment of the status of salmon stocks throughout the North Atlantic for submission to the North Atlantic Salmon Conservation Organisation (NASCO). The report for England and Wales has been published and may be obtained from the Environment Agency. The annual statistical bulletin, Scottish Salmon and Sea Trout Catches, 2003, is scheduled for publication in late summer.

Severely Disadvantaged Areas

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms are currently classed as containing both severely disadvantaged area and non-severely disadvantaged area land. [168032]

Alun Michael: We currently do not classify farm businesses in the way requested. However, in 2003, 8,261 farmers claimed Hill Farm Allowance on both severely disadvantaged and disadvantaged (i.e. non-severely-disadvantaged) land. Holdings of less than 10 hectares are excluded from HFA, and so are not included in this figure. Neither would it include farm businesses with severely disadvantaged land and land ineligible for HFA, but no disadvantaged land.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Joan Ruddock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what resources her Department makes available to local authorities for Sites of Special Scientific Interest; and how much was made available in 2003–04. [164971]

Mr. Bradshaw: The overall funding requirements of local authorities is a matter for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The Department does not provide direct funding to local authorities specifically for the management of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs). SSSI landowners and managers, such as local authorities, are able to access, subject to conditions, a variety of funding streams which can benefit SSSIs, including from English Nature, agri-environment schemes and from lottery or EU sources. English Nature estimate that overall local authorities own or manage about 4.7 per cent. of England's SSSI land.

St. George's Day

Paddy Tipping: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had with the Country Land and Business Association about St. George's Day breakfasts. [167863]

Alun Michael: The Government recognises the benefits of local food and welcomes initiatives like the Country Land and Business Association's (CLA) initiative that aim to encourage people to buy more locally sourced foods. Money is available under the England Rural Development Programme to support activities such as the establishment of Farmers' Markets, the development of regional and local branding of food and the formation of co-operative groups to market quality products. DEFRA has also worked with the Institute of Grocery Distribution (IGD) to produce best practice guides designed to show how supermarkets and food service companies can work with small local producers and explore how barriers to local sourcing can be overcome. In addition to this, our Public Sector Food Procurement Initiative is designed to encourage public sector bodies to procure their food in a manner that promotes sustainable development and to encourage more small and local businesses to compete to supply them with food.

The CLA initiative also complements the Government's three-year programme of support for the quality regional food sector which is being delivered by Food From Britain. This £3 million programme aims to promote the quality regional food sector and consists of a range of activities focussing on trade development, increasing competitiveness and raising consumer awareness.

Stone Curlews

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to change the boundaries of the Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest to reflect changes in the stone curlew population. [165128]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Secretary of State has no role in the determination of the boundaries of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs), this is a matter for English Nature.

I understand however, that English Nature has no plans at this time to recommend changes to the boundary of the Breckland Farmland SSSI. Survey and monitoring of the number and distribution of stone curlews is carried out annually throughout Breckland. This data is regularly reviewed to assess any significant changes in the population and its distribution.

If, in the future, there is evidence that parts of the SSSI no longer support the special interest (breeding stone curlew) or that areas beyond the existing SSSI boundary become important, the legislation provides that English Nature has the discretion to de-notify parts of the site or extend the SSSI boundary to incorporate any new areas that may qualify.

Trees

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the percentage tree cover in each EU member state was *(a)* on the latest date for which figures are available, *(b)* 10 years ago and *(c)* 20 years ago. [165798]

Mr. Bradshaw: Based on information collected by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation forest as a percentage of land area is given in the table as follows.

Country	*2000*[1]	*1990*[1]	*1980*[2]
Austria	47	46	45
Belgium/ Luxembourg	22	23	23
Denmark	11	10	11
Finland	72	72	76
France	28	27	28
Germany	31	31	29
Greece	28	26	45
Ireland	10	7	6
Italy	34	33	27
Netherlands	11	11	10
Portugal	40	34	35
Spain	29	27	25
Sweden	66	66	68
United Kingdom	12	11	9

Notes:

[1] FAO Global Forest Resources Assessment 2000. Definitions of forest can vary between countries and over time.

[2] FAO The Forest Resources of the ECE Region, published 1985. The years covered vary between countries, although most are around 1980. Definitions of forest can vary between countries.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent steps *(a)* have been taken and *(b)* are planned to improve tree health. [165800]

Mr. Bradshaw: The need to maintain, and improve where necessary, the health and vitality of trees is integral to the government's approach to sustainable forest management. We have set this out in the UK Forestry Standard and its supporting literature, which contain many specific measures for protecting woodland and improving tree health. All woodland management by the Forestry Commission is consistent with this standard and we expect private woodland owners that receive grant aid from the Forestry Commission to also meet the standard. The government has encouraged the development of the voluntary UK Woodland Assurance Standard that provides an independent verification of compliance with good practice and measures to ensure the continuing good health of woodland. We shall continue to ensure compliance with the UK Forest Standard in those woods managed by the Forestry Commission and encourage it in the private sector. We will improve, through research, our knowledge of factors affecting

tree health and we shall maintain a vigilant guard against the establishment of non-native pests and diseases.

Upland Farms (Environmental Management)

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she intends to take to ensure that farms in uplands are rewarded for improved environmental management of their land. [168948]

Alun Michael: A significant proportion of farmers in the uplands are already participating in our Environmentally Sensitive Area or Countryside Stewardship Schemes.

Next year we plan to roll out our new agri-environment scheme called Environmental Stewardship. The Entry Level of that scheme will be available to all upland farmers and we hope that many more of them will decide to join it.

Woodlands

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the total *(a)* area and *(b)* production in cubic metres of (i) broadleaf and (ii) coniferous woodland was in each year since 1980 (A) in England and (B) broken down by region. [165799]

Mr. Bradshaw: A national woodland survey is carried out by the Forestry Commission at intervals of between 15 and 20 years. Comparative areas of woodland[1] in 1980 and 1998 were published in the latest National Inventory of Woodland and Trees, Regional Inventory reports. The figures are given in the following table.

Thousand hectares

	1980[2]		1998[3]	
Region	*Broadleaves*	*Conifers*	*Broadleaves*	*Conifers*
North-East	16.2	73.3	24.5	69.2
North-West	33.0	39.4	46.7	39.8
Yorkshire and the Humber	39.0	37.4	46.1	35.4
East Midlands	37.8	21.6	52.9	17.9
West Midlands	44.1	28.3	63.1	25.7
East of England	59.4	40.7	90.2	37.5
London	5.4	0.3	5.5	0.2
South East	138.2	59.1	173.6	52.4
South West	95.7	63.8	137.4	60.8
Total England	468.8	363.9	640.0	338.9

[1] Excluding open space, coppice and felled areas awaiting replanting.

[2] 1980 Census of Woodland.

[3] National Inventory of Woodland and Trees—Regional Inventory Reports. Reference dates varied by region 1995 to 1999.

[4] Differences in sampling methodology between 1980 and 1998 may account for some of the differences.

[5] In the 1980 Census the area assigned to broadleaves and conifers included any associated open space such as roads and rides. In the 1998 Inventory open spaces are separately identified and to obtain meaningful comparison between the two datasets the 1980 Census data has been reduced by the percentage of open space identified in the 1998 Inventory (nationally 6.5 per cent.).

Timber production is not recorded by region and the estimate for total England production is given in the following table.

[1]Removals in million cubic metres overbark standing

	Hardwoods (from broadleafed trees)	*Softwood (from conifer trees)*
1980	1.2	1.3
1981	1.2	1.3
1982	1.0	1.4
1983	0.8	1.4
1984	0.8	1.5
1985	0.9	1.5
1986	0.9	1.7
1987	0.8	1.9
1988	1.1	2.3
1989	1.2	2.5
1990	1.1	2.5
1991	1.1	2.5
1992	0.8	2.6
1993	0.7	2.3
1994	0.8	2.6
1995	0.9	2.5
1996	0.8	2.4
1997	0.8	2.2
1998	0.7	2.1
1999	0.7	2.2
2000	0.6	2.1
2001	0.6	2.0
2002	0.6	1.8

[1] Based on figures published in Forestry Facts and Figures for 1980–94, adjusted to consistent definition. Later figures for private sector removals estimated from a GB survey for 2000–02 and interpolated.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

British Prisoners (Thailand)

Mrs. Fitzsimons: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last made representations to obtain pardons for British prisoners incarcerated in Thai prisons; and if he will make a statement. [168719]

Mr. Mullin: On 1 April 2004, the Government agreed to make representations to the Thai authorities in support of a clemency petition submitted by a British prisoner in Thailand.

China

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Chinese Government concerning *(a)* the repatriation of the North Korean refugee Mr. Park Yong-chol (alias Jo Yong-su) from China to North Korea and *(b)* the mistreatment of the Chinese house church leader Pastor Gong Shengliang while in prison in Hongshan Prison, Wuhan City, Hubei Province. [168799]

Mr. Rammell: We regularly raise the issue of North Korean border crossers at the biannual UK-China Human Rights Dialogue and on other high level occasions. We are aware of the case of Mr. Park. The European Commission has recently suggested that the EU should raise the matter urgently with the Chinese authorities; this is now under consideration by the EU presidency.

We have raised Pastor Gong Shengliang's case with the Chinese authorities on several occasions. We supported an EU demarche in Beijing in July last year on this case.

Climate Change

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment has been made by his Department of the implications for national security of climate change. [168840]

Mr. Caplin: I have been asked to reply.

The Ministry of Defence is reviewing the implications of climate change for national security as part of its wider assessment of strategic trends that might impact on the United Kingdom's interests.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 26 January 2004 with regard to Mosamuat Meherun Nessa Begum. [168926]

Mr. Mullin: I refer my right hon. Friend to my answer of 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1316W.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 1 March 2004 with regard to Mr. Hachemi Nessai. [168927]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary replied on 25 March 2004. However, he will write again shortly.

Departmental Employment Policy

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on his Department's employment termination policy for locally-engaged members of staff. [166919]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: In Foreign and Commonwealth Office posts overseas the rights of all locally engaged employees are protected by local law.

Every post is required to set out the termination procedure in the Terms and Conditions of Service given to each employee on appointment.

Procedures for terminating employment therefore vary across posts.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many employment termination cases of locally-engaged members of staff have been *(a)* disputed and *(b)* taken to arbitration; and in how many instances the findings have been in favour of the member of staff. [166921]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Locally engaged employees have the right to take their case to a local court if they have a dispute over the termination of their employment. To obtain details from each overseas post would incur disproportionate costs.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much severance pay has been awarded to his Department's locally-engaged members of staff in each year since 1997, broken down by country. [166922]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Severance pay for locally engaged employees of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office is governed according to local law and practice in the country the employee is working. To obtain figures from each overseas post would incur disproportionate costs.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169007]

Mr. Rammell: Comparable information is available only for the years 2000–01 to 2004–05. The following figures show the actual spend on entertainment within the Foreign and Commonwealth Office for the first three years, with a forecast for 2003–04 and 2004–05 based upon expenditure to date.

	£
2000–01	8,337,306
2001–02	8,708,262
2002–03	8,612,247
2003–04	[1]8.135,315
2004–05	[1]7,687,873

[1] Estimated.

All expenditure on entertainment within the Department is carefully monitored to ensure that it is made in accordance with departmental guidance that is based on the principles set out in "Government Accounting".

Fingerprinting (USA Entry)

Mr. Henry Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations she has received from the travel industry regarding the fingerprinting of British citizens wishing to travel to the United States; and if she will make a statement. [168918]

Mr. Mullin: There have been no formal representations by the travel industry, although the finger-scanning of British citizens on arrival in the United States has been discussed in our regular meetings with the industry.

Indonesia

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contribution his Department is making to the reconciliation process in Sulawesi. [168575]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The UK's Global Conflict Prevention Pool is used in Indonesia to facilitate inter-faith dialogue. DFID has also committed over £4 million to help establish the United Nations Development Programme Conflict Prevention and Recovery Unit in Jakarta. The unit will help build up capacity in conflict reduction and recovery in provinces torn apart by religious conflict, such as Sulawesi and Maluku.

Iraq

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assistance the

Government are giving to the tribunal and its staff investigating crimes by Saddam Hussein; and if he will make a statement. [168934]

Mr. Rammell: Our secondees in the Coalition Provisional Authority Office of Human Rights and Transitional Justice have provided assistance with the drafting of the Statute, Rules of Procedure and Elements of Crime for the Iraq Special Tribunal (IST). They have also developed the investigations strategy and mass grave action plan for the IST. We have agreed to Iraqi requests to provide further assistance, possibilities for which include: forensic expertise; judicial training; judicial advisers; and public education and outreach. And we have agreed to provide the IST Administration Department with a list of international investigators and analysts to support Iraqi capacity. We are also encouraging other EU partners to consider favourably requests for assistance from the Iraqis.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what period of production is represented by the $7,855,209,215.35 received from oil proceeds by the Development Fund for Iraq up to 16 April 2004; and if he will make a statement. [169157]

Mr. Straw: The $7,855,209,215.35 received from oil proceeds by the Development Fund for Iraq up to 16 April represents the period of production from 28 May 2003 to mid-March 2004.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the future role of the International Advisory Monitoring Board in monitoring and auditing the Development Fund for Iraq after 30 June 2004. [169158]

Mr. Straw: The International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB), as specified in United Nations Security Council Resolution 1483 and the IAMB Terms of Reference, wall cease to be responsible for the auditing of the Development Fund for Iraq once a fully sovereign Iraqi Government has been established. The UK Government would like to see arrangements put in place acceptable to the Iraqi interim administration for the independent and credible audit of Iraqi's oil revenues following the transfer of sovereignty. We are currently in discussion with the Iraqi authorities, the UN international financial institutions, and other countries on how this objective might be best achieved.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the proposed appointment of voting Iraqi members to the Board of the International Advisory Monitoring Board. [169159]

Mr. Straw: We are not aware of voting Iraqi members being appointed to the Board of the International Advisory and Monitoring Board (IAMB). The IAMB comprises voting members from the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, the Arab Fund for Social and Economic Development and the World Bank.

The IAMB, after consulting with the Coalition Provisional Authority administrator, may appoint up to five observers to IAMB meetings, including Iraqi nationals nominated by the Governing Council of Iraq. The IAMB in its press statement of 24 April 2004 welcomed Iraqi Governing Council observer Professor Mahdi Hadi Al-Kafari, and Mr Ihsan Ghanim representing the Iraqi Board of Supreme Audit, to the IAMB. Other Iraqi observers have been invited to IAMB meetings in the past. IAMB observers are not members of the IAMB and have no voting rights.

Small Grants Scheme

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much is available this year for distribution under the small grants scheme by the UK Ambassador or High Commissioner in each country in which the scheme operates; and how much was distributed in each country in each of the last three years. [168813]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) has not operated a Small Grants Scheme (SGS) in the past three years. However, an SGS is run and managed by the Department for International Development (DFID). A proportion of DFID's SGS is disbursed through FCO Posts but is not charged to the FCO budget.

South Africa

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with *(a)* South Africa's Defence Minister, Mosiuoa Lekota, and *(b)* other members of the Government of South Africa concerning the proposed creation of a South African standby force by 2005; and if he will make a statement. [168557]

Mr. Mullin: The African Union aims to establish an African Standby Force (ASF) for peace support operations on the continent. The ASF will be set up in two phases. Phase one is due to be completed by 2005 and phase two by 2010. It will be based on five regional brigades, including one from southern Africa.

We regularly discuss this initiative with the South African authorities, who are playing a key role. The UK is providing practical assistance, including through training by the British Peace Support Team in Pretoria.

My right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence met South African Defence Minister, Lekota, on 8 March. They discussed a range of subjects, including the African Union.

United Arab Emirates

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what joint activity the UK undertakes with the United Arab Emirates on counter-terrorism. [168572]

Mr. MacShane: We have a close and high-level counter-terrorism dialogue with the UAE authorities. The Government currently supplies training and advice on money laundering and terrorist financing, as well as extensive customs training. We are also developing a range of capacity building initiatives in the counter terrorism area.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

"Oil Crises and Climate Challenges"

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will publish her response to the International Energy Agency's publication, "Oil Crises and Climate Challenges". [168636]

Mr. Timms: The IEA carries out detailed analytical work on a wide range of energy policy issues and produces a considerable number of publications each year. As other IEA members, the UK is able to contribute to the nature and content of individual IEA publications when they are still in the draft stage. The Department, therefore, does not generally view it as necessary to make official responses to IEA publications. It has not made an official response to this publication and does not intend to do so.

Accountancy Services

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. [166086]

Jacqui Smith: Central records indicate the following values for the three financial years since 2000–01:

Supplier/financial year	*Spend (£)*
Deloitte & Touche	
2001–02	6,504,084
2002–03	10,784,757
2003–04	12,105,274
Ernst & Young	
2001–02	1,289,628
2002–03	1,625,512
2003–04	2,615,137
KPMG	
2001–02	94,347
2002–03	236,976
2003–04	2,121,207
PricewaterhouseCooper	
2001–02	3,507,357
2002–03	9,297,179
2003–04	5,776,612

The nature of these contracts included research, IT services and consultancy, market research, financial consultancy, legal services and consultancy, training and project management. Details of individual contracts can be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

I have asked the Department's Executive Agencies to reply direct to the hon. Member. Small Business Service's figures are included in the above table.

Letter from Ron Marchant to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 29 April 2004:

I am replying to this parliamentary question, tabled on 1 April 2004, concerning the nature and value of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01.

The Patent Office has not let contracts, consultancies or other services with the aforementioned accountancy firms during the above period.

Letter from Desmond Flynn to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 29 April 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply to you directly on behalf of The Insolvency Service in respect of your question (2003/2390) asking what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was all contracts, consultancies and other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (IV) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and agencies.

I can confirm that The Insolvency Service has had no contracts, consultancies or other services with any of the above-named firms since 2000–01.

Letter from Dr. J. W. Llewellyn to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 29 April 2004:

The Secretary of State for Trade and Industry has asked me to reply on behalf of the National Weights and Measures Laboratory (NWML) to your question about the nature and value of all contracts, consultancies and other services placed with Deloitte and Touche, Ernst and Young, KPMG and PriceWaterhouseCoopers since 2000–2001.

Since 2000–01 NWML has not placed any work with the accountancy firms listed.

Letter from Claire Clancy to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 29 April 2004:

I am responding to your recent Parliamentary Question to the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on behalf of Companies House, which is an Executive Agency of the DTL.

Since 2000/01 we have had one contract with Ernst and Young for an HR review in 2003 with a total value of £27,095.94.

We have not had any contracts with Deloitte and Touche, KPMG or PricewaterhouseCoopers.

Letter from Roger Heathcote to Mr. Jim Cousins, dated 29 April 2004:

You asked the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the *(a)* nature and *(b)* value was of all contracts, consultancies or other services placed with the accountancy firms (i) Deloitte & Touche, (ii) Ernst & Young, (iii) KPMG and (iv) PricewaterhouseCoopers since 2000–01 by the Department and its agencies. I have been asked to reply on behalf of the Employment Tribunals Service.

The Employment Tribunals Service used Deloitte and Touche in 2001 to undertake a Pay and Grading Review. The cost of the review was £50,000. The project was completed in May 2001.

Electricity Generation

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what percentage of electricity has been generated from renewable sources in each of the last seven years for which figures are available; and if she will make a statement. [168056]

Mr. Timms: The percentages of electricity derived from renewable sources in the each of the seven years from 1997 to 2003 are as follows:

Percentage

	Overall	*Sources eligible for Renewable Obligation*
1997	2.12	0.78
1998	2.55	0.95
1999	2.76	1.18
2000	2.75	1.32
2001	2.62	1.52
2002	2.96	1.74
2003 (Provisional)	2.9	2.0

Source:
Digest of UK Energy Statistics 2003 and Digests for earlier years.

This overall renewables percentage includes both biodegradable and non-biodegradable wastes and large scale hydro. The amount of electricity produced using hydro sources varies from year to year depending on the rainfall. Low precipitation during the winters of 2000–01 and 2002–03 resulted in low hydro output during 2001 and 2003 hence the fall in generation from renewables in those years.

Source eligible for the Renewables Obligation are biofuels (including the co-firing of biomass with fossil fuel), onshore and offshore wind, all new hydro, refurbished hydro up to 20 MW (commissioned before 1990), solar photovoltaics and wave and tidal technologies. As more and more onshore and offshore wind projects are commissioned, we can expect to see substantial growth in the amount of renewables electricity output over the coming years.

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimates she has made of the expected generation costs per MWh for *(a)* wind and *(b)* nuclear technologies in (i) 2010 and (ii) 2020. [169776]

Mr. Timms: The Department has published estimates of the cost of electricity generation from a variety of technologies. These are contained in a report published in February 2002 available at: www.dti.gov.uk/energy/greenhousegas/index.shtml.

The Performance and Innovation Unit at the Cabinet Office also published similar estimates in its 2001 Energy Review. These are available at: www.number-10.gov.uk/su/energy/l.html.

Work undertaken for the Renewables Innovation Review covering wind generation costs is also available at: www.dti.gov.uk/energy/renewables/policy/oxeraresults.pdf.

EU Emissions Trading Scheme

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what range of prices for carbon is being included in her Department's forward energy projections from 2005 onwards, with reference to the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. [167765]

Mr. Timms: We have considered a range for the price of a carbon emission allowance from €5 per tonne to €25 per tonne of carbon dioxide (tCO_2) for our forward energy projections and other work related to the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS). We expect the carbon price to be towards the lower end of the range. EU ETS carbon allowances are currently trading at about €7 per tonne of CO_2, albeit on low sales volumes.

Manufacturing Industry

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what the average age is of an employee in the manufacturing industry in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK; and what it has been in each year since 1997; [166768]

(2) how many people employed in the *(a)* manufacturing industry and *(b)* service sector have been over 50 years old in (i) the Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside, (iii) the North East and (iv) the UK in each year since 1997; [166769]

(3) how many *(a)* men and *(b)* women have been employed in the service sector in (i) the Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside, (iii) the North East and (iv) the UK in each year since 1997; [166770]

(4) how many *(a)* women and *(b)* people have been employed in the manufacturing industry in (i) the Jarrow constituency, (ii) South Tyneside, (iii) the North East and (iv) the UK in each year since 1997; [166771]

(5) what the average age has been of an employee in the service sector in *(a)* the Jarrow constituency, *(b)* South Tyneside, *(c)* the North East and *(d)* the UK in each year since 1997. [166772]

Ruth Kelly: I have been asked to reply.

The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Stephen Hepburn, dated 29 April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about employment in Jarrow constituency and at regional and national level. (166768, 166769, 166770, 166771, 166772)

The attached tables give the information requested for

Jarrow Parliamentary Constituency,

South Tyneside Local Authority,

the North East, and

the UK

for the twelve month periods ending February each year from 2000 to 2002.

Information is not currently available for earlier or later periods, although the data for the twelve month period ending in February 2003 is to be published by ONS on 28 April 2004. Estimates are taken from the Labour Force Survey (LFS), carried out by the Office for National Statistics (ONS). As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Table 1: Number of employees in the manufacturing and service sectors in selected areas (not seasonally adjusted) by gender, 12 month periods ending February 2000, 2001 and 2002

Thousand

	2000	*2001*	*2002*
Manufacturing sector[1]			
All employees			
Jarrow Constituency	10	7	8
South Tyneside	12	11	12
North East	194	187	188
United Kingdom	4,420	4,271	4,188
Male			
Jarrow Constituency	7	6	6
South Tyneside	10	9	10
North East	147	146	141
United Kingdom	3,226	3,141	3,069
Female			
Jarrow Constituency	[2]	[2]	[2]
South Tyneside	[2]	2	3
North East	47	41	46
United Kingdom	1,193	1,130	1,119
Service sector[1]			
All employees			
Jarrow Constituency	22	23	22
South Tyneside	35	38	38
North East	654	689	697
United Kingdom	17,280	17,626	17,941

Table 1: Number of employees in the manufacturing and service sectors in selected areas (not seasonally adjusted) by gender, 12 month periods ending February 2000, 2001 and 2002

Thousand

	2000	2001	2002
Male			
Jarrow Constituency	9	9	9
South Tyneside	12	15	15
North East	256	278	279
United Kingdom	7,437	7,583	7,732
Female			
Jarrow Constituency	14	13	14
South Tyneside	23	23	23
North East	398	411	418
United Kingdom	9,843	10,043	10,209

[1] Manufacturing and service sectors are based on the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 1992.
[2] Sample size too small for reliable estimate.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey .

Table 2: Number of employees in manufacturing and service sectors aged over 50[1] (not seasonally adjusted) 12 month periods ending February 2000, 2001 and 2002

Thousand

	2000	2001	2002
Manufacturing sector[2]			
All employees			
Jarrow Constituency	[3]	[3]	[3]
South Tyneside	[3]	2	2
North East	31	36	36
United Kingdom	947	920	922
Service sector[2]			
Jarrow Constituency	[3]	4	4
South Tyneside	6	7	7
North East	126	129	136
United Kingdom	3,378	3,520	3,676

[1] Includes employees aged 50 to 99.
[2] Manufacturing and service sectors are based on the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 1992.
[3] Sample size too small for reliable estimate.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey.

Table 3: Average age of employees in manufacturing and service sectors (not seasonally adjusted) 12 month periods ending February 2000, 2001 and 2002

	2000	2001	2002
Manufacturing sector[1]			
Jarrow Constituency	37	37	38
South Tyneside	37	38	39
North East	37	39	39
United Kingdom	39	39	40
Service sector[1]			
Jarrow Constituency	38	39	39
South Tyneside	38	38	38
North East	38	38	38
United Kingdom	38	38	38

[1] Manufacturing and service sectors are based on the Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) 1992.
Source:
ONS Labour Force Survey.

Miners' Compensation

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the average payment made to solicitors was in *(a)* successful and *(b)* unsuccessful cases for (i) chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and (ii) vibration white finger claims. [168475]

Nigel Griffiths *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The solicitors' costs are paid on a tariff basis, under the terms of the Claims Handling Agreements (CHA). Costs are only payable for successful claims, there are no costs payable for unsuccessful claims.

Under the CHA the basic costs are:

	Costs (£)[1]
COPD	
Settled expedited offers	955
Settled full and final offers	1,856
Settled chronic bronchitis only	531
VWF[2]	
General damages claims in Group 1 occupations[3]	652
General damages claims in Group 2 occupations[4]	760

[1] Plus VAT plus disbursements.
[2] Costs for handling services claims are not yet agreed.
[3] Group 1 occupations incorporates the occupations where generally in the coal mining industry the use of hand held vibratory or percussive tools was recognised as a substantial part of the occupation.
[4] Group 2 occupations incorporates the occupations where in the coal mining industry the use of hand held vibratory or percussive tools was not necessarily a substantial part of the job, however use by individuals within the group, may well have been significant.
Note:
In addition solicitors receive additional payments for handling Grant of Probates, disputes procedures and posthumous claims.

National Allocation Plan

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what energy assumptions have influenced her Department's policy on the appropriate carbon dioxide reduction target relative to 1990 levels within the National Allocation Plan to implement the EU Emissions Trading Directive. [167755]

Mr. Timms: The draft National Allocation Plan (NAP) indicated that the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) would be responsible for delivering the remaining savings of 1.5 million tonnes of Carbon (MtC) (equivalent to 5.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide) from 1990 levels by 2010 envisaged under the UK Climate Change Programme from emissions trading for which there are no policies currently in place. With the exception of the power generation sector, allowances to installations have been allocated on the basis of their projected emissions for the first phase of the scheme, which runs from 2005–07. These projections take account of updated estimates of the impacts and policy measures set out in the Climate Change Programme which have already been implemented or for which there are firm plans. Allowances to the power generation sector have been allocated on the basis that this sector will be responsible for the emissions trading savings of 1.5 MtC to be delivered by the EU ETS. This reflects the fact that the power generation sector faces limited international competition and has relatively good low-cost abatement opportunities.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the carbon dioxide emissions reduction targets in *(a)* the draft National Allocation Plan and *(b)* the climate change programme. [167762]

Mr. Timms: The UK Climate Change Programme envisaged that emissions trading would deliver carbon dioxide (CO_2) reductions of 2 million tonnes of Carbon (MtC) (equivalent to 7.3 million tonnes of CO_2) by 2010. As the UK Emissions Trading Scheme is expected to lead to CO_2 reductions of about 0.5 MtC (1.8 $MtCO_2$), the draft National Allocation Plan (NAP) indicated that the Government had decided that the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) would be used to achieve the remaining savings of 1.5 MtC (5.5 $MtCO_2$) by 2010.

The draft NAP confirmed that the UK is firmly committed to its domestic goal set out in the 2000 Climate Change Programme of moving towards a 20 per cent. reduction in CO_2 emissions below 1990 levels by 2010. Subject to a review of the effectiveness of the EU ETS as a vehicle for delivering cost effective emissions reductions, it is intended that the total quantity of allowances to be issued for the second phase of the Scheme running from 2008 to 2012 will be set to ensure that installations covered by the Scheme make an appropriate contribution to that goal. This will be taken into account in the review of the Climate Change Programme which will take place later this year.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry to what extent the requirements of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive with regard to energy efficiency have been taken into account in future energy projections for the UK. [167763]

Mr. Timms: In practice, the impact of this Directive is likely to vary according to the installation considered and there is a good deal of uncertainty about how the Directive will impact in overall terms. In general, the DTI energy model does not make projections for installations to this level of detail. In modelling the power station sector, a modest improvement in energy efficiency has been assumed to take place at existing coal fired power stations.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will reconcile her revised growth projections for the UK iron and steel industry with the increases set out in the draft National Allocation Plan. [167764]

Mr. Timms: Following publication for consultation of the draft National Allocation Plan for the EU Emissions Trading Scheme (EU ETS) in January, work to refine our energy and emissions projections has continued. We will be publishing a working paper on overall emissions projections in May and a final set of emissions projections for the iron and steel and other sectors covered by the EU ETS in June or soon after. These projections will be used in determining the revised sectoral allocations to be included in the National Allocation Plan.

Post Office Closures

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many post offices have been closed in Scotland as part of the urban reinvention programme. [170051]

Mr. Timms: Post Office Ltd. produces statistics on post office closures on a quarterly basis. The latest data on net closures by region currently available is to the end of December 2003. Data for the quarter to end March 2004 is expected shortly.

There have been 35 post office closures in Scotland under the urban reinvention programme to end of December 2003.

Renewable Energy

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effects of recent trends in investment in renewable energy and upon the residents of Heywood and Middleton. [168434]

Mr. Timms: Recent trends in renewable energy investment have been highly encouraging. More new capacity has been constructed in the last few years than in the previous decade, and a significant amount is currently in the pipeline. This covers a wide range of technologies including onshore and offshore wind, solar and biomass.

While this investment has not translated into capacity within Heywood and Middleton itself, Renewables Northwest, a joint venture between the Regional Development Agency and United Utilities, has been working with local businesses on identifying opportunities in the renewable energy area.

Solar Heating

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she is taking to promote greater use of solar heating panels in the UK. [169368]

Mr. Timms: The Clear Skies initiative was launched in January 2003 in order to promote the uptake of a number of renewable technologies including solar heating panels. Grants are available to both individual householders and community groups in order to install solar heating panels. The initiative also has a list of registered installers and has developed a mentoring scheme in order to train future installers and increase the amount of companies able to install these technologies.

Further details of the initiative, including grant levels, can be found on the website at www.clear-skies.org.

The Scottish Executive has its own parallel scheme, The Scottish Community and Household Renewables Initiative, which also offers grants for the installation of solar heating panels. Further details can be found on the website www.est.co.uk/schri.

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many households in the UK she estimates use solar heating panels; and what her estimate is of use in five years' time. [169369]

Mr. Timms: The DTI does not keep a record of solar heating installations but according to figures from the Building Research Establishment it is estimated that there are approximately 60,000 solar heating systems installed in the UK.

At current installation rates of approximately 5,000 per year, there could potentially be a further 25,000 installations in five years time, assuming none of the current installations are removed.

Telephone Billing

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many disputes regarding telephone billing costs between customer and service providers were referred to Ofcom and its predecessors in each of the last five years; and how many of these were upheld in favour of *(a)* the customer and *(b)* the service provider. [169375]

Mr. Timms: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as independent regulator. Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to the hon. Member. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

HEALTH

Asperger's Syndrome

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if his Department will set up an inquiry into the number of *(a)* adolescents and *(b)* adults with an Asperger's Syndrome diagnosis; and if he will make a statement. [168602]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department has no plans to set up an inquiry of this type. The Medical Research Council (MRC) published a comprehensive review of autism research in December 2001, which provides an authoritative overview of the current state of knowledge on the prevalence, incidence and causes of autism and Asperger's syndrome. The report was commissioned by the Department. It is available on the MRC website at http://www.mrc.ac.uk/pdf-autism-report.pdf

The MRC report notes that according to recent reviews, there appears fairly consistent agreement that autism spectrum disorders affect approximately 60, and more narrowly defined autism 10–30, per 10,000 children under eight years old. The prevalence of autism and Asperger's syndrome among adult and adolescent populations is not known.

The Department allocated a further £2.5 million in February 2002 to the MRC to help take forward the recommendations of their report.

The MRC held a series of four seminars to encourage the development of good quality applications for autism research funding between December 2002 and July 2003. On 11 July 2003, the MRC held the first of its annual forums for autism research, "Breaking barriers, building bridges", in conjunction with the National Autistic Society, to bring together ideas stimulated by the four seminars, one of which had addressed "Autism in Populations".

The MRC will be taking decisions on the allocation of research project funding for further autism studies in May 2004.

Competent Authorities (EU Accession States)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the European Commission has provided a list of competent authorities operating in the accession states in respect of the health and social care profession to his Department. [165902]

Mr. Hutton: No. The European Commission hopes to provide this information shortly.

Correspondence

Mr. Wilshire: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he will respond to the letter from the hon. Member for Spelthorne of 4 February, PO 1043915, regarding continuing care criteria. [165065]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* A reply was sent to the hon. Member on 27 April 2004.

European Health Training Standards

Mr. Baron: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, (1) whether his Department has asked the European Commission to introduce transitional arrangements for health professionals from the new member states who do not meet the minimum training standards specified in the European Community directives on medicine, nursing, midwifery and dentistry by 1 May; [165222]

(2) when the European Commission will make a statement on the readiness of the 10 new member states to meet the minimum training standards specified in the European Community directives on medicine, nursing, midwifery and dentistry by 1 May; [165223]

(3) what powers the UK health regulators will have in relation to the assessment of individuals whose training may not meet minimum EU training requirements as specified in the European Community directives on medicine, nursing, midwifery and dentistry; [165224]

(4) what action the European Commission will take against those accession states that do not meet the minimum training standards specified in the European Community directives on medicine, nursing, midwifery and dentistry by 1 May; [165225]

(5) what efforts his Department has made to secure information from the European Commission as to which of the 10 new member states will have met the minimum training standards specified in the European Community directives on medicine, nursing, midwifery and dentistry by 1 May; and what work his Department has done in co-operation with other member states to secure that information. [165226]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 1 April 2004]:* We are in regular contact with the European Commission and the other member states on this issue. The Commission's assessment is that training in all the acceding countries will meet minimum requirements after 1 May. It is for the Commission to determine what action to take in relation to any acceding countries that do not meet these requirements. Where the qualifications awarded by the acceding countries do not meet minimum requirements,

the regulatory bodies are entitled to require proof of recent and substantial practice experience as a condition of recognition. Where such proof is not available, they are entitles to assess applicants on a case-by-case basis.

Green Ministers

Mrs. Calton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what meetings his Department's Green Minister has attended in the last 12 months in that role. [165443]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department's Green Minister is a member of the ENV(G) Cabinet sub-committee and of the sustainable development taskforce. It has been established practice under successive Governments not to disclose information relating to the proceedings of Cabinet committees. This practice is now formalised by Exemption 2 of Part II of the Code of Practice on Access to Government information.

The Green Minister met representatives of the Sustainable Development Commission in October 2003.

Professional Registration (EU Nationals)

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether health care staff from other EU countries are able to work in the United Kingdom prior to the completion of registration with UK professional bodies; and if he will make a statement. [164915]

Mr. Hutton: It is for employers to ensure that all staff are suitably qualified and experienced for the work to be done, regardless of their country of origin. Staff may not be employed in any capacity requiring registration without being registered. The status of individuals undertaking training or experience with a view to registration must be clearly distinguished from that of registered practitioners.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Treason

23. **Mr. Robathan:** To ask the Solicitor-General what her policy is on the prosecution of United Kingdom nationals for treason. [169200]

The Solicitor-General: Any offence of treason would be dealt with in the same way as other prosecutions. Namely that the police investigate and the Crown Prosecution Service consider whether there is enough evidence and whether a prosecution is in the public interest.

Nottingham Criminal Justice Board

24. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the work of the Crown Prosecution Service with the Nottingham Criminal Justice Board. [169201]

The Solicitor-General: The Nottingham Criminal Justice Board is one of the 42 local Criminal Justice Boards where the police, courts, prosecutors and prison service work together to ensure a fair and affective criminal justice system. Kate Carty, the local Chief Crown Prosecutor, is a member of the board which is chaired by the Chief Constable.

Cannings Case Judgment

25. **Mr. Borrow:** To ask the Solicitor-General if she will make a statement on the progress she is making in identifying prosecutions that may be affected by the Appeal Court's judgment in the appeal against the conviction of Angela Cannings. [169202]

The Solicitor-General: The process of identifying prosecutions which may be affected by the Appeal Court's judgment in the appeal against conviction of Angela Cannings has been completed. Since the Appeal Court's judgment on 19 January the 300 relevant cases have been identified, of which 86 involve defendants in custody. There are three stages to the review process. To date, 167 cases have been reviewed and I will be in a position to tell the House the outcome of those reviews very shortly.

Of the 16 ongoing prosecutions which may have been affected by the Cannings judgment, all have been reviewed and two have been discontinued. A Hampshire case was discontinued before trial and a Coventry case was discontinued before a retrial.

Fraud

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Solicitor-General what recent representations she has received regarding Government measures to eradicate fraudulent schemes targeted at small businesses. [169203]

The Solicitor-General: I have not received any representations regarding these measures.

Wildlife Crime

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Solicitor-General what guidance she gives to Crown Prosecution Service offices to ensure the consistent prosecution of wildlife crime. [169196]

The Solicitor-General: The Crown Prosecution Service is aware of the need to make sure that effective measures are taken to ensure consistency in the prosecution of wildlife crime. It is a member of the Partnership for Action Against Wildlife Crime.

PRIME MINISTER

EU Enlargement

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister what events he will be attending in order to show his support for the enlargement of the EU. [169885]

The Prime Minister: I hosted a reception at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office on 28 April for 400 guests connected with the EU enlargement process and with the accession countries, including former Ministers and others from across the political spectrum. I will also attend the Irish EU Presidency's event to mark accession on 1 May in Dublin.

Immigration Status

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list those who have attended his immigration summits. [169884]

The Prime Minister: A number of Ministers together with officials attended the immigration summits.

Internal discussion and advice is exempt from disclosure in line with exemption 2b of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

India

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister when he next plans to visit India. [169886]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so.

Iraq

Mr. Foulkes: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make representations to the United Nations Secretary General calling for an immediate and independent high level UN inquiry into the Iraq Oil for Food Programme arising from the evidence given to the United States Congress. [169242]

The Prime Minister: On 21 April 2004, the United Nations Secretary-General appointed an independent high-level inquiry to investigate allegations of corruption in the management and administration of the UN's Iraq Oil For Food Programme. Her Majesty's Government fully support the UN inquiry, which was endorsed by the Security Council through its unanimous adoption of resolution 1538 (21 April 2004).

Ministerial Gifts

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister on what date he intends to publish the list of gifts received by Ministers in 2003–04. [169851]

The Prime Minister: The Government are committed to publishing an annual list of gifts received by Ministers in an official capacity valued at more than £140. Details of gifts received during 2003–04 valued at more than £140 are currently being assembled and will be published before the summer recess.

President Mubarak

Mr. Amess: To ask the Prime Minister when he plans to receive a state visit from President Mubarak. [169928]

The Prime Minister: I have no current plans to do so.

Tibet

Harry Cohen: To ask the Prime Minister if he will urge Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao to undertake to commute the death sentence against Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche pending a fair and free retrial in the presence of international observers; and if he will make a statement. [169581]

The Prime Minister: I expect to discuss a wide range of issues with Premier Wen Jiabao.

We and our EU partners have raised concerns about the transparency and conduct of Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's trial with the Chinese authorities on several occasions and have asked them to confirm that Tenzin Deleg Rinpoche's death sentence will be commuted to life imprisonment.

We will continue to monitor this case and make representations to the Chinese authorities where appropriate.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Prime Minister (1) if he will seek from Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao an undertaking to drop all pre-conditions to negotiating a settlement on Tibet with representatives of the Dalai Lama; and if he will make a statement; [169584]

(2) if he will make a statement in public on the situation in Tibet during the visit of Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao. [169585]

The Prime Minister: I expect to discuss a wide range of issues with Premier Wen Jiabao during his visit to the UK. The Government have an ongoing dialogue with China over human rights issues and Tibet at both ministerial level and the biannual UK/China Human Rights Dialogue. We welcome the continuing contact between the Chinese authorities and representatives of the Dalai Lama.

Tom Kelly

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what factors underlay his decision to appoint Mr. Tom Kelly as his chief spokesman; and what qualities Mr. Kelly will bring to his post. [167784]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for New Forest, East (Dr. Lewis) at Prime Minister's questions on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 884–85.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

All-postal Elections

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he received *(a)* the summary report and *(b)* the full report on the voting and the integrity of the all-postal elections in Merrow, Guildford in May 2003 produced by the Electoral Commission. [169647]

Phil Hope: The Government received on 31 July 2003 the Electoral Commission's statutory evaluation report on the all-postal pilot election scheme at the elections held in Guildford on 1 May 2003.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when the full report on the voting and the integrity of the all postal election in Merrow, Guildford in May 2003 by the Electoral Commission will be published; and in what form it will be published. [169653]

Phil Hope: The Electoral Commission published on 31 July 2003 its evaluation report on the all-postal pilot election scheme held in Guildford on 1 May 2003. This was also sent to the local authority on the same date and was placed on the Commission's website.

Coverage Care

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister pursuant to the answers of 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 59–60W, on Coverage Care, what the current arrangements with Coverage Care (Gloucestershire) Ltd. are to which the answer refers; what the various circumstances referred to in the answer

were in this case, regarding the provision of financial assistance from local authorities; what discussions have taken place between his Department and Gloucestershire county council over this matter; what rent arrears Gloucestershire county council has accrued in relation to Coverage Care (Gloucestershire) Ltd.; and whether the Government has asked the District Auditor to investigate the matter. [163886]

Yvette Cooper: The circumstances are set out in detail in the general consents. Of particular relevance are "The General Consent under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 1988 for Small Amounts of Assistance 1999" and "The General Consent under Section 25 of the Local Government Act 1988 for Disposal of Residential Care Homes 1999".

In preparing for the possibility of a specific consent being sought from the First Secretary of State, the county council has explained the nature of possible proposals to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. However, information about the current arrangements with Coverage Care (Gloucestershire) Ltd.; details of proposals; and rent arrears accrued by Gloucestershire county council has resolved that information relating to the business affairs of the company should remain confidential. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has not asked the District Auditor to investigate the matter.

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Best: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will upgrade the existing decent homes standard for all social sector housing to address fuel poverty. [167770]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not intend to change the standard. To meet the decent homes standard, a home must have efficient heating as well as effective insulation. We are confident that the decent homes target will deliver significant improvements to the energy efficiency of the social housing stock taking many households out of fuel poverty.

Delivery of the decent homes target will improve the heating and/or insulation of 1.3 million homes owned by local authorities and housing associations.

Homelessness

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list, for each housing authority, for the years *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 2000 and *(c)* 2003 the number of (i) adult homeless people, (ii) child homeless and (iii) residents in bed and breakfast accommodation. [166896]

Yvette Cooper: Available information, as reported by local authorities in England, has been made available in the Library of the House. Data collected on homelessness is in respect of households, rather than persons, although broad estimates of the number of dependent children within households accepted as eligible for assistance, unintentionally homeless and in "priority need" can be derived from the information supplied by local authorities. Snapshot information about numbers of households in various forms of temporary accommodation, including bed and breakfast style accommodation, represents the position on the last day of each quarter.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many homeless families there were, broken down by region, for *(a)* the last quarter of 2003 and *(b)* the first quarter of 2004. [169732]

Yvette Cooper: Information on homelessness collected by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is in respect of households, rather than families. The number of households accepted as eligible, unintentionally homeless where the main category of priority need was the presence of dependent children, or an expectant mother, is however available. The following table shows the number of homeless household acceptances by local authorities, by region, along with information on those with dependent children or an expectant mother, for the fourth quarter of 2003. Estimates for the first quarter of 2004 will be published on 16 June.

Homeless households accepted by local authorities
Fourth quarter October—December 2003

	Total households accepted[1]	*of which main priority need category reported as:*	
		Dependent Children	*Expectant Mother*[2]
North East	2,050	970	190
North West	4,240	2,220	320
Yorkshire and The Humber	3,800	1,670	300
East Midlands	2,330	1,220	250
West Midlands	3,540	1,960	370
East of England	2,660	1,230	330
London	7,250	3,700	880
South East	3,610	1,720	470
South West	2,630	1,190	320
England	32,100	15,880	3,410

Notes:
[1] Applicants accepted as eligible, unintentionally homeless and in priority need.
[2] Household containing an expectant mother, but with no dependent children
Source:
ODPM quarterly P1E homelessness returns.

Housing

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on how the Starter Homes Initiative has affected the residents of Preston. [169660]

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the Starter Homes Initiative has benefited the residents of Wigan. [169268]

Mr. Benton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on how the Starter Homes Initiative has affected the residents of Bootle. [170077]

Keith Hill: Between September 2001 and 31 March 2004, the Starter Home Initiative helped key workers into home ownership in London, the south east, eastern and south west regions. A small scheme also operated in Warwickshire. The programme did not operate outside these areas.

Isle of Wight Projects

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list, for each of the financial years ending in March *(a)* 2000, *(b)* 2001 and *(c)* 2002, each project on the Isle of Wight funded by the (i) South East England Development Agency and (ii) the single

Regeneration Budget showing the (A) funding for each project, (B) intended outcomes of each project and (C) actual outcomes of each project. [169729]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the letter sent by my right. hon. Friend the Member for Greenwich and Woolwich, on 27 April 2004. A copy of this letter has been made available in the library of the House.

I will write to the hon. Member with regards to the information requested on the intended outcomes for each project as soon as the information is collated. A copy of the letter will also be made available in the library of the House.

New Deal for Communities

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the administration budget was for each New Deal for Communities partnership for each financial year since 1999–2000; and what the estimated administration budget for each such partnership is for financial years (i) 2004–2005 and (ii) 2005–06. [160342]

Yvette Cooper *[pursuant to my reply, 11 March 2004, Official Report, c. 638–39W]:* My earlier answer gave a figure of £9.655 million management and administration expenditure for Rochdale NDC. This figure includes all revenue expenditure. The correct figure is £2.413 million. The attached table includes the corrected figure and much smaller corrections for Newham, New Cross, Brighton and Derby NDCs. Figures for other NDCs remain the same. The New Deal for Communities Programme has 39 NDC Partnerships and £2 billion has been committed to them over the 10 years of the NDC Programme. The 17 Round 1 Partnerships entered their delivery phase in 2000–01 and the 22 Round 2 Partnerships entered their delivery phase in 2000–02.

The NDC Partnerships went through two phases before they entered their delivery phase. Phase 1 involved building up a partnership, phase 2 involved developing a delivery plan for the 10 years of the programme and, where possible, developing "quick win" projects. During Phase 1 and Phase 2 we would expect Management and Administration to be high as the partnerships were in the initial stages of setting up and building a partnerships.

Overall, partnerships may only spend up to 10 per cent. of their 10-year budget total on Management and Administration during the year life of their programme. Profiles vary, and some partnerships have spent more that 10 per cent. per annum on Management and Administration so far. However, we do not expect management and administration to exceed 10 per cent. of total spend by the time each partnership reaches its final year.

Management and Administration Budget

	1999–2000	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*[1]	*2005–06*[1]
Partnership							
Newham	332,786	490,000	515,000	480,000	635,200	600,000	650,000
Shoreditch	400,000	340,000	340,000	340,000	590,000	540,000	540,000
Aylesbury	400,000	168,750	304,800	383,212	688,370	679,800	497,100
Ocean	400,000	599,000	680,000	680,000	670,000	620,000	620,000
South Kilburn	0	240,000	335,000	496,000	496,000	696,000	696,000
North Fulham	0	299,500	380,000	520,000	500,000	528,472	520,000
EC1 Islington	0	400,000	450,000	670,000	500,000	500,000	518,000
Clapham Park	0	400,000	450,000	584,000	563,800	563,154	639,000
New Cross	0	427,670	227,670	482,119	632,000	500,000	501,497
Seven Sisters	0	208,000	612,000	635,000	553,000	550,000	550,000
Brighton	330,350	628,075	770,925	652,059	437,451	543,991	572,532
Southampton	10,000	387,000	362,000	385,850	450,000	600,000	480,000
Plymouth	10,000	40,000	225,610	461,957	424,000	380,000	Not yet agreed
Bristol	320,000	450,000	500,000	518,000	533,000	590,000	540,000
Luton	0	0	375,000	600,000	500,900	440,000	Not yet agreed
Norwich	0	395,900	425,900	425,900	450,000	475,000	450,000
Leicester	198,000	542,000	985,000	800,000	692,000	620,000	600,000
Nottingham	200,000	299,000	360,000	482,000	520,000	500,000	500,000
Derby	10,000	302,000	299,310	428,200	500,000	531,050	880,540
Sandwell	400,000	546,968	599,437	500,000	500,000	500,000	500,000
Walsall	0	223,000	250,000	465,000	450,000	455,000	260,000
Coventry	0	260,000	385,002	519,021	555,000	555,000	550,000
Wolverhampton	0	255,000	173,844	435,526	577,076	594,000	612,000
Kings Norton	300,000	262,452	301,692	237,189	526,941	735,428	507,582
Aston	0	235,000	116,500	520,000	520,000	535,000	550,000
Doncaster	0	0	344,478	453,344	426,352	440,000	450,000
Sheffield	0	0	680,000	680,000	506,587	506,587	506,587
Bradford	0	314,000	460,600	514,700	502,200	500,000	500,000
Hull	0	731,000	791,360	577,190	500,000	500,000	450,000
Knowsley	0	0	306,969	524,627	504,820	780,611	1,168,580
Kensington[1]	0	479,619	574,097	619,000	650,000	670,306	800,000
Manchester	204,153	605,878	622,366	642,568	650,000	600,000	500,000
Oldham	0	0	151,324	254,196	360,700	405,000	409,000
Salford	0	0	204,571	289,997	740,000	740,000	740,000
Rochdale	0	0	280,000	393,000	540,000	600,000	600,000
Hartlepool	0	339,965	258,000	461,355	690,000	690,040	691,880
Newcastle	350,000	200,000	388,000	650,000	670,000	600,000	575,000
Middlesbrough	350,000	251,400	420,830	300,000	477,000	588,000	543,000
Sunderland	0	300,000	305,000	397,000	839,000	400,000	500,000
Total	4,215,289	11,621,177	16,211,655	19,458,010	21,521,397	21,792,439	21,168,298

[1] Please note that figures given for 2004–05 and 2005–06 are estimates and some are not yet agreed

Parish Councils

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the Standards Board for England has spent on investigations with regard to parish councils; and how much money was involved in the complaints and issues that led to such investigations. [168664]

Phil Hope: The Standards Board for England does not record this information.

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether his Department directs the Standards Board for England to consider the benefit to the public interest when *(a)* determining whether to pursue investigations against parish councillors and *(b)* pursuing those investigations. [168720]

Phil Hope: When considering allegations of misconduct, the Standards Board for England operates within the statutory framework of the Local Government Act 2000 and related Regulations. In considering whether to refer an allegation for investigation, the Board considers whether the allegation is serious enough to justify a referral for investigation, and if a national or local investigation would be justified. The purpose of an investigation, carried out by an ethical standards officer, appointed by the Standards Board, is to make a finding as to whether or not the code of conduct for members has been breached and what further action if any needs to be taken. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not have powers to intervene in particular cases and does not do so.

Recycling

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [165643]

Phil Hope: The UK Sustainable Development in Government Second Annual report shows that in the year ended 31 March 2003 recycled paper accounted for 87 per cent. of desk top paper purchased by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The post-consumer waste element of that recycled paper was 80 per cent. or more.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [165644]

Phil Hope: The UK Sustainable Development in Government Second Annual report shows that in the year ended 31 March 2003 recycled paper accounted for 99 per cent. of paper for printed publications purchased by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The post-consumer waste element of that recycled paper was 75 per cent. or more.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [165645]

Phil Hope: Procurement units in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have been made aware of the quick win target for the purchase of copying paper. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister monitors its performance for the purpose of reporting progress in the annual Sustainable Development in Government report.

In addition the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has recently introduced an electronic ordering tool and this is to be configured to prevent the ordering of non-recycled paper by withdrawing non-compliant paper from the contracted suppliers' catalogues available to local purchasing officers.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165646]

Phil Hope: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Greening Operation Policy statement requires the use of compliant recycled paper and procurement units in the Office have been made aware of the quick win target for the purchase of paper for printed publications. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister monitors its performance for the purpose of reporting progress in the annual Sustainable Development in Government report.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister by what date his Department expects to reach the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165647]

Phil Hope: The Sustainable Development in Government Report shows that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister met the quick win target for *(a)* copying paper and *(b)* for printed publications purchased in 2002–03. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister expects that all of its copying paper and virtually 100 per cent. its printed paper procurement will be "Quick Win" compliant by end of 2005–06.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will strive to attain 100 per cent., but at present some printing processes presently preclude the use of Quick Win specification paper. Should this situation change, "Quick Win" compliant paper will be used.

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; what the name is of the paper used in each case; and what the (i) recycled and (ii) post-consumer recycle content of the paper is in each case. [165648]

Phil Hope: The details requested are as follows:

(a) Copier Paper—Evolve Business, supplied by Banner, contains 100 per cent. post-consumer waste.

(b) Stationery—Repeat Offset, supplied by the James McNaughton Paper Group, contains 100 per cent. post-consumer waste.

(c) Envelopes—Conservation and Croxley Heritage, supplied through the Government's Stationery Contract (Taurus Print & Design), contains 100 per cent. post-consumer waste.

(d) Paper for Reports—Revive, Revert and Evolution ranges, containing 75 per cent. post-consumer waste and 25 per cent. Elemental Chlorine Free pulp, Greencoat range, containing 80 per cent. post-consumer waste and 20 per cent. Totally Chlorine Free pulp, and Evolve Business, containing 100 per cent. post-consumer waste, all supplied by Robert Home Paper Company, Premier Paper Ltd., Howard Smith Paper and James McNaughton Paper Group through the Government's Paper Framework Contract.

Vacant/Derelict Land

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much previously developed land was *(a)* vacant and *(b)* derelict in England in each year since 1997. [169493]

Keith Hill: The available estimates are from the National Land Use Database of Previously Developed Land surveys of 1998, 2001 and 2002:

Previously developed land in England

	Vacant	*Derelict hectares*
1998	19,170	19,340
2001	19,720	21,410
2002	20,750	19,960

Results for 2003 will be published in the summer.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Autism

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on provision for those with autism in Northern Ireland. [168826]

Angela Smith: Provision for people with autism is the responsibility of a number of Government Departments and statutory bodies and a wide range of provision is available to help and support sufferers and their families.

The Department of Education has taken a proactive stance in supporting positive interventions for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder (ASD) and has allocated funding for ASD training for people in the range of pre-school settings and for the establishment of an Interboard ASD Training Group, which will develop training needs and support measures in this area. It is also planning the establishment of a Centre of Excellence in the education of children with ASD on an all Ireland basis. Complementary parent and teacher videos and CD-ROMs, along with guidance material on autism have been produced and an "ASD Guide to Classroom Practice" has been issued to all schools as an aid to teachers and classroom assistants.

Health and Social Services Boards provide a range of mainstream and specialist healthcare services for children and adults with autism, including diagnostic and assessment services, family support services, respite services, day care services, befriending schemes, mental health services, learning disability services, training for parents and staff and collaboration with specialist voluntary organisations such as PAPA (Parents and Professionals and Autism) and PEAT (Parents' Education as Autism Therapists). The Department of Health, Social Services and Public Safety's Priorities for Action 2004–05 includes action to enhance diagnostic, assessment and early intervention services for children with autism. An additional £0.5 million has been allocated for this purpose.

Other assistance is available through the Disablement Advisory Service and Jobskills programme of the Department of Employment and Learning and through Disability Living Allowance and Attendance Allowance provided by the Social Security Agency.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people were diagnosed as autistic in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [168827]

Angela Smith: The information requested is not available.

Core Gateway Costs

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much Core Gateway costs are for a two-week course at the East Antrim Institute in Northern Ireland. [168623]

Mr. Gardiner: The Core Gateway cost for a two-week course at East Antrim Institute in Northern Ireland is £400 per participant. This is in line with payments made to all Providers of Core Gateway based on a rate of £40 per day for full attendance.

Inward Investment

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many jobs were created *(a)* by inward investment projects and *(b)* through business associated with agreed inward investment projects, for each year from 1998 and expressed as a percentage of the figure for the UK as a whole. [168213]

Mr. Gardiner: The information is as follows:

(a) Table 1 details the number of jobs created by inward investment projects assisted during the five year period commencing 1995–96. While the question asks for each year from 1998, it should be recognised that since assisted projects take some time to reach maturity, it has not been practice to produce job creation figures until four years subsequent to the offers of assistance being made. Therefore, this answer covers only two of the years requested but has been expanded to include the previous three years.

Table 1: Job Creation by Inward Investors

Financial Year	*Job creation up to March 2003*
1999–2000	5,284
1998–99	2,856
1997–98	4,187

Table 1: Job Creation by Inward Investors

Financial Year	*Job creation up to March 2003*
1996–97	4,426
1995–96	2,979
Total	19,732

To provide a more up to date picture of inward investment activity Table 2 presents the number of jobs promoted by inward investment projects during the five year period from 1998–99.

Table 2: Jobs Promoted By Inward Investors

Financial Year	*Jobs Promoted*
2002–03	1,033
2001–02	2,526
2000–01	5,506
1999–2000	6,584
1998–99	4,162
Grand Total	19,811

Previous evidence provided by the Industrial Development Board (IDE) to the Northern Ireland Audit Office showed that approximately 70 per cent. of jobs promoted were created and a similar proportion of grant offered was actually paid.

(b) No estimates are available concerning the secondary impacts associated with inward investment projects.

At present Invest NI has no statistically robust method of producing comparative figures regarding job promotion/creation figures achieved by the UK as a whole. Invest NI intends over the coming year to engage with UK Trade and Investment to develop an approach which will enable such comparisons to be made on a consistent basis. Nevertheless, Invest NI, and previously the IDB has indicative evidence to suggest that Northern Ireland's share of new contestable UK Foreign Direct Investment from the manufacturing and international tradeable service industry sectors is in the region of 10 per cent.

Legal Aid

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people *(a)* applied for and *(b)* received legal aid in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years; and how many people had an application rejected. [168195]

Mr. Lammy: I have been asked to reply.

The Legal Services Commission records the number of applications for assistance rather than the number of clients assisted. The following table sets out details of legal aid applications for the period 1998–99 to 2002–03.

	Legal advice and assistance (LAA) Claims	*Advice by way of representation (ABWOR) Applications*	*Children Order Applications*	*Civil Applications*	*Criminal Applications*
1998–99					
Received	57,969	5,633	5,506	15,813	19,729
Granted		5,121	4,600	6,713	19,190
Refused		79	71	2,358	539
1999–2000					
Received	45,292	5,798	5,198	14,109	20,063
Granted		5,285	4,950	12,586	19,394
Refused		408	244	4,439	669
2000–01					
Received	46,656	5,622	5,133	14,097	19,344
Granted		5,157	4,824	11,480	18,681
Refused		177	123	2,847	663
2001–02					
Received	41,949	5,797	5,708	14,997	17,820
Granted		5,440	5,403	9,011	17,303
Refused		235	181	2038	517
2002–03					
Received	55,292	5,745	5,999	13,569	21,732
Granted		5,351	5,656	11,102	20,941
Refused		316	252	3,167	791

Mr. Beggs: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost of legal aid was in Northern Ireland in each of the last five years. [168196]

Mr. Lammy: I have been asked to reply.

The following table sets out the total cost of legal aid in Northern Ireland from 1998–99 to 2002–03:

£ million

	Criminal	*Civil*	*Sub total*	*Administration*	*Total*
1998–99	15.93	14.16	30.09	2.58	32.67
1999–2000	23.25	11.40	34.65	2.69	37.34
2000–01	21.88	15.82	37.70	2.87	40.57
2001–02	24.57	16.96	41.53	3.26	44.79
2002–03	26.77	18.21	44.98	3.58	48.56

Sexually Transmitted Infections

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in the incidence of sexually transmitted infections was in each year since 2000 in each of the health and social services board areas in Northern Ireland, broken down by *(a)* age and *(b)* sex. [168622]

Angela Smith: Information is not available on incidence of sexually transmitted infections in Northern Ireland, as not all persons with such infections are in contact with the health service. Information is, however, available on the number of initial contacts with Genito-Urinary Medicine clinics each year, in respect of persons with various sexually transmitted infections. This information which is shown for the financial years ending March 2000, March 2001, March 2002 and March 2003, together with the percentage change between each year, has been placed in the Library.

WORK AND PENSIONS

BT Business Rates

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will place in the Library correspondence between his Department and the European Commission regarding the European Commission's preliminary investigations into the alleged undeserved subsidisation of BT's business rates by the Valuation Office Agency, including his Department's response. [167269]

Jacqui Smith: I have been asked to reply.

This correspondence contains commercially confidential material which it would be inappropriate for the Government to make public. This is covered by exemption 13 Third Party Commercial Confidences of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Child Support Agency

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he expects a resolution to Child Support Agency computer problems deriving from running two concurrent systems. [167134]

Mr. Pond: The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John Taylor, dated 29 April 2004:

In replying to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, when he expects a resolution to Child Support Agency computer problems deriving from running two concurrent systems.

I have been working closely with EDS to resolve the issues on the new computer system. We are currently working on a remediation plan, which has yet to be validated and agreed. The old scheme cases will be converted to the new scheme when Ministers are confident that it is working well. I will continue to monitor this carefully and make regular reports to the Secretary of State on progress. As you are aware, reports have been made available in the House of Commons library on 16 July, 18 November 2003, 12 February and 21 April 2004.

Council Tax

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate, based on his Department's policy simulation model for 2004–05, for *(a)* all households, *(b)* all pensioner households, *(c)* all households headed by a pensioner over 70 and *(d)* all households headed by a pensioner aged 70 or above, the average level of (i) gross council tax and (ii) council tax net of rebates expressed as a percentage of household income. [169644]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table. Estimates are modelled using the DWP Policy Simulation Model for 2004–05. This model is based on 2001–02 Family Resources Survey data, uprated to 2004–05 prices, benefit rates and earnings levels. It is then grossed up to forecast population totals for that year. The following table shows the information requested.

Percentage

	Average gross council tax as a percentage of household income	*Average council tax net of rebates as a percentage of household income*
All households	4	3
All pensioner households	5	3
All households headed by a pensioner aged over 70	6	3
All households headed by a pensioner aged 70 or over	6	3

Notes:

1. Gross council tax figures are net of any discounts.
2. Household income is net of income tax and national insurance contributions, and is unequivalised.
3. Estimates assume 100 per cent. take up of council tax benefit.

Disabled Workers

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Wigan over the last seven years. [169311]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Wigan, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, firefighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisors, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Preston over the last seven years. [169662]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Preston, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, firefighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

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Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

Failed Pension Schemes

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 293, how many people whose pension schemes have been wound up have found that the money that they invested yielded nothing. [169646]

Malcolm Wicks: Information is not available on the number of people whose pension schemes have wound up with no, or insufficient, funds to meet their expected pensions. We are currently exploring with pension scheme trustees and other industry representatives the basis on which we can establish firm estimates of the extent of the problem of defined benefit schemes winding-up under funded, the numbers affected and the potential scale of losses

New Deal

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in Burnley have benefited from the *(a)* New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [167886]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. From 12 April we enhanced the New Deal for Partners in order to offer partners taking part in that programme the same level of help and support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. Also from this April we have started to roll out Work Focused Interviews for Partners, offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

870 women have started New Deal for Lone Parents in Burnley since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, of whom, 550 have gained a job. Information on the number of women who have benefited from the New Deal for Partners is not available at constituency level.

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people in the Vale of Clwyd constituency have benefited from *(a)* New Deal for Young People, *(b)* New Deal for 25-plus and *(c)* New Deal for Lone Parents in each ward in the Vale of Clwyd. [166683]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not available at ward level. The available information for the Vale of Clwyd constituency is in the table.

Number of individuals who have benefited from New Deal for Young People, New Deal 25-plus and New Deal for Lone Parents to the end of December 2003

Programme	*Individual starts*	*Individuals into work*
New Deal for Young People	1,110	690
New Deal 25-plus	270	80
New Deal for Lone Parents	1,130	560

Note:
Numbers are rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
New Deal Evaluation Database.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Burnley have gained work through the New Deal programme. [168321]

Jane Kennedy: 590 lone parents in Burnley have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998.

Information on the number of women who have gained work through the other New Deal programmes is not available at constituency level.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Heywood and Middleton have gained work through the New Deal programme. [168540]

Jane Kennedy: 730 lone parents in Heywood and Middleton have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998.

Information on the number of women who have gained work through the other New Deal programmes are not available at constituency level.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in Heywood and Middleton have benefited from *(a)* the New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* the New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [168544]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. From 12 April we enhanced the New Deal for Partners in order to offer partners taking part in that programme the same level of help and support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. Also from this April we have started to roll out Work Focused Interviews for Partners, offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

1,080 women have started New Deal for Lone Parents in Heywood and Middleton since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, of whom, 690 have gained a job. Information on the number of women who have benefited from the New Deal for Partners is not available at constituency level.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents have gained work through the New Deal programme. [168741]

Jane Kennedy: 247,310 lone parents have gained work though the New Deal for Lone Parents since the introduction of the programme in October 1998. Lone parents may have gained work through other New Deal programmes but cannot be identified separately.

Information on the number of women who have gained work through the other New Deal programmes are not available at constituency level.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Wigan have gained work through the New Deal programme. [169310]

Jane Kennedy: 460 lone parents in Wigan have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998.

Information on the number of women who have gained work through the other New Deal programmes is not available at constituency level.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in Wigan have benefited from *(a)* the New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* the New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [169312]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. From 12 April we enhanced the New Deal for Partners in order to offer partners taking part in that programme the same level of help and support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. Also from this April we have started to roll out Work Focused Interviews for Partners, offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

710 women have started New Deal for Lone Parents in Wigan since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, of whom, 430 have gained a job. Information on the number of women who have benefited from the New Deal for Partners is not available at constituency level.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in Preston have benefited from *(a)* the New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* the New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [169661]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. From 12 April we enhanced the New Deal for Partners in order to offer partners taking part in that programme the same level of help and support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. Also from this April we have started to roll out Work Focused Interviews for Partners, offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

890 women have started New Deal for Lone Parents in Preston since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, of whom, 500 have gained a job.

Information on the number of women who have benefited from the New Deal for Partners is not available at constituency level.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Preston have gained work through the New Deal programme. [169663]

Jane Kennedy: 530 lone parents in Preston have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998.

Information on the number of women who have gained work through the other New Deal programmes is not available at constituency level.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in Manchester, Gorton have benefited from the *(a)* New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [167342]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. From 12 April we enhanced the New Deal for Partners in order to offer partners taking part in that programme the same level of help and support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. Also from this April we have started to roll out Work Focused Interviews for Partners, offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

930 women have started New Deal for Lone Parents in Manchester, Gorton since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, of whom, 450 have gained a job. Information on the number of women who have benefited from the New Deal for Partners is not available at constituency level.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Manchester, Gorton have gained work through the New Deal programme. [167348]

Jane Kennedy: 480 lone parents in Manchester, Gorton have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998.

Information on the number of women who have gained work through the other New Deal programmes is not available at constituency level.

Pension Credit

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of pension credit are receiving *(a)* less than 10p per week, *(b)* 10p to 19p per week, *(c)* 20p to 29p per week, *(d)* 30p to 39p per week, *(e)* 40p to 49p per week, *(f)* 50p to 59p per week, *(g)* 60p to 69p per week, *(h)* 70p to 79p per week, *(i)* 80p to 89p per week and *(j)* 90p to 99p per week. [169396]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is given in the table. An award of pension credit of less than 10p per week is not payable unless the person is receiving another benefit payable with pension credit.

Pension credit awards of less than £1 as at 31 March 2004

Amount	*Number of awards*
Less than 10p	1,360
10p to 19p	1,107
20p to 29p	1,156
20p to 39p	1,152
40p to 49p	1,241
50p to 59p	1,271
60p to 69p	1,355
70p to 79p	1,302
80p to 89p	1,419
90p to 99p	1,428
Total	12,791

State Second Pension

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate *(a)* the gross cost, *(b)* the saving in expenditure on the state second pension, *(c)* the saving in expenditure on pension credit, *(d)* the saving in expenditure on other means-tested benefits, *(e)* the additional revenue from income tax and *(f)* the net cost to the Exchequer, of paying a full basic state pension to all individuals aged 65 or over from April 2006 onwards at the rate of the guarantee credit, regardless of contribution record, and subsequently indexed to average earnings, combined with the abolition from that date of all new accruals to the state second pension and the abolition of all payments of savings credit, including those to existing recipients for each of the 10 financial years from 2006–07. [167320]

Malcolm Wicks *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The information is not available in the format requested. However, such information as is available is in the following table:

£ billion

	(a) Gross Cost	*(b) S2P Saving*	*(c) PC Saving*	*(d) IRB Saving*	*(f) Net Cost*
2006–07	19.4	0	3.1	1.6	14.8
2007–08	20.7	0	3.3	1.7	15.8
2008–09	22.1	0.1	3.5	1.8	16.7
2009–10	23.5	0.1	3.7	1.9	17.8
2010–11	25.0	0.2	3.9	2.0	18.8
2011–12	26.6	0.3	4.1	2.1	20.1
2012–13	28.6	0.4	4.3	2.3	21.6
2013–14	30.5	0.6	4.6	2.4	23.0
2014–15	32.4	0.7	4.8	2.6	24.3
2015–16	34.2	0.9	5.0	2.7	25.6

Notes:

1. Figures are for Great Britain in 2004–05 price terms using the GDP deflator index rounded to the nearest £100 million.
2. Gross costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002 based population projections. Gross costs refer to the additional costs after allowing for National Insurance Fund benefits and non-means tested vote benefits.
3. The net cost includes all savings except for additional income tax revenue, see note 4.
4. Additional income tax revenue is estimated by the Inland Revenue using 2006 tax rates. We are unable to publish any income tax forecast estimates for years beyond that which is published in the Financial Statement and Budget Report (currently 2006–07). The income tax estimate for 2006–07 is based on the 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes and is projected in line

with March 2004 Budget assumptions. The income tax revenue in 2006–07 is £5.4 billion, resulting in a total net cost of £9.4 billion. For illustrative purposes, Inland Revenue assumed income tax revenue to be a fixed percentage of the gross cost for this option in 2007–08 and 2008–09. Therefore, the total net cost in 2007–08 is £10 billion and in 2008–09 is £10.5 billion. Estimates for later years would be subject to a greater degree of uncertainty.

5. The savings from abolishing future accruals to the state second pension are also calculated by the Government Actuary's Department, they include state pension, additional pension and widows benefit additional pension and are consistent with the long term Public Expenditure Survey forecasts. As earnings in the year of reaching state pension age do not count towards an individual's S2P, the first savings occur in 2007–08. No allowance has been made for changes to contracting out rules.

6. The savings credit is assumed to be abolished from April 2006 with no payments to existing pensioners and no new recipients after 2006. Figures are based on the illustrative long-term projections of benefit expenditure underlying Annex A of the Budget report.

7. The savings from other income related benefits (housing benefit and council tax benefit) are calculated using the Department's policy simulation model and April 2004 benefit rates. Consistent with previous answers the offset for the first year is held constant for subsequent years. In addition the increase in housing benefit and council tax benefit personal allowance for people aged 65 and over by the maximum savings credit amount, introduced alongside savings credit and included in forecast expenditure, has been accounted for, with the costing including the effect of removing this increase.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Legal Aid

Bob Spink: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many solicitors provided legal aid in each legal aid area *(a)* in 1997 and *(b)* at the latest time for which figures are available. [168619]

Mr. Lammy: The Legal Services Commission can provide figures for 1997–98 on the number of solicitors' offices paid for legal aid work in Family, Non-family and Crime but cannot provide any further breakdown by category. Some offices practiced more than one area of legal aid, therefore the total offices paid does not equal the sum of the breakdown. These figures are in the following table A.

In January 2000 the Legal Services Commission introduced a system of contracting. A breakdown of the number of solicitors' offices with contracts as at April 2004 is provided in the following table B. Some offices hold a contract in more than one category of law, therefore, the total offices with civil contracts does not equal the sum of the breakdown.

Table A

Category of law	*Solicitors' offices paid in 1997–98*
Family	9,082
Non-family	9,497
Crime	7,304
Total solicitors' offices paid	10,601

Table B

Category of law	*Solicitors' offices with contracts as at April 2004*
Actions against the police	75
Clinical negligence	288
Community care	57
Consumer	45
Debt	158
Education	47
Employment	163
Family	3,072
Housing	450
Immigration: asylum	380
Immigration: non-asylum	376
Mental health	297
Personal injury	1,079
Public law	40
Tolerance	2,098
Welfare benefits	186
Solicitors' offices with Controlled Work Contracts	3,701
Additional Licence Only Contracts	213
Total solicitors' offices with General Civil Contracts	3,914
The number of solicitors' offices with criminal contracts as at 31 March 2004	2,750

Bob Spink: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what proportion of the legal aid budget was spent on asylum and immigration cases in each of the last five years. [167074]

Mr. Lammy: The proportion of the legal aid budget spent on immigration and asylum in each of the last five years was as follows:

	Percentage
	Proportion
1998–99	3.2
1999–2000	3.9
2000–01	4.8
2001–02	7.4
2002–03	9.2

Figures for 2003–04 are not yet available.

Social Security Commissioners

Hywel Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (1) what the average waiting time from application to hearing for cases before the Social Security Commissioners was in the last three years in *(a)* Wales and *(b)* England; [167983]

(2) what the average waiting time from application to hearing for cases before the Social Security Commissioners was in each of the last three years for cases heard *(a)* wholly or partly in Welsh and *(b)* in English. [167986]

Mr. Lammy: The Social Security Commissioners receive applications from the claimant, which are then considered by the Commissioners, and a ruling issued. The Commissioners will either grant or refuse leave to appeal. If leave to appeal is granted the appeal then proceeds to hearing. No cases before the Social Security Commissioners have been heard either wholly or partly in Welsh during the last three years. The Office of the Social Security Commissioners does not hold separate

statistical information relating to waiting times for cases in either Wales or England. The average waiting times for an application for leave to appeal, and for appeals granted leave to proceed to hearing, over the last three years, are as follows:

Weeks

Period	*Average waiting time for application decision*	*Average waiting time from decision to hearing*[1]
2001–02	16	34
2002–03	10	21
2003–04	8	20

[1] Please note that waiting time figures have been rounded up or down where appropriate.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what written and other information material is provided *(a)* in Welsh and *(b)* bilingually to people taking cases to the Social Security Commissioners. [167984]

Mr. Lammy: The Office for the Social Security Commissioners has an internet site which is accessible in Welsh or English which provides a range of information in relation to the procedures of the Commissioners. Work is currently ongoing in translating the Social Security Commissioners appeal form, and an information leaflet, into the Welsh language.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many cases from Wales were heard in each of the last three years by the Social Security Commissioners; and how many of these were heard partly or wholly through the medium of Welsh. [167985]

Mr. Lammy: The Office of the Social Security Commissioners does not hold statistical information relating to the volume of cases received principally from Wales. However, over the last three years there have been 73 cases heard orally in Cardiff for which proceedings were conducted in English.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what provision is available for cases before the Social Security Commissioners to be heard either wholly or partly in Welsh in respect of *(a)* cases heard in Wales and *(b)* cases from Wales heard in England. [167987]

Mr. Lammy: A standard direction applies to cases received from Wales. This states that "A notice that it is intended to use Welsh must *(a)* identify those parts of the case or hearing in which Welsh will be used and *(b)* be given to the commissioner as soon as possible and in any event at least 21 days before any oral hearing. If notice is given that Welsh will be used the Commissioner will make any further directions that are necessary or expedient". This direction covers all cases received from Wales irrespective of whether they are heard in Wales or England.

Hywel Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many cases from Wales were heard by the Social Security Commissioners in England in each of the last three years. [168018]

Mr. Lammy: The Office of the Social Security Commissioners does not hold statistical information relating to the number of cases received from Wales and subsequently heard in England.

British Irish Council

Rev. Martin Smyth: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what work is being undertaken by the British Irish Council in the field of languages; what the objectives of this work are; which Government Departments are involved; what contribution non-governmental organisations in the minority languages sector are making to this work; and how the work will contribute to the delivery of the European Charter for Regional or Minority Languages. [168010]

Mr. Lammy: The work of the British-Irish Council (BIC) in the area of Indigenous, Minority and Lesser-Used Languages is subject to agreement between all member administrations and is led by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The BIC at its meeting in Cardiff in November 2003, which was attended by the Prime Minister, agreed that Members should:

Jointly consider outcomes of research into intergenerational language transmission;

Carry out an assessment of structures supporting indigenous language learning in adult education in each of the BIC administrations;

Work together to identify priorities for their respective indigenous languages in relation to Information and Communication Technology development;

Consider together the potential benefits of co-operating on the development of language use surveys;

Share information on their experiences of the relationship between planning policy and linguistic considerations.

The language covered by the BIC in its work in this field to date include:

Cymraeg/the Welsh language

Gaelic in Scotland

Gaelg/the Manx language

An Ghaeilge/the Irish language

Guernesiais/Guernsey-French

Jerriais/the Jersey language

Ulster Scots

The members of the Council are the British and Irish Governments; the devolved administrations of Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales; the Bailiwicks of Jersey and Guernsey and the Isle of Man. (Since the suspension of the Northern Ireland Assembly, Northern Ireland interest within the British-Irish Council have been represented by Northern Ireland Office Ministers as part of the UK delegation).

Each of the BIC member administrations is responsible for determining the nature of the involvement of its own administration.

The Welsh Assembly Government lead the work in the languages sector and it is open to any member administration to suggest a contribution from a non-governmental organisation. Work in this field will

include input from various language boards, adult education providers and community-based language groups such as the Welsh Mentrau Iaith.

Delivery of the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages is a matter for each of the Charter's ratified signatories including the UK Government. The work of the BIC in this area will complement current UK initiatives in respect of the Charter.

Correspondence

David Winnick: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the hon. Member for Walsall North will receive a reply to his letter of 11 March ref.147849. [168885]

Mr. Lammy: I wrote on 29 April to my hon. Friend, the Member for Walsall North in response to his letter of 11 March. I apologies for the delay.

Immigration

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the costs to the Legal Aid Fund on immigration matters were in each financial year since 1996–97. [167180]

Mr. Lammy: In the time available, it is not possible to identify separately the cost of immigration from asylum cases. The costs to the Legal Aid Fund on immigration and asylum matters in England and Wales for each financial year since 1996–97 are as follows:

	£ million (net) [1]
1996–97	26.1
1997–98	35.2
1998–99	53.3
1999–2000	61.4
2000–01	81.1
2001–02	129.4
2002–03	176.2
2003–04	[2]204

[1] Approximately 10 per cent. of the total cost of immigration and asylum matters relates to immigration and nationality cases.
[2] Provisional figure, subject to end-of-year adjustments.

Small Claims

Vera Baird: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1417W, on small claims, what research projects the Department has conducted. [168621]

Mr. Lammy: The Department's Research Unit has commissioned and published two reports by Professor John Baldwin on small claims. They are:

No. 1/97 Monitoring the rise of the small claims limit: litigants' experiences of different forms of adjudication

No 8/02 Lay and judicial perspectives on the expansion of the small claims regime

A report by Professor Joanna Shapland, Angela Sorsby and Jeremy Hibbert: A Civil Justice Audit was published by the Department in 2002. This looked at the value, nature and progress of cases through the County Court in Sheffield and included data on small claims.

The DCA Research Unit has recently begun a study of a scheme to mediate small claims in Exeter County Court. The DCA's Consumer Strategy Review has also looked at small claims as part of its project on debt.

Welsh Medium Service

Hywel Williams: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what recent assessment he has made of the Welsh medium service provided by the Social Security Commissioners. [167683]

Mr. Lammy: The Chief Commissioner has asked for the Social Security Commissioners' electronic database to be amended to have the functionality to identify cases received from Wales. There is a Welsh page available on the website available at http://www.osscsc.gov.uk/pages/cymru.htm giving information on the procedures of the Social Security Commissioners. The website is currently undergoing substantial revision. The relevant appeal form, and an information leaflet are being re-developed for the Welsh medium.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Sure Start (Chatham)

10. **Jonathan Shaw:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the effect of the Sure Start programme in Chatham. [169214]

Margaret Hodge: Sure Start Chatham is starting to make a difference to the children and families in the area. The programme has launched a highly successful programme where mothers encourage other mothers to breast-feed; breast-feeding rates are now up by about 20 per cent. And the uptake rate for hearing tests which was about 33 per cent. before the programme began, now stands at 97 per cent.

Nationally we are undertaking a major and comprehensive evaluation of the Sure Start Programme. Results will become available over the next 12 months. But to give just one example of the impact, we know that in Sure Start local programme areas, there has been a 6 per cent. reduction in percentage of mothers who smoke during pregnancy; and we know that that will make a real difference to the health and well being of a child.

Educational Attainment (East Midlands)

11. **Mr. Allen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will rank the local education authorities for the East Midlands by their level of educational attainment. [169215]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Performance tables for each local education authority are published each year showing the level of educational attainment at Key Stage 2, Key Stage 3, GCSE/GNVQ and A/AS level. I am today placing details of the nine East Midlands authorities in Library.

Civic Awareness

12. **Helen Jackson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to promote civic awareness through educational activities for students aged 14 to 19 years. [169216]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The National Curriculum provides citizenship learning for students up to age 16. We have also been investigating the scope for introducing an entitlement to active citizenship in the post-compulsory phase; development work continues. Mike Tomlinson's Working Group sees young people's active contribution to the community within the core of 14–19 learning; The Group's final report is due out in the autumn.

Mathematics Teaching

14. **Mr. Gibb:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will respond to the proposals made in the report by Professor Smith on post-14 mathematics teaching. [169218]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As I have said before, I very much welcome Professor Smith's report. It provides a sound framework for determining the way ahead.

I have already accepted the broad thrust of his recommendations. I am able to report that work is in hand to advertise the appointment of a chief adviser of mathematics and Anita Straker, of the Centre of British Teachers, has been appointed on an interim basis. I affirm that I am still committed to the idea of a National Centre for Excellence in Mathematics Teaching that is separate from the science centre.

I am discussing implementation of the report in detail with Professor Smith and others and will announce my decisions on individual elements in due course.

Children of Military Personnel (Schools Funding)

15. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he will announce additional funding for schools with a large proportion of children of military personnel under the terms of the turbulence factor. [169219]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: Local education authorities have discretion to make extra funding available to schools with high pupil turnover as a result of armed forces redeployments, and some do so, including Essex. We are aware that schools with a high proportion of service family children among their pupils have a range of concerns about funding and other issues; and a series of regional meetings is taking place in May with a new national body including representative head teachers of such schools, as well as Government officials. We shall be considering the results in due course, with a view to meeting the needs of these schools.

School Selection (Hertfordshire)

16. **Claire Ward:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received regarding the independent adjudicator's decision on school selection in Hertfordshire. [169220]

Mr. Miliband: We have received representations from a small number of parents, either complaining that they disagree with the decision, or that it has taken too long for this issue to be resolved. However, adjudicators are independent of the Secretary of State and their decisions can only be challenged through the courts.

Disruptive Pupils

17. **Mr. Blizzard:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support he will give to schools to enable them to deal with disruptive pupils. [169221]

Margaret Hodge: We are the first Government to adopt a comprehensive strategy to improve behaviour in schools. We are providing all secondary schools with high-quality training materials and expert consultancy, developing similar materials for primary schools and focusing intensive support such as multi-agency teams on schools facing the greatest challenges. This is in addition to the learning support units and learning mentors already provided through our Excellence in Cities programme.

Schools (Drinks Dispensers)

18. **Mr. Simon Thomas:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary schools have (i) soft drinks machines and (ii) free water dispensers for pupils. [169222]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is not collected centrally but the Education (School Premises) Regulations 1999 require schools to have a wholesome supply of drinking water.

Centres of Vocational Excellence

19. **Ross Cranston:** To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the impact of Centres of Vocational Excellence upon standards in further education colleges. [169223]

Alan Johnson: Centres of Vocational Excellence are already making a significant contribution to our drive to raise standards in further education colleges, particularly in engaging employers and responding to their needs. 82 per cent. of employers rate CoVE training as excellent or good.

We expect the contribution of CoVEs to improving standards to increase significantly when we reach our target of 400 and each centre is fully developed. And we are already two-thirds of the way to achieving this target.

Adult Education

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much has been spent in Liverpool on *(a)* adult literacy and *(b)* adult numeracy in each year between 1997 and 2003. [166956]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on "Skills For Life" (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology),

from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table.

£000

	Basic skills	Key skills
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	8,925	2,598
August 2001 to July 2002	15,369	3,586
August 2002 to July 2003	27,258	4,210

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Broadband

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of schools have access to broadband-enabled internet, broken down by those in *(a)* urban, *(b)* rural and *(c)* deprived areas. [168668]

Mr. Charles Clarke: By the end of March 2004, 60 per cent. of schools had access to broadband connectivity and we are on track to connect all schools by 2006. My Department does not hold information on the percentage of schools in deprived areas with access to broadband, or regularly collect such information for rural schools. The most recent position for which data on rural schools is available is August 2003, at which point 42 per cent. of all schools and 33 per cent. of rural schools were connected to broadband.

Capital Modernisation Fund (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money was allocated to Wigan from the Capital Modernisation Fund. [169292]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Department for Education and Skills does not hold this information centrally. Capital Modernisation Fund is allocated by projects and not by area.

Careers Advisers

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many careers advisers there were in each year since 1997. [167990]

Margaret Hodge: My Department does not collect data on the number of careers advisers or the specialist qualifications held by Connexions Personal Advisers. Although Connexions Partnerships report the numbers of Personal Advisers in post, they are not yet required to provide data on those with a careers guidance specialism. This information will be available in the annual survey of all Connexions staff due to take place at the beginning of May.

Child Care (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many child care places have been created in Preston since 1997; [168114]

(2) how many children in Preston have gained from the National Childcare Strategy. [168131]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Preston. However, from April 1999 to December 2003 Lancashire local authority created 20,860 new child care places helping some 36,821 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 9,046 helping some 16,274 children.

Child Guardians

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he expects the President of the Family Law Division to issue her latest practice note regarding the appointment of child guardians in private law proceedings. [167633]

Margaret Hodge: The President of the Family Division issued a Practice Direction on 5 April 2004. Copies of this Practice Direction and the CAFCASS Practice Note, which explains it, have been placed in the Library of the House.

Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the closing date was for applications for new board members for the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service; [169022]

(2) what criteria his Department used in determining appointments to the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service board; [169023]

(3) how many people applied for positions on the board of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service; [169024]

(4) whether applications for the board of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service were considered which had been received after the official closing date. [169025]

Margaret Hodge: The published closing date for applications to the new board of the Children and Family Court Advisory and Support Service (CAFCASS) was 28 January 2004. After 28 January the exercise was extended, to widen the range of skills and experience offered by candidates, and four further applications were considered. A total of 336 applications for the positions were received. The published criteria for new board members were as follows:

"Successful candidates will have demonstrated skills and experience in one or more of the following:

Experience of working at a senior level in, or close to, the family justice system or social services for children.

National level experience of children's charities or responsible organisations representing families and parents or mediation services.

A background in research relevant to CAFCASS customers and the operation of family law.

Experience of a top level executive position in a large organisation, public or private sector, delivering high quality services to the public.

Experience of being a non-executive board member or director in an NDPB, company or charity.

Senior experience in financial management, not necessarily as a professionally qualified person, with expertise in budgeting, resource management and audit.

Board expertise in information technology.

In addition, candidates will demonstrate commitment to customer care and valuing diversity. They will have integrity and be able to work well as a member of a team."

Children's Centres

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children's centres have been set up; and if he will make a statement. [167875]

Margaret Hodge: There are 67 children's centres in England all of which are based in disadvantaged areas. We have now begun to receive children's centres implementation plans from local authorities and are considering these on an individual basis. We will be in a position to announce more centres by the middle of June 2004. Further announcements will be made at regular intervals as we work towards our goal of 1,700 children's centres by March 2008 and our aspiration for one in every community in the longer term.

Computers Within Reach (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* families in Wigan have benefited from the Computers within Reach programme. [169291]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers Within Reach (CWR) scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a State Pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Wigan was not one of the pilot areas for the CWR scheme.

Connexions Service

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the number of students who have visited a Connexions branch since the launch of the service. [167991]

Margaret Hodge: Information on the number of students who have visited Connexions branches since the launch of the service has not been collected centrally.

A departmental survey in 2003 found that, on average, young people made 40,000 visits to Connexions one-stop-shops and community based access points each week. This equates to over two million visits per year.

East of England Centre for Playwork Education and Training

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the *(a)* total set up and *(b)* latest annual operating costs were for the East of England Centre for Playwork Education and Training; and what the sources of those funds are; [168779]

(2) what the aims and objectives are for the East of England Centre for Playwork Education and Training; and how many staff are involved in this organisation. [168795]

Margaret Hodge: The East of England Centre is one of nine regional centres for Playwork Education and Training operated by the Playwork Unit of Skillsactive, the Sector Skills Council for Active Leisure and Learning. The Government, through the SureStart Unit and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, contributes to the funding of the Playwork Unit. In 2003–04, £50,000 of this contribution went to the East of England Centre and a similar amount will again go to the Centre in 2004–05.

The aims and objectives of the Playwork Unit and its regional centres are to: raise the level of understanding about the importance of children's play; improve the access to good quality play provision throughout England; and improve children's lives by setting standards of excellence in education, training and qualifications and developing opportunities for playworkers to access education, training and qualifications.

The total set up costs, annual operating costs and staff numbers of the East of England Centre are the responsibility of the Playwork Unit of Skillsactive, which is a charitable organisation.

Education (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Bootle in each of the last seven years. [169080]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-olds in Sefton local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for three and four-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003" which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Since the beginning of April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three-year-olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers—Sefton local education authority area: 1997–2003

Position in January each year	3-year-olds	4-year-olds
1997	2,100	3,200
1998	2,000	3,300
1999	2,100	3,200
2000	2,400	3,100
2001	2,900	3,200
2002	2,700	3,200
2003	2,700	3,000

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

Education (East Worthing and Shoreham)

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new nurseries have been set up in East Worthing and Shoreham since 1997. [169033]

Margaret Hodge: West Sussex local authority is responsible for determining the local need for nurseries in West Sussex and holding information on current provision. West Sussex local authority reported that between April 1999 and December 2003, 37 new nurseries have been established in the constituency of East Worthing and Shoreham. Thirteen of these are offering full daycare and 24 are offering sessional daycare, creating 1,301 additional places. West Sussex Local authority plan to create a Children's Centre in Worthing providing Children's Centre services for around 250 children and their families. The nursery attached to the Worthing Children's Centre (which has benefited from resources from the Neighbourhood Nurseries Initiative) is set to open in October 2004 and will deliver 30 new full daycare places.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three-year-olds and (ii) four-year-olds in East Worthing and Shoreham in each of the last seven years. [169035]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-olds in West Sussex local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for 3 and 4-year-olds in England were published in a statistical bulletin "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Since the beginning of April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three-year-olds in England whose parents want one, will be eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers—West Sussex local education authority area: 1997–2003

Position in January each year	3-year-olds	4-year-olds
1997	600	7,600
1998	800	7,900
1999	900	8,400
2000	800	8,700
2001	1,300	8,200
2002	2,600	8,100
2003	4,900	8,400

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

Education (Heywood and Middleton)

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many children have benefited from the National Childcare Strategy; and if he will make a statement; [168496]

(2) how many child care places have been created in Heywood and Middleton since 1997. [168513]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of childcare places for Heywood and Middleton. However, from April 1999 to December 2003 Manchester local authority created 6,086 new child care places helping some 11,101 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 3,629 helping some 6,772 children.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent on computers for schools in Heywood and Middleton in each of the last seven years. [168506]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However Heywood and Middleton is in Rochdale LEA and since 1998–99 schools in Rochdale have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund Grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Rochdale LEA (£)
1998–99	442,813
1999–2000	354,000
2000–01	728,370
2001–02	1,076,549
2002–03	1,304,709
2003–04	1,613,999
2004–05	1,826,570

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the effects on schools of changes since 1997 in the level of investment in school sports in Heywood and Middleton. [168576]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held in the format requested.

Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged 5–16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government are investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of 5–16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing just over £330,128–00 to support the Siddal Moor School Sport Partnership in the Rochdale LEA area. The partnership includes five secondary schools (including the sports college hub) and 20 primary/special schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and School Sport.

The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Rochdale LEA area with over £2.873 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Latest research, published by the Departments on 4 March shows that 68 per cent. of pupils in schools that have been in a Partnership for three years, are taking up the two hour entitlement, rising to 90 per cent. at Key Stage 3. Data has been collected from remaining Partnerships and will be published in April.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four year olds in Heywood and Middleton in each of the last seven years. [168581]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year olds in Rochdale local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for three and four year olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin Provision for children under five years of age in England-January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Since the beginning of April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three year olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers—Rochdale local education authority area—1997–2003

Position in January each year	3-year-olds	4-year-olds
1997	1,400	2,800
1998	1,500	2,800
1999	1,400	2,800
2000	2,300	2,700
2001	2,300	2,700
2002	2,500	2,700
2003	2,300	2,700

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year old children.
[2] A free nursery education place comprises five, two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for thirty-three weeks of the year, usually three terms of eleven weeks.

Education (Match Funding)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what studies he has made of the difficulties further education colleges have faced in deriving sources of funding to match funds from the learning and skills council. [168362]

Alan Johnson: We have not commissioned studies into the factors affecting further education college abilities to match funds from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). Colleges are generally required to provide match funding for capital projects.

Colleges are not required to match funding for learning provision.

Education (Stalybridge and Hyde)

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many childcare places have been created in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997; [168750]

(2) how many children in Stalybridge and Hyde have gained from the National Childcare Strategy. [168757]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of childcare places for Stalybridge and Hyde. However, from April 1999 to December 2003 Manchester Local Authority created 6,086 new child care places helping some 11,101 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 3,629 helping some 6,772 children.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Stalybridge and Hyde in each of the last seven years. [168751]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However Stalybridge and Hyde is in Tameside LEA and since 1998–99 schools in Tameside have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

Allocation to Tameside LEA

	£
1998–99	400,000
1999–2000	300,000
2000–01	982,825
2001–02	1,105,494
2002–03	1,562,674
2003–04	1,584,573
2004–05	2,015,558

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery places and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) 3 and (ii) 4-year-olds in Stalybridge and Hyde in each of the last seven years. [168758]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested. Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-olds in Tameside local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for 3 and 4-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin 'Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Since the beginning of April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all 3-year-olds in England whose parents want one, will be eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers—Tameside local education authority area: 1997–2003

Position in January each year	*3-year-olds*	*4-year-olds*
1997	1,700	2,900
1998	1,600	2,900
1999	1,600	2,800
2000	2,100	2,700
2001	2,200	2,800
2002	2,200	2,600
2003	2,200	2,600

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children.
[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

Education (Warrington, South)

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) 3 and (ii) 4-year-olds in Warrington South in each of the last seven years. [168702]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-olds in Warrington local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for 3 and 4-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin 'Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Since the beginning of April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all 3-year- olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers—Warrington local education authority area

Position in January each year	*3-year-olds*	*4-year-olds*
1997	800	2,300
1998	800	2,500
1999	900	2,300
2000	1,000	2,400
2001	2,000	2,400
2002	2,100	2,300
2003	2,100	2,300

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by 3 and 4-year-old children.
[2] A free nursery education place comprises five 2½ hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* computer equipment and *(b)* computer facilities for schools in Warrington South in each year since 1997. [168703]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However Warrington South is in Warrington LEA and since 1998–99 schools in Warrington have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

Allocation to Warrington LEA

	£
1998–99	401,364
1999–2000	465,000
2000–01	854,534
2001–02	947,807
2002–03	1,369,561
2003–04	1,402,145
2004–05	1,732,009

Education Funding (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to schools in Birkenhead for information and communications technologies since 2001. [166333]

Alan Johnson: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to his question on 19 April 2004 for the funding spent on computers for schools in Birkenhead in each of the last seven years.

Football Clubs (Study Centres)

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many study centres have been built in conjunction with leading football clubs since 1997. [167582]

Mr. Miliband: Since 1997, 58 study support centres have been built, or existing premises refurbished, in conjunction with football clubs as part of the Department's Playing for Success initiative. The clubs involved are from the FA Premier, Nationwide and Conference Leagues. The Department's contribution to the costs has been matched by the LEAs and clubs involved.

Headquarters Staff

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made in reducing the number of headquarters staff since the 2004 Budget Statement. [168599]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my hon. Friend to the reply I gave the right hon. Member for West Dorset (Mr. Letwin) on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 41W.

Healthy Eating

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much his Department spent to promote healthy eating among children aged under 16 years in each of the last seven years in each local education authority in Greater London. [168883]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The Department does not hold information on the total amount spent on the promotion of healthy eating among pupils aged 16 or the expenditure by each local education authority.

Over the last five years a total of over £5 million a year has been allocated to local education authorities to promote healthy eating. This includes funding of £2 million per year since 1999 to the National Healthy Schools Standard (NHSS). LEAs are free to supplement these allocations from other budgets supported by un-hypothecated revenue support grant.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of *(a)* maintained and *(b)* grammar schools in (i) Greater London and (ii) each London borough have introduced healthy eating options into school canteens in the past 12 months. [168884]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The Department for Education and Skills does not collect this information.

Higher Education (Specialist Courses)

Sir Nicholas Winterton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many specialist textile and clothing education courses are available in universities and colleges; and what assessment he has made of the adequacy of provision of such courses. [167590]

Alan Johnson: This Department does not collect data on the number and type of courses available at universities and colleges. However, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) lists available courses by subject. There are around 450 higher education courses associated with textiles including 340 in fashion and 27 in clothing. I have made no assessment of adequacy of provision. As independent organisations, higher education institutions themselves determine what programmes and courses they offer.

Information and Communications Technology

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to schools in Burnley for information and communications technologies since 2001. [167937]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my hon. friend to my answer to his question on 22 April, for the funding spent on computers for schools in Burnley in each of the last seven years.

Interactive Computer Displays

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate his Department has made of the cost to *(a)* Government and *(b)* individual schools of installing interactive computer display whiteboards. [168669]

Mr. Charles Clarke: A total of £50 million has been announced for the provision of interactive whiteboards to primary and secondary schools. This funding has been split equally between the financial years 2003–04 and 2004–05 and has been allocated to LEAs. All LEAs in England will receive funding and we would expect over 18,000 classrooms to benefit.

The British Educational Communications and Technology Agency (Becta) have created an interactive whiteboards framework contract which delivers significant savings in price and considerably reduces the time and effort that would be needed to procure them. Details are available at www.whiteboards.becta.org.uk. LEAs and schools are also able make purchases via this contract with funds not associated with the central initiative.

Jobs (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Burnley from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [167909]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in Burnley since 1997. [167910]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Peter Pike, dated April 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Burnley. (167909,167910)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs, in Burnley, for 1997 and the latest year available, 2002. No information is available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees1 in Burnley parliamentary constituency: 1997 and 2002

Number, per cent.

	Full-time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	25,700	35,000
2002	24,200	35,800
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	1,500	900
Percentage	5.9	2.5

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs

Source:

1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI)

Millennium Volunteers

Mr. Woodward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Government's policy is on the recruitment of 16 to 24-year-old millennium volunteers; and how many have been recruited *(a)* in total and *(b)* in St. Helens South. [165332]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department's Spending Review settlement provided funding for the MV programme at national level of £15 million a year for the period to March 2006. The Millennium Volunteers (MV) programme, which forms part of the Connexions Service portfolio of services for young people, provides volunteering opportunities for young people aged between 16 and 24 to engage with their local communities. To date over 136,000 young people have participated in the programme in England, with nearly 67,000 completing 100 hours or more of volunteering. We do not hold the information on the number of volunteers in St. Helens South.

National Childcare Strategy

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many children in Burnley have been affected by the National Childcare Strategy; [167921]

(2) how many child care places have been created in Burnley since 1997. [167938]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Burnley. However, from April 1999 to December 2003 Lancashire local authority created 20,860 new child care places helping some 36,821 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 9,046 helping some 16,274 children.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Bootle have benefited from the National Childcare Strategy. [169084]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Bootle. However, from April 1999 to December 2003 Sefton local authority created 3,417 new child care places helping some 6,128 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 1,859 helping some 3,400 children.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many children in East Worthing and Shoreham have benefited from the National Childcare Strategy; [169034]

(2) how many child care places have been created in East Worthing and Shoreham since 1997. [169036]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for East Worthing and Shoreham. However, from April 1999 to December 2003 West Sussex local authority created 12,005 new child care places helping some 21,702 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 7,334 helping some 13,837 children.

New Deal for Schools

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding each school in Burnley has received from the New Deal for Schools; [167924]

(2) how much public funding money has been spent on repairing schools in Burnley in each year since 1997. [167922]

Mr. Miliband: Table A shows the schools in the Burnley constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Since 2001, the majority of capital support has been allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level; this should be held at local authority level. Table B sets out the capital support made by the Department to Lancashire local education authority and its schools since 1997–98, in total and by programme (including all allocations through NDS mentioned in table A).

Year/School	*Project*	*Package*	*Funding (£)*
NS1 1997/98			
Burnley Rosehill Junior School	Schemes submitted by District Liaison Committees	LEA wide grant	2,006,000
Burnley Healey Wood Infant School	Rewires	Project including 18 schools	1,007,100
NDS3 1999/2000			
Burnley Lowerhouse Junior School	Rewires	Project including 18 schools	1,007,100
Burnley Barden Junior School	Rewires	Project including 18 schools	1,007,100
Burnley Barden Junior School	Window Repairs/Replacement	Project including 14 schools	516,000
Burnley Wood Top Church of England Infant School	Window Repairs/Replacement	Project including 14 schools	516,000
Burnley St. Stephen's Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School	Playground Repairs	Project including 25 schools	300,000
Burnley Barden High School	Boilers/Heating	Project including 17 schools	601,900
St. Theodore's Roman Catholic High School, Burnley	Rewires	Project including 18 schools	1,007,100
NDS4 2000/2001			
Burnley Ivy Bank High School	Planned maintenance work, internal alterations and partial refurbishment of science accommodation	—	197,880
Burnley Habergham High School	Replacement of temporary classrooms	—	102,265
Padiham Primary School	Consolidation on infant site to enable amalgamation of KS1 accommodation	—	527,976
Burnley Ightenhill Primary School	Replacement of HORSA Kitchen and dining facilities	—	330,623

Year/School	*Project*	*Package*	*Funding (£)*
Padiham Gawthorpe High School	Provision of second indoor sports facility (to supplement existing gym) and re-roofing of main teaching block	—	257,965
Ightenhill Nursery School	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110
Burnley Rosehill Junior School	Playground Repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090
Burnley Rosehill Junior School	Roof Repairs/Replacement	Project including 11 schools	548,460
Burnley Rosehill Community Infant School	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110
Burnley Rosehill Community Infant School	Roof Repairs/Replacement	Project including 11 schools	548,460
Burnley Barden Community Infant School	Rewires of electrical systems	Project including 17 schools	951,650
Burnley Barden Junior School	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110
Burnley Ightenhill Primary School	Replacement Windows	Project including 13 schools	566,350
Burnley Ightenhill Primary School	Playground Repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090
Todmorden Road Primary School	Playground Repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090
Burnley Holy Trinity Church of England Primary School	Playground Repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090
Christ The King Roman Catholic Primary School, Burnley	Playground Repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090
Padiham Gawthorpe High School	Refurbishment of CDT	Project including 6 schools	1,502,992
St. Theodore's Roman Catholic High School, Burnley	Rewires of electrical systems	Project including 17 schools	951,650
St. Theodore's Roman Catholic High School	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110
Burnley Calder View Community Special School	Playground Repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090

Notes:
1. For NDS 1 grant was allocated for Lancashire local education authority (LEA) wide projects, part of which was used for building maintenance work and improved security at each of two schools in the Burnley constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.
2. Where the project includes a package for a number of schools, each school received a share of the funding.

Table B: Capital allocations: Lancashire local education authority

£000

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Additional NDS Grant (615)	—	—	—	—	1,510	—	—
Assistance with Asset Management Plans	—	—	189	—	—	—	—
Voluntary Aided formulaic allocations	—	—	—	—	378	2,167	2,813
Basic Need	5,388	5,519	4,766	6,543	2,931	4,597	9,312
Class Size initiative	—	1,238	3,711	2,190	347	89	—
Condition	—	—	—	—	7,923	12,228	16,043
Devolved Formula	—	—	—	9,115	7,517	11,489	17,518
Energy	—	353	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation	—	—	—	—	—	4,551	8,750
NDS 1	2,006	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 2	—	3,468	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 3	—	—	7,538	—	—	—	—
NDS 4	—	—	—	13,376	—	—	—
Outside Toilets	—	275	—	—	—	—	—
Private Finance Initiative	—	—	13,400	—	—	—	—
School Labs	—	—	—	591	591	—	—
School Security	373	408	429	429	301	258	—
Schools Access Initiative	75	211	400	620	980	1,634	2,138
Schools Renewal Challenge Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Secondary Learning Support Units	—	—	—	290	314	389	—
Seed Challenge	—	—	—	604	703	1,288	1,282
Specialist Schools	—	—	—	100	100	500	—
Staff Workspace	—	—	—	—	—	220	526
Supplementary Credit Approvals	2,021	454	1,149	365	454	—	—
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools	—	—	—	63	3	—	—
Targeted Capital Funding	—	—	—	—	2,093	2,689	—
Targeted Capital Funding—VA	—	—	—	—	—	—	4,225
Voluntary Aided School Grant	3,425	5,031	3,597	3,735	3,633	4,371	—
Total	13,288	16,957	35,179	38,021	29,778	46,470	62,607

To date we have allocated £53.8 million capital funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding each school in Preston has received from the New Deal for Schools; [168128]

(2) how much public funding money has been spent on repairing schools in Preston in each year since 1997. [168130]

Mr. Miliband: Table A shows the schools in the Preston constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Since 2001, the majority of capital support has been allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level, this should be held at local authority level.

Table B sets out the capital support made by the Department to Lancashire local education authority and its schools since 1997–98, in total and by programme (including all allocations through NDS mentioned in table A).

Table A—NDS allocations to schools in the Preston constituency

	School	*Project*	*Package*	*Funding (£)*
NDS1—1997–1998	Woodlands School	Improve science block	LEA wide grant	1,170,000
	Preston Tutorial Centre	Schemes submitted by District Liaison Committees	LEA wide grant	2,006,000
NDS3—1999–2000	Brookfield Community Primary School	Playground Repairs	Project including 25 schools	300,000
	Frenchwood Community Primary School	Roof Works	Project including 13 schools	549,700
	Preston Grange Primary School	Playground Repairs	Project including 25 schools	300,000
	Preston Greenlands Community Primary School	Window Repairs/Replacement	Project including 14 schools	516,000
	Ribbleton Avenue Infant School	Boilers/Heating	Project including 17 schools	601,900
	Preston Fishwick Primary School	Window Repairs/Replacement	Project including 14 schools	516,000
	Bamber Bridge St Saviour's Church of England Primary School	Playground Repairs	Project including 25 schools	300,000
	Christ The King Catholic High School, Preston	Boilers/Heating	Project including 17 schools	601,900
NDS4—2000–2001	Moorfield School	Raising Standards		532,119
	Walton-le-Dale High School	Extension of Design Technology/ Science Building and boiler replacement		697,323
	Brookfield Community Primary School	Replacement Windows	Project including 13 schools	566,350
	Brookfield Community Primary School	Rewires of electrical systems	Project including 17 schools	951,650
	Deepdale Junior School	Playground Repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090
	Deepdale Junior School	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110
	Frenchwood Community Primary School	Replacement Windows	Project including 13 schools	566,350
	Frenchwood Community Primary School	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110
	Frenchwood Community Primary School	Playground Repairs	Project including 29 schools	270,090
	Frenchwood Community Primary School	Roof Repairs/Replacement	Project including 11 schools	548,460
	Holme Slack Community Primary School	Replacement Windows	Project including 13 schools	566,350
	Holme Slack Community Primary School	Roof Repairs/Replacement	Project including 11 schools	548,460
	English Martyrs Catholic Primary	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36	1,143,110
	St Mary and St Benedict's Roman Catholic Primary School, Bamber Bridge	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110
	Sherburn School	Replacement of Boilers/Heating Systems	Project including 36 schools	1,143,110

Notes:

1. For NDS 1 grant was allocated for Lancashire local education authority (LEA) wide projects, part of which was used for building maintainance work and improved security at each of two schools in the Preston constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.
2. Where the project includes a package for a number of schools, each school received a share of the funding.

Table B—Capital allocations: Lancashire local education authority

£000

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Additional NDS Grant (615)	—	—	—	—	1510	—	—
Assistance with Asset Management Plans	—	—	189	—	—	—	—
Voluntary Aided formulaic allocations	—	—	—	—	378	2167	2813
Basic Need	5388	5519	4766	6543	2931	4597	9312
Class Size initiative	—	1238	3711	2190	347	89	—
Condition	—	—	—	—	7923	12228	16043
Devolved Formula	—	—	—	9115	7517	11489	17518
Energy	—	353	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation	—	—	—	—	—	4551	8750
NDS1	2006	—	—	—	—	—	—

Table B—Capital allocations: Lancashire local education authority

£000

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
NDS2	—	3468	—	—	—	—	—
NDS3	—	—	7538	—	—	—	—
NDS 4	—	—	—	13376	—	—	—
Outside Toilets	—	275	—	—	—	—	—
Private Finance Initiative	—	—	13400	—	—	—	—
School Labs	—	—	—	591	591	—	—
School Security	373	408	429	429	301	258	—
Schools Access Initiative	75	211	400	620	980	1634	2138
Schools Renewal Challenge Fund	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Secondary Learning Support Units	—	—	—	290	314	389	—
Seed Challenge	—	—	—	604	703	1288	1282
Specialist Schools	—	—	—	100	100	500	—
staff Workspace	—	—	—	—	—	220	526
Supplementary Credit Approvals	2021	454	1149	365	454	—	—
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools	—	—	—	63	3	—	—
Targeted Capital Funding	—	—	—	—	2093	2689	—
Targeted Capital Funding—VA	—	—	—	—	—	—	4225
Voluntary Aided School Grant	3425	5031	3597	3735	3633	3633	4371
Total	13288	16957	35179	38021	29778	46470	62607

Note:
To date we have allocated £53.8 million capital funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Performance Tables

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the merits of adjusting performance tables to take account of schools' performance in a wider range of vocational qualifications; and if he will make a statement. [169452]

Mr. Miliband: We have piloted, with 244 schools, the reporting of achievements in a wider range of qualifications. That pilot study was published on 1 April, along with a statement of our intentions to include this wider change in this year's secondary school performance tables. Of the 244 schools that participated in the pilot study, 199 achieved a higher capped point score as a result of the inclusion of this wider range of qualifications.

Primary Schools (Administrative Staff)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many administrative staff were employed in primary schools in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales in each year since 1997. [167978]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the full-time equivalent number of administrative staff employed in maintained primary schools in England who are helping to free teachers to teach and supporting the efficient running of their schools in each year from 1997 to 2003, the latest information available.

	Number
1997	19,210
1998	19,560
1999	19,980
2000	21,180
2001	22,260
2002	23,060
2003	23,330

Source:
Annual Schools Census.

Information regarding the number of administrative staff employed in Welsh schools is a matter for the National Assembly for Wales.

Register of Interests

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the requirements are on officials in his Department to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for his departmental officials. [164701]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirement for civil servants to declare a conflict of interest.

In my Department, individuals are required to declare to management in writing, any personal financial activities or official dealings with individuals or groups who share private or business interests.

Where a conflict, (or potential conflict), of interest arises, management will decide whether to transfer the work which gives rise to the conflict, to another person to avoid any potential embarrassment to the Department.

School Closures

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many primary school closures there were in *(a)* England and *(b)* Wales in each year since 1997. [167977]

Mr. Miliband: The numbers of primary schools in England that closed during the calendar years 1997 to 2003 are as follows:

	Number of primary schools closed
1997	171
1998	174
1999	197
2000	188

	Number of primary schools closed
2001	227
2002	223
2003	207

Source:
DfES.

The figures include schools that closed as a result of the amalgamation or merger of two or more schools; schools that have closed but re-opened as voluntary schools with a religious character; and schools that have closed in local education authorities that have moved from a three-tier to a two-tier system.

The National Assembly for Wales is responsible for schools in Wales and can supply this information on request.

Schools Funding (Norfolk)

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent representations he has received regarding funding of schools in Norfolk. [169217]

Mr. Miliband: We have received few recent representations on the funding of schools in Norfolk.

School Standards (Liverpool and Berkshire)

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools in Liverpool, Walton have *(a)* been deemed to be failing since 1997 and *(b)* subsequently achieved satisfactory standards. [166960]

Mr. Miliband: Three schools in Liverpool, Walton, have been deemed to be failing since 1997, one primary school, one special school and one secondary school. Two of these schools have subsequently closed. The secondary school was judged by Ofsted in 2003 to have made satisfactory progress since the inspection which removed it from special measures in 2001.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what research his Department has commissioned into the extent of solvent abuse by children; [169059]

(2) what estimate he has made of the number of children in care who engage in solvent abuse. [169061]

Margaret Hodge: Although there is no centrally collected data on the extent of solvent abuse by looked after children, information on the use of volatile substances among young people aged 11–15 years is collected in an annual national survey of secondary school children commissioned by the Department of Health. Latest information is given in the statistical release "Drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England in 2003: headline figures" which was published on 31 March 2004. Drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England in 2003 http://www.publications.doh.gov.uk/public/sddsurvey2003.pdf.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many pupils with special educational needs live more than three miles away from the *(a)* primary school, *(b)* secondary school and *(c)* special school that they attend; and if he will make a statement. [166866]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is shown in the table.

Numbers of pupils living more than three miles[1] from the maintained primary, secondary and special schools[2] that they attend, as at January 2003

	Primary	Secondary	Special
Number of pupils travelling more than three miles	155,187	583,446	48,447
Percentage of pupils travelling more than three miles[3]	3.7	17.8	52.1
Number of pupils with SEN travelling more than three miles	28,720	72,548	47,966
Percentage of pupils with SEN travelling more than three miles[4]	3.8	14.3	52.3

[1] Distances calculated are straight line.
[2] Includes middle schools as deemed.
Source:
Pupil Level Annual Schools' Census.

Sports Facilities

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of secondary schools offer their sports facilities for wider community use outside school hours. [169074]

Mr. Stephen Twigg *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The Department does not collect information on the number of schools that offer their sports facilities to the wider community. But, many LEA's and schools have arrangements with the local community that provide for this and the development of extended schools will encourage and promote this trend.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to increase sports facilities within existing schools. [169127]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The Government are investing significant funding to enhance school sports facilities across England. The New Opportunities for PE and Sport Programme is providing £581.25 million in England (£25 million of which has gone towards the Space for Sport and the Arts programme) and schools from all local education authority areas are benefiting. The Space for Sport and the Arts Programme is providing £130 million to support projects at primary schools in 65 target areas. The schools benefiting from these schemes are required to open up and share their new facilities with other schools and their local community. In addition, the Sporting Playgrounds Programme is providing £10 million to enhance primary school playgrounds to increase physical activity and sport in 27 target areas.

This funding is on top of the Department for Education and Skills capital investment in school buildings and facilities, which has grown from under £700 million in 1996–97 to £3.8 billion in 2003–04, and will rise to £5.1 billion in 2005–06. The bulk of this investment is allocated to schools and local authorities on a formulaic basis, and is available for improving school sports facilities where these are prioritised in local asset management plans.

From 2005–06, the Government are also introducing Building Schools for the Future, which aims to rebuild and renew all secondary schools, (including their sports facilities) within 10 to 15 years, subject to future spending decisions.

Sure Start

Claire Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he plans to extend the Sure Start scheme to Watford constituency. [162907]

Margaret Hodge: There are a range of Sure Start services in Watford, including a children's centre, attached to Westfield School. Holywell is providing Sure Start services for around 590 children and their families. Since 1998, we have guaranteed free early education for all 4-year-olds and this guarantee has been extended to all 3-year-olds from April 2004. In Hertfordshire this represents an additional funding of over £60 million for 2004–05.

Since 1999, Hertfordshire have also been given over £6.1 million of funding to provide additional child care places and figures received from the authority shows that by March 2003 additional 11,067 childcare places were created.

Teacher Vacancies

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Bootle on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [169179]

Mr. Miliband: Information on teacher vacancies is not available by constituency as it is collected at local education authority level. In January 2003, the latest information available, there were 10 full-time teacher vacancies in Sefton local education authority.

Like other areas, since 1997 Sefton has benefited from the initiatives that the Government have put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in Sefton LEA has risen by 120, from 2,540 to 2,660 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the area has grown by 540 from 780 to 1,320 in 2003.

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in each subject in *(a)* primary, *(b)* secondary, *(c)* special and *(d)* all schools in each year since 1997, broken down by local education authority; and if he will express these figures as percentages of all teachers. [167569]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Teaching Assistants

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Bootle in *(a)* each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [169180]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full-time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Bootle constituency for each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	130
1998	130
1999	150
2000	160
2001	200
2002	160
2003	220

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Wigan *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [169278]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the numbers of full-time equivalent teaching assistants in maintained schools in Wigan constituency for each year between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	100
1998	110
1999	110
2000	110
2001	160
2002	130
2003	190

Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

University Students (London)

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students studying at a London university in the last academic year for which figures are available originated from *(a)* the UK and *(b)* overseas. [167979]

Alan Johnson: The latest available figures are given in the following table.

Enrolments[1] to UK HE institutions in London 2002–03

Domicile	*Number*
UK	259,630
EU	21,105
Other Overseas	40,648
Total	321,383

Note:
[1] Snapshot as at 1 December.
Source:
Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Vulnerable Children

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills which local authorities are participating in piloting data sharing schemes for vulnerable children; and when each is due to report. [169037]

Margaret Hodge: The Government have provided up to £1 million each to 10 Trailblazers, involving 15 local authorities, to test new ways of information sharing and multi-agency working. They are: Bolton; Camden; Kensington and Chelsea; Knowsley; Lewisham; Sheffield; Gateshead and Newcastle; Leicestershire, Leicester City and Rutland; Telford and Wrekin and Shropshire and west Sussex and east Sussex.

An evaluation underway by Royal Holloway, University of London is due to report in autumn 2004.

An interim report, Developing Identification and referral tracking systems: An evaluation of the processes undertaken by trailblazer authorities, was published in March 2004. I will arrange for a copy to be sent to the hon. Member and one has already been placed in the Library of the House.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Antisocial Behaviour

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* anti-social behaviour orders, *(b)* parenting orders and *(c)* curfew orders have been issued by Leeds City Council since 12 February 2003. [168605]

Ms Blears: Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs)—The number of ASBOs issued within the Leeds local government authority area, as notified to the Home Office, from 12 February 2003 up to 31 December 2003 (latest available) is 50. The local authority was the main complainant for 47 of these orders. Three orders were issued, following conviction, at the court's discretion.

Parenting Orders—Youth Justice Board figures indicate that two parenting orders were made by courts in the Leeds Youth Offending Team (YOT) area following conviction of juveniles between January 2003 and December 2003 (latest available figures).

Curfew Orders—Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the Autumn.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many antisocial behaviour orders were issued in *(a)* the first quarter of 2003, *(b)* the second quarter of 2003, *(c)* the third quarter of 2003, *(d)* the fourth quarter of 2003 and *(e)* the first quarter of 2004. [169733]

Ms Blears: The number of Anti-Social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs), as notified to the Home Office, issued within England and Wales in 2003 is given, by quarter, in the table. Latest available data are up to December 2003.

The number of anti-social behaviour orders, as notified to the Home Office, issued within England and Wales, by court and by quarter
January to December 2003 (latest available)

	Quarter				
	First	*Second*	*Third*	*Fourth*	*Total*
County court on application	—	—	2	3	5
Magistrates court on application	112	143	150	158	563
On conviction	53	76	112	146	387
Crown court on conviction	4	4	15	42	65
Total	169	223	279	349	1,020

Asylum Seekers/Immigration

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many applications for asylum in the UK have been made from claimants not residing in the United Kingdom in the last year for which figures are available. [165613]

Mr. Browne: There is no provision in the Immigration Rules to seek asylum in the UK from abroad. A person usually has to travel to the UK in order to claim asylum here, although an asylum seeker is not usually "resident" in the UK. Exceptionally, some cases are referred to the Home Office from overseas diplomatic posts. If entry clearance is granted exceptionally, and the applicant subsequently travels to the UK and applies for asylum, the application would be included in the figures in the same way as other applications. Limited information is available on applications that are processed abroad. No overseas applications are recorded as having been lodged since 1992.

Information on asylum applications made in the UK is published quarterly. The next publication covering the second quarter of 2004 will be available on 25 May 2004 on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans the Government has to provide alternative accommodation for asylum seekers currently detained at Maghaberry Prison. [164609]

Mr. Browne: We have no plans to provide alternative accommodation in Northern Ireland for those immigration detainees who are currently held at HMP Maghaberry.

However, an individual detainee who initially elected to remain at HMP Maghaberry rather than be transferred to an Immigration Service removal centre in Great Britain may at any time request to be transferred to such a removal centre.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department to which countries his Department judges that asylum seekers cannot be returned for *(a)* human rights and *(b)* other reasons. [163331]

Mr. Browne: All asylum and human rights claims are considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Should a claim be refused and any appeal before the independent Immigration Appellate Authority be unsuccessful, it means that for that individual it is safe to return.

The only country to which, as a matter of policy, we do not at present generally enforce the return of failed asylum seekers is Zimbabwe. This policy is based not on asylum or human rights reasons but on our view that in the wider context of the Government's position on Zimbabwe, it would be inappropriate forcibly to return failed asylum seekers applicable at this time.

However, it is open to Zimbabwean failed asylum seekers to return voluntarily. Zimbabweans may apply for the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration

Programme (VAARP) operated by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on behalf of the Home Office.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* men, *(b)* women and *(c)* children have been granted humanitarian protection in the United Kingdom in each month since April 2003. [166473]

Mr. Browne: The table shows initial decisions resulting in grants of humanitarian protection (HP) to asylum seeker principal applicants and dependants by month from April to December 2003, the latest published figures that are available.

Principal applicants[1,2] not recognised as refugees but granted humanitarian protection, excluding dependants, by sex, April to December 2003

	Male	Female	Total grants of HP	Total initial decisions
April 2003	5	10	15	4,290
May 2003	5	10	15	5,130
June 2003	10	5	15	5,230
July 2003	5	5	15	4,940
August 2003	5	5	15	4,200
September 2003	5	5	15	5,070
October 2003	5	10	20	5,605
November 2003	5	5	15	5,060
December 2003	10	10	15	4,310
Total	65	70	135	43,840

[1] Provisional figures rounded to the nearest five.
[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome appeals or other subsequent decisions.

Dependants of principal applicants[1,2] not recognised as refugees but granted humanitarian protection, by sex, April to December 2003

	Male	Female	Total
April 2003	—	*	*
May 2003	*	—	*
June 2003	5	5	10
July 2003	*	5	5
August 2003	—	*	*
September 2003	—	*	*
October 2003	5	5	10
November 2003	*	5	5
December 2003	*	5	5
Total	15	25	40

[1] Provisional figures rounded to the nearest five with * = 1 or 2.
[2] Information is of initial determination decisions, excluding the outcome appeals or other subsequent decisions.

16 per cent. of these 135 principal applicants and 88 per cent. of the 40 dependants were aged under 18 at time of decision, based on the date of birth information supplied by applicants. 10 of the principal applicants were identified as unaccompanied asylum seeking children, 83 per cent. of these were under 18 at the time of initial decision.

Cases granted HP are actively reviewed at the end of the HP period, which may subsequently result in refusal and removal.

Data on non-asylum grants of HP are not available.

Information on asylum decisions, by sex, is published annually. The next publication covering 2003 will be available at the end of August 2004 on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many National Asylum Support Service-supported asylum seekers in the City of Newcastle have had support and accommodation withdrawn on the grounds of the failure of their case, broken down by *(a)* gender and *(b)* the number of dependants involved. [168692]

Mr. Browne: Information on numbers of cases who have had support terminated broken down by reason for cessation, by area of the UK, or by gender is unavailable and could be produced only at a disproportionate cost. A total of 45,185 cases had support terminated in 2002 (the latest year for which data is available) compared with 14,195 in 2001. Support may be terminated for a variety of reasons, including failure of an asylum application or changes in the circumstances of the applicant affecting their eligibility for support.

As at the end of December 2003 the number of asylum seekers (including dependants) supported in Newcastle in the National Asylum Support Service, (NASS) accommodation was 1,510, and 55 were in receipt of subsistence only support. Figures are rounded to the nearest five and cases which have had their support terminated are excluded from this figure.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by MASS is published quarterly, and information on the number of cases with support ceased is published annually in the annual Home Office Statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom, available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many cases involving asylum seekers and dependants from EU accession countries remain to be determined. [168694]

Mr. Browne: The requested information is unavailable and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case records.

Information on the number of asylum applications awaiting an initial decision is published quarterly on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html. The next publication will be available from 25 May 2004 and will cover the first quarter of 2004 (January to March).

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether asylum seekers from EU accession countries will be required to have an approved work permit under the Special Work Registration scheme before starting work on 1 May; and if he will place in the Library a copy of the guidance issued to *(a)* employers and *(b)* jobcentres. [168696]

Mr. Browne: From 1 May asylum seekers from the eight EU Accession countries (Poland, Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovakia, Slovenia, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania) will be able to take up employment in the UK

providing they apply to register under the new Worker Registration Scheme. They will not need a work permit. These arrangements apply equally to accession nationals who are already in the UK (including as asylum seekers) and to those who arrive in the UK on or after 1 May.

Workers who are required to register should apply as soon as they start a new job—not before—and within one month of taking up employment at the latest. Further information about the Worker Registration Scheme is available on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) website: www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk.

Guidance issued to employers is also available on the IND website at http://www.ind.homeoffice.gov.uk/default.asp?pageid=17 and available in hard copy from the Employer's Helpline on 0845 010 6677.

An Awareness Pack and guidance material has been prepared by Jobcentre Plus for use by its staff. This will be placed in the Library once the Regulations are laid before the House on 30 April.

Mr. Malins: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department in relation to the Oakington Reception Centre, for the second quarter of 2002, how many *(a)* appeals were received following refusals, *(b)* appellants remain in custody, *(c)* appellants are at addresses known to his Department, *(d)* appeals have been determined and *(e)* failed appellants have been removed. [140573]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 1 December 2003]*: There were 2,160 appeals received for claims decided at the Oakington Reception Centre out of 2,270 refused asylum applications in the second quarter of 2002. Appellants are not routinely detained at Oakington pending their appeal, although some may be in detention at Immigration Service Removal Centres, at Immigration Short Term Holding Facilities, and at prison establishments. Information on the number of appellants in detention and information on the current address of an appellant is not readily available and could only be verified at disproportionate cost. The number of appeals determined on the 2,160 received in the second quarter of 2002 was 1,995. The number of failed applicants who have been removed could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case files.

Information on Oakington and other asylum statistics is published quarterly. The most recent publication covering the third quarter of 2003 is now available on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of applications for asylum in England and Wales were accepted in each year since 1997. [168015]

Mr. Browne: The requested information is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost. Asylum applications, initial decisions, and appeals data relate to applications for asylum in the UK are not available at regional level.

It is estimated that around four in 10 (42 per cent.) of applications for asylum in the UK in 2002 resulted in the granting at initial decision of asylum (10 per cent.) or of exceptional leave to remain (23 per cent.), or in appeals which were allowed by the IAA adjudicators (a further 10 per cent.). This compares with 42 per cent. for applications made in 2001, and 31 per cent. for applications made in 2000. Comparable information for previous years is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost by examination of individual case files.

The proportion granted asylum or other status either at initial decision or appeal varies over time reflecting the mix of nationalities, the situations in countries of origin, and the merits of each individual case.

Further detail including information on the basis of the estimation is provided in the annual statistical bulletin Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2002 (pages 11–12), copies of which are available from the Library of the House and at the RDS website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

It is planned that corresponding information for applications made in 2003 will be published in Asylum Statistics United Kingdom 2003 at the end of August 2004.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum cases which went to appeal during each of the last seven years were *(a)* granted and *(b)* refused leave to remain in the country; and what the total number of cases which went to appeal was in each year. [165619]

Mr. Browne: Data on the number asylum cases that went onto appeal are given in the following tables. The tables show the outcomes of appeals determined by adjudicators of the Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA), further appeals to the Immigration Appeal Tribunal (IAT) and applications for Judicial Review for the latest seven years for which data are available. IAA appeal determinations may relate to initial decisions made in previous years; IAT appeal determinations may relate to IAA determinations in earlier years. Outcomes of appeals relate to whether an asylum appeal is allowed, dismissed or withdrawn. Allowed appeals do not necessarily result in grants of leave to remain. Some appeals to the IAT are brought by the Secretary of State.

A record 81,725 appeals were determined by IAA adjudicators in 2003, a quarter (27 per cent.) higher than in 2002 (64,405). The proportion of appeals dismissed rose to 78 per cent. in 2003 (76 per cent. in 2002), while the proportion of appeals allowed fell to 20 per cent. (22 per cent. in 2002).

As at 31 December 2003, there were an estimated 12,000 appeals lodged with the Home Office which had not been sent to the Immigration Appellate Authority, compared with 30,000 at the end of December 2002; a proportion of appeals lodged do not result in appeal bundles being sent to the IAA.

Appeals[1] determined by adjudicators of the Immigration Appellate Authority, excluding dependants, 1997 to 2003

Number of principal appellants

	Appeals received by the Home Office[2]	*Appeals received by the IAA*	*Total determined[3]*
1997	20,950	22,385	21,090
1998	14,320	15,440	25,320
1999	6,615	7,775	19,460
2000	46,190	28,935	19,395
2001	74,365	47,905	43,415
2002[5]	51,695	64,125	64,405
2003[5]	[6]45,600	70,575	81,725

	Allowed		*Dismissed*		*Withdrawn*	
	Total	*As % of total determined[4]*	*Total*	*As % of total determined[4]*	*Total*	*As % of total determined[4]*
1997	1,180	(6)	18,145	(86)	1,720	(8)
1998	2,355	(9)	21,195	(84)	1,770	(7)
1999	5,280	(27)	11,135	(57)	3,050	(16)
2000	3,340	(17)	15,580	(80)	475	(2)
2001	8,155	(19)	34,440	(79)	825	(2)
2002[5]	13,875	(22)	48,845	(76)	1,685	(3)
2003[5]	16,070	(20)	63,810	(78)	1,845	(2)

[1] Figures (other than percentages) rounded to the nearest 5. Numbers might not add up due to rounding.

[2] Figures for 1997 to 2000 are based on manual counts of data received in Appeals Support Section of the Home Office. Some cases are received elsewhere in the Home Office before being forwarded to ASS and so may be counted in a later month than when they arrived in the Home Office. Figures for 2001+ are based on electronic sources.

[3] Based on information supplied by the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Determinations do not necessarily relate to appeals received in the same period.

[4] Percentages based on total determined excluding without foundation appeals referred to Secretary of State for further consideration. Based on data supplied by the Presenting Officers Unit within the Home Office (October 1999-December 2002).

[5] Provisional figures,

[6] Estimate. Figures rounded to the nearest hundred, and subject to later revision.

Further appeals to the Tribunal, decisions, and the outcome of Tribunal Hearings, excluding dependants, 1996 to 2002[1]

Number of principal appellants

	Applications for leave to appeal to the Tribunal[2]		*Appeals to the Tribunal*		*Outcome of Tribunal Hearings[3]*			
	Applications	*Decisions*	*Received*	*Determined*	*Allowed*	*Dismissed*	*Withdrawn*	*Remitted to adjudicators for further consideration*
1996	5,620	5,345	1,010	900	55	285	10	550
1997	[5]8,915	[5]8,130	2,185	[5]1,375	..	..	..	..
1998	[5]10,910	[5]10,315	1,775	[5]1,090	..	..	..	..
1999	8,635	9,575	2,135	1,790	..	..	..	..
2000	6,020	5,490	1,615	2,635	815	1,385	220	215
2001	15,540	13,540	3,860	3,190	475	1,140	150	1,430
2002[4]	25,600	22,825	6,920	5,565	620	2,015	225	2,700

Outcome of Tribunal Hearings[3]

	Appellant			*Secretary of State*		
	Allowed	*Dismissed*	*Withdrawn*	*Allowed*	*Dismissed*	*Withdrawn*
1996	..	..	..	..	..	..
1997	..	..	..	..	..	..
1998	..	..	..	..	..	..
1999	..	..	..	..	..	..
2000	650	1,225	185	170	165	35
2001	315	1,020	125	160	120	25
2002[4]	410	1,880	210	215	130	15

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5. Numbers might not add up due to rounding.

[2] Figures based on data supplied by the Department for Constitutional Affairs. Decisions and determinations do not necessarily correspond to applications and appeals received in any given year.

[3] Figures supplied by the Presenting Officers Unit. Figures for October-December 1999 are based on data for November-December.

[4] Provisional figures.

[5] Revised figures.

Applications for Judicial Review, and outcomes, excluding dependants, 1996 to 2002

Applications for leave to move for Judicial Review[1]

	Applications	Decisions[2]	of which: granted leave to move	Percentage of applicants granted leave to move[3]
1996	1,225	915	190	(21)
1997	1,350	1,250	320	(26)
1998	1,890	1,220	300	(25)
1999 Q1, Q2, and Q4[6]	1,790	1,125	395	(35)
2000[7]	1,920	2,095	555	(26)
2001[7]	2,210	2,300	290	(13)
2002[8]	3,075	2,980	260	(9)

The outcome of judicial review hearings[1]

	Allowed[4]		Dismissed[5]		Withdrawn	
	Total	As % of total determined	Total	As % of total determined	Total	As % of total determined
1996						
1997						
1998						
1999 Q1, Q2, & Q4[6]	135	(57)	25	(11)	75	(32)
2000[7]	365	(48)	300	(40)	95	(12)
2001[7]	260	(68)	60	(16)	60	(16)
2002[8]	25	(30)	60	(67)	5	(3)

[1] Figures based on Administrative Court data. Figures (other than percentages) rounded to the nearest 5 with * = 1 or 2.

[2] Decisions do not relate to applications in any given period.

[3] The number of which granted leave to move as a percentage of decisions.

[4] The decision of the respondent (in this case, the Home Office or the Department for Constitutional Affairs) was quashed. These figures include consent orders where the JR was conceded by the respondent.

[5] The decision of the respondent was upheld.

[6] Estimated figures.

[7] Figures exclude judicial reviews brought in cases relating to asylum support (NASS).

[8] Provisional figures.

Statistics on the number of asylum appeals heard by adjudicators of the Immigration Appellate Authority are published quarterly; data covering the Immigration Appeal Tribunal and Judicial Review are published annually. Copies of the most recent publications are available from the Library of the House or on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers have been placed in *(a)* Huddersfield, *(b)* Kirklees and *(c)* Yorkshire and Humber in each year since 1990. [164902]

Mr. Browne: The information is not available in the precise format requested. The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) assumed responsibility for the support of asylum seekers on 3 April 2000.

NASS disperses asylum seekers to Government Office Regions and local authority areas. Statistics by parliamentary constituencies became available at the end of December 2003. The table shows the available data for the number of asylum seekers (including dependants) supported by NASS in Yorkshire and Humberside region, which includes Kirklees local authority area and Huddersfield constituency, as at the end of each year since December 2000. Earlier figures are not available.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS is published quarterly. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Asylum seekers (including dependants) supported by NASS

Government Office Region/local authority area/parliamentary constituency and type of support	December 2000	2001	2002	2003
Yorkshire and Humber				
Accommodation	3,550	8,470	10,215	9,920
Subsistence only	90	285	800	855
Kirklees				
Accommodation	n/a	n/a	935	1,095
Subsistence only	n/a	n/a	45	45
Huddersfield				
Accommodation	n/a	n/a	n/a	750
Subsistence only	n/a	n/a	n/a	25

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest five. Figures may not sum due to rounding.
2. n/a not available

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the countries to which the Home Office does not currently return failed asylum seekers. [165828]

Mr. Browne: We seek to remove all failed asylum seekers and illegal immigrants wherever possible. All asylum and human rights claims are considered on their individual merits in accordance with our obligations under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR). Should a claim be refused and any appeal before the independent Immigration Appellate Authority be unsuccessful, it means that for that individual it is safe to return.

The only country to which, as a matter of policy, we do not at present generally enforce the return of failed asylum seekers is Zimbabwe. This policy is based not on asylum or human rights reasons but on our view that in the wider context of the Government's position on Zimbabwe, it would be inappropriate forcibly to return failed asylum seekers applicable at this time.

However, it is open to Zimbabwean failed asylum seekers to return voluntarily. Zimbabweans may apply for the Voluntary Assisted Return and Reintegration Programme (VAARP) operated by the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) on behalf of the Home Office.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Department is required to record mistaken removals of asylum seekers; and what steps have been taken to develop an appropriate database for this function. [165933]

Mr. Browne: There is no statutory requirement for the Immigration and Nationality Directorate (IND) to keep records of any mistaken removals of asylum seekers

from the UK. By mistaken removals, we are referring to the removal of any individuals while there are any unresolved issues pending on a case, outstanding appeals or judicial challenges.

Following a recommendation made by the Home Affairs Select Committee in April 2003 that measures be put in place to record and publicise such cases, IND is currently looking into the feasibility of setting up a central database to record all mistaken removals. We do not have any present plans to publicise such information but no final decision will be made on this without prior consultation with the Immigration Research and Statistical Service (IRSS).

Dr. Ian Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what medical assessments are conducted on asylum seekers prior to dispersal within the UK, and if he will make a statement; [166427]

(2) what provision is made for continuing HIV treatment for existing HIV patients in the immigrant population following dispersal; [166609]

(3) what plans he has to assess the system of dispersal for asylum seekers suffering from HIV. [166426]

Mr. Browne: In assessing suitability for dispersal the National Asylum Support Service (NASS) takes account of all known facts. Some health needs are identified when the application for NASS support is being completed. In addition, those asylum seekers who go through Induction Centres are given the opportunity to have a health assessment. This does not automatically include screening for HIV/AIDS but an asylum seeker who believes he may be at risk may opt to have tests conducted.

Asylum seekers known to be HIV positive are dispersed to areas where relevant treatment is available. In line with standard practice for all MASS dispersals, MASS informs the relevant Primary Care Trust of the asylum seeker's arrival in their area. MASS outreach staff visit asylum seekers shortly after their arrival to ensure that they have access to all services, including health services. Accommodation providers and voluntary sector "one-stop" services can also assist newly dispersed asylum seekers to access services including registering with a GP. Asylum seekers who have undergone a health assessment prior to dispersal are in possession of hand held medical records which they can pass to their GP.

These policies and practices are being considered as part of a short external review which is expected to report to Ministers in the Summer.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers were dispersed in the UK for the latest year for which figures are available. [166610]

Mr. Browne: Numbers of asylum seekers placed in the National Asylum Support Service, (NASS) accommodation under the dispersal policy, and numbers who are in receipt of subsistence only support from NASS, are available on a quarterly and annual basis. The total for the United Kingdom as at end December 2003 was 49,760.

The next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers are housed in Liverpool, Walton under the dispersal programme. [166981]

Mr. Browne: The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) disperses asylum seekers to Government office regions and local authority areas. The number of asylum seekers (including dependants) supported in NASS accommodation in the constituency of Liverpool, Walton as at the end of December 2003 was 230.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS is published quarterly. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time taken to deal with an asylum application is. [166982]

Mr. Browne: The latest published statistics show that the speed of processing asylum applications continues to improve. 80 per cent. of applications (excluding withdrawals and third country cases[1]) received in the period April to September 2003 had initial decisions reached and served within two months. 74 per cent. of applications received in 2002–03, and 61 per cent. of applications received in 2001–02, had initial decisions reached and served within two months. This exceeded the Government's targets of 65 per cent. for 2002–03 and 60 per cent. for 2001–02, and we are on track to meet the target of 75 per cent. for 2003–04.

The average time between application and initial decision was 10 months for initial decisions made in 2003, compared with 20 months for April 1997. This has been calculated using all cases for which data are available, including older cases decided as part of the reduction of the number of outstanding cases, as well as new cases decided as part of normal work in progress. The number of cases awaiting initial decision fell to 24,500 at the end of December 2003, the lowest level for more than a decade (and 41 per cent. lower than a year earlier), and continues to fall.

Information on the timeliness of initial decisions is published quarterly on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

[1] Cases which may be the responsibility of other EU member states under the Dublin Convention.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum applications were registered in each year between 1997 and 2003. [166984]

Mr. Browne: The tables show asylum applications received in each year between 1997 and 2003 for the UK and for the EU as a whole. The figures show the rise in the UK and across Europe in the late 1990s followed by the fall in 2003 as a result of a series of measures

including those in the National Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. In 2003 applications to the UK fell by 41 per cent. compared with a fall of 10 per cent. for the rest of the EU (excluding Italy).

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants, 1997–2003

	Total applications
1997	32,500
1998	46,015
1999[2]	71,160
2000[2]	80,315
2001[3]	71,025
2002[4]	84,130
2003[4]	49,370

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 5
[2] May exclude some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices between January 1999 and March 2000
[3] Provisional figures
[4] Revised figure

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom and European Union, including dependants, 1997–2003

	Total Applications in UK	Total applications in EU
1997	41,500	255,800
1998	58,500	312,300
1999[2]	91,200	396,700
2000[2]	98,900	401,900
2001[4]	91,600	397,600
2002[5]	103,100	386,100
2003[5]	61,100	[3]308,400

[1] Figures rounded to the nearest 100
[2] May exclude some cases lodged at Local Enforcement Offices between January 1999 and March 2000
[3] Excludes Italy data
[4] Provisional figures
[5] Revised figure

Information on asylum applications is published quarterly. The publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May 2004 on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many asylum seekers have been registered with the London Borough of Hillingdon in each of the last five years. [168071]

Mr. Browne: The information is not available in the form requested. The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) assumed responsibility for the support of asylum seekers on 3 April 2000.

NASS disperses asylum seekers to Government Office regions and local authority areas. The following table shows the available data for the number of asylum seekers (including dependants) supported by NASS in the Hillingdon Local Authority area, as at the end of each quarter since December 2002. Information in respect of the number of persons dispersed to an area during a given year is not available and could be produced only at disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of asylum seekers supported by NASS is published quarterly. The next publication covering the first quarter of 2004 (January to March) will be available on 25 May on the Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html

As at end:	In receipt of subsistence only support	Supported in NASS accommodation
December 2002	625	20
March 2003	585	10
June 2003	595	15
September 2003	530	15
December 2003	490	15

Note:
Figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of asylum seekers are estimated to have entered the country illegally in each of the last five years. [168915]

Mr. Browne: The number of asylum applications received in each of the last five years for which data are available are given in the table. There is no official estimate of the proportion of these who entered the country illegally.

Applications[1] received for asylum in the United Kingdom, excluding dependants: 1999 to 2003—Number of principal applicants

	[2]Applications received
1999	71,160
2000	80,315
2001[4]	71,025
2002[3]	84,130
2003[3]	49,370

[1] Figures rounded to nearest five
[2] May exclude some cases lodged at local enforcement offices between January 1999 and December 2000
[3] Provisional figures
[4] Revised figures

Official estimates of the size of the illegally resident population in the United Kingdom do not exist. The Government has commissioned research into the methods used in other countries to estimate the size of the illegal population in order to define methods appropriate for the UK.

The work required is challenging because, by definition, illegal migrants fall outside of official statistics and are therefore difficult to measure. People illegally present in the UK are also motivated to ensure they remain hidden, which is a challenge to conducting research.

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions in the last year immigration detainees were held overnight in police cells. [160556]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of immigration detainees who were held overnight in police cells is not held centrally. However, I can give an assurance that detention in police cells for immigration purposes is kept to the minimum.

Mr. Heathcoat-Amory: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people from the EU accession states have *(a)* been granted and *(b)* been

refused leave to remain in the UK under the European Communities Association Agreement (i) in 2001–02, (ii) in 2002–03 and (iii) to date in 2003–04. [160937]

Mr. Browne: Detailed figures are not available for 2001–02. However, on the basis of internal management information, we estimate that around 8,000 applications were made during this period.

In 2002–03, we estimate that just under 15,000 ECAA applications were granted, and some 1,400 were refused or fell for other reasons. In 2003–04 (to end February 2004), these figures were around 35,000 and 1,200 respectively.

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether his Department has passed to the Immigration Appellate Authority the relevant papers in the case of Mr. S. M., husband of Mrs. S. K. of Aylesbury (decision maker's reference 643686; Gerrys/Fedex case reference 9003389; appeal reference 900863159; UK Visas reference GV100/86120); and if he will make a statement. [167247]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* This appeal was forwarded to the Immigration Appellate Authority on 13 April 2004.

Bogus Colleges

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action his Department has taken to close down bogus colleges for migration purposes; and how many colleges have been closed down in each year since 1997. [166555]

Mr. Browne: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to a statement made by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 22 April.

Charities Bill

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish the Charities Bill. [167048]

Fiona Mactaggart: The draft Charities Bill, announced in the Queen's Speech, is expected to be published in mid-May. It will be considered by a joint Committee of both Houses which will be asked to report by 30 September.

Correspondence

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the Minister for Citizenship, Immigration and Counter Terrorism expects to reply to the hon. Member for Southend, West's letters of *(a)* 10 December 2003 and *(b)* 12 January. [165196]

Mr. Browne: The information is as follows.

(a) I apologise for the delay in replying to the hon. Member. On 5 April the letter was accepted by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office who will reply shortly.

(b) My hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State (Fiona Mactaggart) wrote to the hon. Member on 23 February.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 8 March with regard to Mohammed Riaz. [168924]

Mr. Blunkett: I responded to my right hon. Friend on 26 April 2004.

Crime

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Burnley has been since 1997. [168315]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Burnley is a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level have been published only from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Heywood and Middleton has been since 1997. [168535]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Heywood and Middleton comes within the Rochdale Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk

Crime Statistics

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Manchester Gorton has been since 1997. [167467]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Gorton comes within the Manchester Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk.

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many homophobic incidents were recorded in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 by each of the (i) police divisions in west Yorkshire and (ii) police forces in England and Wales. [167049]

Ms Blears: Recorded crime figures submitted to the Home Office by police forces do not separately identify crimes motivated by homophobia. This is because homophobic crime is not a distinct offence in law, and is instead included within the figures for other offences according to the nature of the action.

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many racially aggravated incidents were recorded in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 by each of the (i) police divisions in West Yorkshire and (ii) police forces in England and Wales. [167050]

Ms Blears: The available information relates to racially or religiously aggravated offences by police force area. The latest figures relate to 2002–03 and are given in the table. This information is not published at police force division level.

Information for 2003–04 is not yet available.

Racially or religiously aggravated offences recorded by the police in 2002–03[1]

Police force area	*Number*
Avon and Somerset	900
Bedfordshire	169
Cambridgeshire	410
Cheshire	376
Cleveland	145
Cumbria	69
Derbyshire	560
Devon and Cornwall	496
Dorset	177
Durham	371
Essex	558
Gloucestershire	210
Greater Manchester	2,353
Hampshire	317
Hertfordshire	343
Humberside	302
Kent	547
Lancashire	860
Leicestershire	809
Lincolnshire	136
London, City of	71
Merseyside	734
Metropolitan Police	9,853
Norfolk	203
Northamptonshire	303
Northumbria	934
North Yorkshire	3,457
Nottinghamshire	635
South Yorkshire	242
Staffordshire	466
Suffolk	246
Surrey	407
Sussex	443
Thames Valley	948
Warwickshire	159
West Mercia	527
West Midlands	2,422
West Yorkshire	707
Wiltshire	232
Dyfed-Powys	96
Gwent	193
North Wales	288
South Wales	737
Total	34,411

[1] Offences of racially or religiously aggravated other wounding, harassment, common assault and criminal damage

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what changes there have been to the levels of recorded crime, broken down by offence, within Weston-super-Mare in each year since 1997. [167531]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Weston-super-Mare comes within the North Somerset Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk.

Criminal Justice

Peter Bradley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average time from arrest to court was for *(a)* persistent young offenders and *(b)* all offenders in the Wrekin in each year from 1997. [166721]

Paul Goggins: The information is as follows.

Days

	West Mercia—Persistent Young Offenders arrest to sentence	*West Mercia Time Interval Survey—charge to first listing*	*National figures—Persistent Young Offenders arrest to sentence*
1997	155	n/a	141
1998	123	n/a	125
1999	109	30	108
2000	96	32	93
2001	79	28	76
2002	63	25	68
2003	57	24	66

Notes:

1. We cannot provide "arrest to court" data for Persistent Young Offenders—only arrest to sentence.
2. We cannot provide "arrest to court" for all offenders.
3. The figures for "charge to first listing" come from the Time Interval Surveys. Comparable data for 1997 and 1998 are not available.
4. We cannot provide data for the Wrekin, but we can provide data for West Mercia in which this constituency is situated.

Criminal Justice Database

Dr. Whitehead: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 17 February, how many matches are contained wholly within the criminal justice section of the database. [165827]

Ms Blears: The National DNA Database is a criminal intelligence database and its use is restricted by the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, as amended, to purposes related to the prevention or detection of crime, the investigation of an offence or the conduct of a prosecution. All of the matches referred to in the 17 February answer, either suspect-to-scene or scene-to-scene were made in the course of police investigations.

Detained Families

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the work of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate official appointed to oversee all detained family cases. [164330]

Mr. Browne: Oversight of family cases involving children as part of the family is maintained by the Management of Detained Cases Unit within Immigration and Nationality Directorate. Their role includes reviewing the appropriateness of detention and ensuring that where detention is maintained that the cases are progressed expeditiously.

Any cases involving concern are referred at an early stage to the Immigration Service Director designated to oversee these cases. This Director also receives any information about welfare issues from those responsible for managing the Removal Centre Estate.

In particular, the Director reviews weekly, all cases involving the detention of families with children where detention might reach 28 days, before the period of detention reaches 28 days, together with reports on all cases already subject to ministerial authorisation. The Director decides whether it is appropriate to seek ministerial authority to maintain such detention.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions in the last 12 months asylum seeker families with children have been detained for over 28 days. [164331]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of occasions that families with children were detained under Immigration Act powers is not available.

Management information indicates that on 26 January 2004, 35 children were in detention who were detained solely under Immigration Act powers. Three-quarters of those had been in detention for 14 days or less and the remainder had been detained for less than four months. These individuals were all detained as part of families whose detention as a group was considered necessary.

Detention of all children beyond 28 days is now subject to ministerial authorisation.

Information on the number of people detained solely under Immigration Act powers as at 27 March 2004 will be published on the Home Office website (www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/immigration1.html) on 25 May.

Detention and Removal Centres

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who is responsible for dealing with complaints made by immigration and asylum detainees about incidents occurring while they are under escort or transit outside detention or removal centres. [157446]

Mr. Browne: All allegations of assault are taken very seriously and all complaints are investigated. If a complaint is made about an alleged assault or inappropriate use of force by either the in-country or overseas escorting contractor the Immigration Service contract monitor will refer this allegation to the police. If such a complaint is made in respect of a local escort, for example to hospital, the detainee, or his/her representative, is always advised in the first instance to go to the police.

In both cases it is a matter for the police whether a criminal investigation follows. If it is decided not to undertake a criminal investigation, and the escort was a local journey the Immigration Service contract monitor at the removal centre will carry out an investigation of the alleged incident. If the complaint was against the in-country or overseas escorting contractor, the internal investigation will be undertaken by the appropriate contract monitor.

DNA/Fingerprint Data

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many DNA samples taken by the police have been destroyed in each of the last five years; and under whose authority in each case. [167728]

Ms Blears: DNA samples are destroyed and the record of the profile derived from them is removed from the National DNA Database under the authorisation of the police force which submitted the DNA sample for analysis.

Prior to May 2001, DNA samples obtained from persons who were charged or prosecuted and who were subsequently acquitted or against whom charges were dropped had to be destroyed. An amendment to the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984 by the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 removed this requirement in respect of England and Wales but not Scotland. Samples may therefore have been destroyed and the profiles removed from the Database for one or more of the following reasons:

they are duplicate records from the same individual,

the individual has been acquitted or charges not proceeded with,

the samples were taken in error, or

the death of the individual.

The police also instruct the laboratory which carried out the DNA analysis to destroy all of the residual retained sample. Records of samples destroyed are not held centrally.

The number of subject profile records removed from the National DNA Database over the past five years was as follows:

	Number of records removed
2003–04	22,976
2002–03	21,229
2001–02	25,830
2000–01	77,336
1999–2000	59,957

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will take steps to ensure that the collecting of DNA and fingerprint data from individuals arrested but not charged with an offence does not lead to *(a)* a disproportionately high number of samples of black and ethnic minority citizens and *(b)* a disproportionately low sample of other races being kept. [167256]

Ms Blears: With effect from 5 April 2004 the police have the power under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, as amended, to take and retain the fingerprints and a non-intimate sample from all persons arrested for a recordable offence and detained in a police station.

The police are given guidance in Codes of Practice as to how to exercise their powers and if they act unlawfully there are existing remedies available to anyone who feels he or she has not been treated fairly or in accordance with the law. Revised Codes of Practice giving guidance on these new powers come into force on 1 May and in the meantime the police have been given advice on these powers in the Home Office Circular 20/2004.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what statistics and categories of information will be kept in respect of DNA and fingerprint data on individuals who are not charged with an offence at the time the record is taken or subsequently in connection with the reason the police decided to take the sample; whether the information will be kept in a form which enables statistics on the race or ethnic origin of individuals' samples kept to be accounted for; and if he will make a statement. [166942]

Ms Blears: Under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, as amended, the police have the power to take fingerprints and non-intimate DNA samples, with or without consent, from all persons arrested for a recordable offence and detained in a police station.

Limited demographic information relating to the person arrested will be kept on the National Automated Fingerprint Identification Service and National DNA Databases and fuller information, analogous to the information relating to charged persons, will be kept on the Police National Computer. This will include the name, date of birth, sex, colour (white/non-white/unknown), and ethnic appearance (white European, dark European, Afro-Caribbean, Asian, Oriental, Arab and unknown). The type of offence (or offences) for which the person was arrested will also be recorded and the circumstances which led to the arrest will be kept locally.

Eaves Housing for Women

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the evaluation of the Eaves Housing for Women project will be *(a)* begun and *(b)* completed; what funding was committed to the Eaves Housing project for the years 2002–03 and 2003–04; what funds are committed for 2004–05; what plans he has to extend the project nationality; and if he will make a statement. [166474]

Mr. Browne: The evaluation of the POPPY Scheme, run by Eaves Housing for Women, began when the project started in March 2003 and will conclude in August. We expect to receive the findings in the late summer of 2004, with publication of the report following shortly thereafter. Funding allocated for the project in 2002–03 and 2003–04 was £33,000 and £620,000 respectively, including the costs of publicity and evaluation. Funding for 2004–05 has yet to be finalised but is expected to be at a similar level to 2003–04. Decisions about future provision and funding for victims of trafficking—including extension to other areas—will be based on evidence of need and will be taken in light of the evaluation findings.

Entry Visas

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on the role of the Scottish Executive in determining Government policy on issuing entry visas. [165978]

Mr. Browne: The Scottish Executive has no role in determining Government policy on issuing entry visas as immigration is a reserved matter and dealt with nationally, but we do work closely with the Scottish Executive on visa policy.

EU Enlargement

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what action he plans to take to ensure control of Britain's frontiers following enlargement of the EU in May. [163550]

Mr. Browne: The Immigration Service is implementing a series of measures at air and seaports to maintain robust border controls post 1 May and to discharge our obligations to ensure that bona fide EU travellers are processed without delay. Measures include: raising awareness of the risks of document abuse by non EU nationals; re-deploying front-line staff when necessary and trialling these arrangements in advance of 1 May.

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the likely number of people coming into the UK from countries acceding to the EU in each of the next seven years. [150803]

Mr. Browne: Research conducted by University College London for the Home Office, published in June last year ("The impact of EU enlargement on migration flows", Home Office On-Line Report 25/03), estimates that the numbers of people expected to migrate to the UK from the new member states in the years following enlargement will not be significant. The research corroborates a number of other independent studies, which have been summarised in reports by the European Commission in 2000 and the former Department for Education and Employment in 1999. The estimates for those expected to migrate cover those coming to the UK for at least a year. As my right hon. friend the Home Secretary said, these are independent estimates and not Home Office figures.

We will monitor the situation and the UK has the right to reintroduce restrictions on workers in the event of an unexpected impact on the standard of living or level of employment in a particular region or occupation.

Gurkhas

Jane Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects to publish the outcome of the review of immigration rules and procedures applicable to dependent members of serving Gurkha soldiers. [166515]

Mr. Browne: There is no review into immigration rules and procedures applicable to dependent members of serving Gurkha soldiers. Officials are currently reviewing immigration policy in respect of Gurkhas serving in the British Army and will be reporting to Ministers shortly.

Harold Shipman

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether authority has been given for Dr. Harold Shipman's body to be disposed of. [167254]

Paul Goggins: Yes. This authorisation has been given.

Identity Card

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the public services for which the Draft Identity Cards Bill requires the production of an ID card as a condition of receiving the service. [169447]

Mr. Browne: There is no automatic requirement to produce an ID card for particular services in the draft Bill published by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 26 April. Parliament or the relevant devolved administration would have to approve regulations for each service on a case by case basis. In addition Clause 15(2) prohibits the ID card or a check of the National Identity Register being the mandatory way to access social security benefits or free public services prior to there being a compulsory requirement to register for an ID card.

Clause 15(5) of the draft Identity Cards Bill defines provision of a public service as:

(a) the provision of any service to an individual by a public authority;

(b) the exercise or performance in relation to an individual of any power or duty of a Minister of the Crown, the Treasury or a Northern Ireland department;

(c) the doing by any other person of anything in relation to an individual which that person is authorised or required to do for purposes connected with the carrying out of any function conferred on him by or under an enactment; or

(d) treating an individual as having complied with a requirement imposed on him by or under any enactment.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what purpose the Draft Identity Cards Bill enables an individual's national insurance number to be recorded in the National Identity Register. [169449]

Mr. Browne: Schedule 1 of the draft Identity Cards Bill published by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 26 April (CM 6178) sets out the information which may be recorded in the National Identity Register. Final decisions on what will be recorded in the Register will depend on further feasibility studies and what legislation Parliament finally agrees.

Recording the National Insurance number on the Register would link the more secure identity established when the ID card is issued with the National Insurance number which is a less securely issued number. This could help prevent abuse by people using other people's National Insurance numbers and be more convenient for employers using an ID card to confirm eligibility to work.

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers he plans to make available to the police in the event that an individual refuses to verify his or her identity following introduction of identity cards. [169702]

Mr. Browne: The draft Identity Cards Bill that my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary published on 26 April makes clear that it will not be a requirement for individuals to carry an identity card or to produce a card to a police officer on demand.

As set out in "Legislation on Identity Cards: a consultation (CM 6178)" there will be no new power for the police to stop someone and demand to see their card. Existing police powers to require drivers to produce their driving licence (which could be designated as an ID card) on demand or within seven days at a police station will remain. Added to this, if someone has been arrested for a recordable offence, existing powers will allow the police to take reasonable steps to identify them. This currently includes powers to check biometric information. There are also classes of criminal offences which are non-arrestable and are enforced by sending a summons. In these situations, the police have to be certain of a person's name and address. If a person refuses to identify themselves in these circumstances or the police are not satisfied with the information given, they have a power of arrest after which biometric checks can be made. If it were not possible to identify an arrested person otherwise, for example checking police records, a check could then be made on the person's biometric against the National Identity Register.

Illegal Immigrants

Mr. Gordon Prentice: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many illegal immigrants from China could not be deported in each year since 1997 because the Chinese authorities refused to take them; and if he will make a statement. [163198]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number of Chinese nationals who could not be returned to China due to the Chinese authorities refusing to accept them is not available.

Deportations are a specific subset of removals alongside persons subject to administrative removal, removal due to illegal entry action or those refused entry at port and subsequently removed. Information on the nationality of those people removed as a result of deportation action is not available.

Our ability to effect removals to the country of origin is crucial in tackling illegal immigration, and we expect the co-operation of source countries in this regard. The Chinese Government have very strict conditions for re-documenting their citizens and will only accept their return once they have verified their exact identity. This causes problems for many countries that wish to repatriate Chinese illegal immigrants and failed asylum seekers, as those who do not wish to return are careful to conceal their true identity. Chinese officials seconded to the Immigration Service have recently provided assistance in identifying Chinese nationals to enable their return. We are now working on an arrangement to make this assistance permanent.

We have made it clear to the Chinese Government that we urgently need to find a solution to the problem of re-documenting those who continue to conceal their identity in order to frustrate return, and are working together to find a way forward to enable us to significantly increase returns to China.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what measures are in place to stop businesses employing illegal immigrants; [155283]

(2) what measures are in place to deter employers from employing illegal migrants. [159605]

Mr. Browne: The current principal control on employers to prevent the use of illegal labour is section 8 of the Asylum and Immigration Act 1996. Section 8 makes it an offence to employ someone over the age of 16 who is subject to immigration control unless that person has current and valid permission to be in the United Kingdom and that permission does not prevent him or her from taking the job in question; or that person comes into a category where such employment is otherwise allowed. At present, an employer can be fined up to £5,000 per illegal employee on summary conviction for an offence under section 8.

On 16 March we announced changes, via secondary legislation, to strengthen the security of the document checks employers must carry out on prospective employees under section 8 to establish a statutory defence from prosecution.

The changes will make it easier for compliant employers to ensure that their work force can work in the UK, and for the Immigration Service to identify and prosecute the small minority of non-compliant employers who knowingly or negligently employ illegal workers.

The Government recognises the widespread concern, especially in the wake of the recent Morecambe Bay tragedy, about the use of illegal labour and is also supporting the Private Members Bill introduced by my hon. friend, the member for Renfrewshire West (Jim Sheridan) on the licensing of gangmasters. More generally, we are increasing illegal working enforcement activity.

Between April and June 2003 the Immigration Service reported carrying out 79 illegal working operations of which 27 were aimed at detecting five or more illegal workers. Between October and November last year the number of reported operations increased by over 75 per cent. on the second quarter to 141, while the operations aimed at detecting five or more illegal workers rose by over 175 per cent. to 75.

In the four month period from the beginning of November 2003 to the end of February 2004 UKIS reported carrying out 18 enforcement operations at farms and packhouses where labour providers were involved. These operations led to the removal of over a hundred immigration offenders. A further 11 operations involving labour providers are also scheduled or being planned.

Earlier this month, two major investigations involving the police supported by UKIS resulted in the conviction of gangmasters for very serious criminal offences. In March, six labour providers with the company Ultimate Source were convicted at Kings Lynn Crown Court of various offences in connection with the supply of illegal workers. On 16 March, the labour provider and his son were found guilty of charges including conspiracy to defraud and facilitating the entry of illegal immigrants into the UK. Both have been sentenced to seven years imprisonment.

Where the Immigration Service encounters illegal workers, it seeks to remove them from the United Kingdom.

Merseyside Police

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions individuals have been excluded from a specific area for up to 24 hours by Merseyside Police and Community Support since the inception of this power. [165920]

Ms Blears: Merseyside police tell me that they have dispersed more than 100 individuals and given them directions excluding them from three specific areas for up to 24 hours since these powers came into force.

NASS

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much has been allocated to the National Asylum Support Service in each financial year since its inception. [163628]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 29 March 2004]:* The National Asylum Support Service was established as a separate directorate within the Immigration and Nationality Directorate in 2000–01.

Total Resource Expenditure incurred by the National Asylum Support Service is listed in the table.

£ million

	Administration cost	*Asylum support cost*	*Total cost*
2000–01	36	747	783
2001–02	36	1,046	1,082
2002–03	54	1,070	1,124

National Offender Management Service

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish an organogram for the structures of the National Probation Directorate, HM Prison Service and the National Offender Management Service; and what its likely effects will be on personnel and staffing. [168184]

Paul Goggins: The Government will make available details of the structure and organisation of the National Offender Management Service when this is finalised. It is hoped that the proposed structure will be completed soon and can be discussed with trade unions and other key stakeholders.

Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act

Ms Buck: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will commission an independent review of the implementation of section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. [162633]

Mr. Browne: The Government do not consider that an independent review of the working of section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 is necessary or desirable.

The operation and impact of section 55 has been closely monitored since implementation on 8 January 2003, and initial problems are being resolved. From 17 December 2003, asylum applicants who can give a credible account that their asylum claim was made within three days of arrival would normally be accepted

as having applied as soon as reasonably practicable. This has resulted in a greater proportion of applications being granted under section 55.

These section 55 arrangements provide a balanced but firm policy that discourages economic migration, while continuing to offer refuge to those seeking asylum, and providing support to those who qualify or are vulnerable. The National Asylum Support Service (NASS) will continue to maintain an open dialogue on section 55 with the voluntary sector agencies, local government and other stakeholders.

Naturalisation

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to implement the report of the Advisory Group on Living in the UK about education for naturalisation applicants. [166122]

Mr. Browne: I refer my hon. Friend to the Written Ministerial Statement made by my right hon. and noble friend Baroness Scotland of Asthal on 2 February 2004, *Official Report*, column WS13, and to the related papers deposited in the Library, which set out the steps we are taking with regard to the recommendations of the report.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Treasury about financing the proposals of the Advisory Group on Living in the UK for education of naturalisation applicants. [166126]

Mr. Browne: Negotiations on the Home Office's Spending Review settlement must remain confidential.

Offender Management

Julie Morgan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how the National Offender Management Service will contribute towards a reduction in the use of custody. [168391]

Paul Goggins: This will be achieved through more effective management of offenders under the National Offender Management Service as well as better targeting and co-ordination of custodial and community sentences.

Omar Bakri Mohammed

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will review the immigration status of Omar Bakri Mohammed, with a view to removing his indefinite leave to remain. [166042]

Mr. Browne *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* It is not our policy to make public details of a person's immigration status.

Police

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding per head of population has been received in each year since 1997 from *(a)* Government grant and *(b)* the police precept by each police force in England and Wales. [162359]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the tables.

(a) Government grant funding[1] per head of population[2]

£

Force	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Avon and Somerset	94.52	96.85	97.60	101.29	112.31	110.15	117.18
Bedfordshire	95.82	96.93	95.42	99.91	108.29	115.56	118.92
Cambridgeshire	84.24	87.30	89.35	92.80	103.72	100.53	111.62
Cheshire	88.91	91.34	95.57	100.23	106.51	108.84	120.16
Cleveland	122.58	132.06	134.19	140.03	149.03	157.88	166.99
Cumbria	105.43	106.94	108.60	113.77	123.88	125.25	130.76
Derbyshire	88.59	91.52	94.26	95.21	106.24	105.08	112.59
Devon and Cornwall	88.03	94.04	96.17	100.10	109.74	109.35	113.03
Dorset	81.70	85.94	88.70	87.33	94.50	93.57	98.29
Durham	108.52	117.57	123.08	129.27	137.27	138.75	149.73
Dyfed-Powys	89.53	91.34	91.32	96.95	110.74	111.64	115.44
Essex	90.59	88.26	90.52	92.21	98.79	102.63	107.04
Gloucestershire	93.57	94.74	94.35	97.93	107.57	107.25	113.44
Greater Manchester	125.21	129.03	132.87	137.74	153.33	151.72	168.58
Gwent	102.95	106.10	111.61	115.73	126.18	129.40	137.76
Hampshire	87.91	92.20	94.15	97.52	104.68	107.94	118.02
Hertfordshire	90.49	91.73	97.52	94.07	102.02	102.00	107.18
Humberside	108.87	114.29	114.32	120.40	129.41	128.70	139.33
Kent	96.07	99.44	100.23	105.36	115.33	116.75	128.40
Lancashire	104.63	109.53	110.95	118.32	130.73	127.55	135.86
Leicestershire	92.34	93.20	97.15	100.26	110.95	108.92	116.95
Lincolnshire	88.35	84.49	88.14	94.19	97.01	103.72	102.31
Merseyside	150.14	152.59	154.54	160.78	170.52	180.40	194.66
Metropolitan	211.79	212.42	213.96	229.34	246.12	262.69	286.02
Norfolk	91.37	91.84	90.65	95.41	103.19	106.25	115.26
Northamptonshire	87.97	90.37	91.62	96.41	102.33	102.67	112.99
Northumbria	126.11	134.98	138.05	140.95	155.45	153.22	166.88
North Wales	95.01	96.33	98.35	102.77	112.54	119.44	124.00
North Yorkshire	85.44	90.25	89.77	90.97	101.44	98.66	103.84
Nottinghamshire	106.07	108.74	114.03	116.53	120.55	127.25	133.70
South Wales	115.87	117.36	119.86	123.00	132.89	135.82	145.63
South Yorkshire	111.96	115.56	120.09	124.84	131.32	136.86	151.49

(a) Government grant funding[1] per head of population[2]

£

Force	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Staffordshire	95.05	94.50	94.51	96.45	102.10	104.48	114.45
Suffolk	81.66	84.42	89.14	91.93	102.94	100.07	107.25
Surrey	101.66	89.09	98.45	89.29	87.53	86.54	93.50
Sussex	90.44	93.48	95.87	96.93	103.40	107.94	114.11
Thames Valley	85.97	89.94	90.48	93.06	104.08	104.96	110.48
Warwickshire	86.87	86.31	87.33	96.42	115.96	100.96	110.31
West Mercia	82.23	82.82	86.62	91.42	108.57	97.85	101.55
West Midlands	122.96	129.04	132.80	138.23	146.43	151.75	171.37
West Yorkshire	115.77	119.90	122.66	129.50	136.76	142.66	152.24
Wiltshire	90.79	91.08	91.08	95.26	103.05	102.78	106.37

[1] Government funding includes general grant (Home Office police grant, ODPM/Welsh Assembly Government Revenue Support Grant and National Non-Domestic Rates). It also includes specific grants: Crime Fighting Fund, Rural Policing Fund, Airwave, DNA Expansion Programme, Community Support Officer funding, London and South East Allowances, Free Travel (City of London and MPS only), Basic Command Unit funding, Street Crime Initiative, Special Priority Payments, Counter Terrorism funding (MPS only) and capital grants.

[2] Source for resident population figures: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, as used in the calculation of the police funding settlements.

(b) Precept[1] per head of population[2]

£

Force	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Avon and Somerset	17.47	18.56	20.68	23.12	24.93	28.73	39.52
Bedfordshire	17.41	18.64	20.54	22.46	23.64	26.58	31.84
Cambridgeshire	16.87	15.96	17.27	20.72	22.73	31.63	39.48
Cheshire	17.51	18.68	19.71	21.55	23.04	26.32	31.84
Cleveland	15.37	13.66	17.73	18.68	20.09	27.90	36.11
Cumbria	18.82	23.61	25.61	27.79	30.29	33.87	44.77
Derbyshire	15.76	17.68	20.46	22.24	23.81	29.12	36.46
Devon and Cornwall	17.06	16.73	18.61	20.64	21.76	25.97	36.89
Dorset	24.47	27.35	30.07	32.87	35.98	40.25	48.75
Durham	14.62	13.68	14.26	15.02	16.24	18.75	23.90
Dyfed-Powys	17.33	21.43	26.45	31.18	33.41	36.22	45.88
Essex	19.44	22.55	23.72	25.03	26.26	28.53	34.96
Gloucestershire	18.18	20.54	24.72	28.27	29.89	34.38	51.92
Greater Manchester	15.58	16.32	17.50	18.26	18.97	20.21	28.10
Gwent	15.58	17.41	19.30	24.52	27.75	31.71	40.58
Hampshire	18.23	17.72	19.09	19.60	21.05	26.97	35.31
Hertfordshire	20.48	23.44	25.26	27.16	28.92	32.29	39.96
Humberside	15.11	15.34	16.14	17.95	25.79	28.90	35.28
Kent	18.50	17.47	19.03	20.27	21.92	26.80	35.35
Lancashire	16.03	16.23	17.67	19.31	21.17	23.18	27.95
Leicestershire	15.71	18.47	19.44	20.91	23.33	29.71	33.55
Lincolnshire	21.90	25.18	26.33	28.08	29.70	31.43	34.46
Merseyside	18.94	20.47	22.22	23.53	25.17	28.02	31.03
Metropolitan	24.26	29.38	31.69	34.56	44.59	49.04	61.80
Norfolk	17.10	18.04	21.73	24.42	28.38	34.14	42.23
Northamptonshire	22.40	22.20	24.69	25.99	27.42	35.22	43.99
Northumbria	14.77	13.49	14.21	14.88	16.12	17.02	19.20
North Wales	17.11	20.75	23.96	28.59	30.47	35.78	47.19
North Yorkshire	17.78	17.47	18.99	20.80	22.97	32.58	57.99
Nottinghamshire	14.46	16.32	18.13	19.36	20.97	25.71	33.83
South Wales	15.88	18.17	21.17	26.24	28.02	29.49	35.66
South Yorkshire	14.47	14.79	15.96	16.23	17.37	20.65	27.15
Staffordshire	16.77	22.34	24.36	25.92	29.83	32.08	41.11
Suffolk	17.20	17.63	18.94	20.71	23.18	28.05	38.35
Surrey	19.40	28.94	32.78	34.81	36.09	42.05	60.17
Sussex	19.87	19.69	20.58	21.51	22.83	27.00	38.71
Thames Valley	19.84	19.13	21.31	22.81	24.41	27.81	41.15
Warwickshire	18.39	22.00	25.38	27.71	30.88	37.22	43.60
West Mercia	17.64	18.83	20.79	26.21	28.09	37.48	42.85
West Midlands	15.00	13.87	14.62	15.71	16.49	18.01	21.35
West Yorkshire	15.12	15.09	15.86	17.13	17.90	22.53	26.96
Wiltshire	19.94	22.85	25.11	27.80	30.65	33.79	41.04

[1] Source for precept information: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government.

[2] Source for resident population figures: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, as used in the calculation of the police funding settlements.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police cyclists there are per head of population for each police force. [168004]

Ms Blears: The requested information is not available centrally.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Burnley has been since 1997. [168314]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is available only from 2002.

Burnley is part of the Pennine Basic Command Unit (BCU). Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Pennine BCU increased by 0.7 per cent. (from 526 to 530). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Paul Stephenson) and within the Pennine BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average police-to-population ratio was in *(a)* England and *(b)* the Avon and Somerset Police Authority in each year since 1997. [167505]

Ms Blears: The information requested is given in the following table:

Police strength per 100,000 population

31 March	*Avon and Somerset*	*England*
1997	204.2	242.2
1998	202.8	240.7
1999	202.9	237.8
2000	197.1	233.0
2001	199.4	234.3
2002	204.8	240.2
2003	213.0	254.5

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what funding per head of population has been received from *(a)* Government grant and *(b)* the police precept by each police force in England and Wales in each year since 1997. [154678]

Ms Blears: The information is set out in the tables.

(a) Government Grant Funding[1] per head of population[2]

£

Force	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Avon and Somerset	94.52	96.85	97.60	101.29	112.31	110.15	117.18
Bedfordshire	95.82	96.93	95.42	99.91	108.29	115.56	118.92
Cambridgeshire	84.24	87.30	89.35	92.80	103.72	100.53	111.62
Cheshire	88.91	91.34	95.57	100.23	106.51	108.84	120.16
Cleveland	122.58	132.06	134.19	140.03	149.03	157.88	166.99
Cumbria	105.43	106.94	108.60	113.77	123.88	125.35	130.76
Derbyshire	88.59	91.52	94.26	95.21	106.24	105.08	112.59
Devon and Cornwall	88.03	94.04	96.17	100.10	109.74	109.35	113.03
Dorset	81.70	85.94	88.70	87.33	94.50	93.57	98.29
Durham	108.52	117.57	123.08	129.27	137.27	138.75	149.73
Dyfed-Powys	89.53	91.34	91.32	96.95	110.74	111.64	115.44
Essex	90.59	88.26	90.52	92.21	98.79	102.63	107.04
Gloucestershire	93.57	94.74	94.35	97.93	107.57	107.25	113.44
Greater Manchester	125.21	129.03	132.87	137.74	153.33	151.72	168.58
Gwent	102.95	106.10	111.61	115.73	126.18	129.40	137.76
Hampshire	87.91	92.20	94.15	97.52	104.68	107.94	118.02
Hertfordshire	90.49	91.73	97.52	94.07	102.02	102.00	107.18
Humberside	108.87	114.29	114.32	120.40	129.41	128.70	139.33
Kent	96.07	99.44	100.23	105.36	115.33	116.75	128.40
Lancashire	104.63	109.53	110.95	118.32	130.73	127.55	135.86
Leicestershire	92.34	93.20	97.15	100.26	110.95	108.92	116.95
Lincolnshire	88.35	84.49	88.14	94.19	97.01	103.72	102.31
Merseyside	150.14	152.59	154.54	160.78	170.52	180.40	194.66
Metropolitan	211.79	212.42	213.96	229.34	246.12	262.69	286.02
Norfolk	91.37	91.84	90.65	95.41	103.19	106.25	115.26
Northamptonshire	87.97	90.37	91.62	96.41	102.33	102.67	112.99
Northumbria	126.11	134.98	138.05	140.95	155.45	153.22	166.88
North Wales	95.01	96.33	98.35	102.77	112.54	119.44	124.00
North Yorkshire	85.44	90.25	89.77	90.97	101.44	98.66	103.84
Nottinghamshire	106.07	108.74	114.03	116.53	120.55	127.25	133.70
South Wales	115.87	117.36	119.86	123.00	132.89	135.82	145.63
South Yorkshire	111.96	115.56	120.09	124.84	131.32	136.86	151.49
Staffordshire	95.05	94.50	94.51	96.45	102.10	104.48	114.45
Suffolk	81.66	84.42	89.14	91.93	102.94	100.07	107.25
Surrey	101.66	89.09	98.45	89.29	87.53	86.54	93.50
Sussex	90.44	93.48	95.87	96.93	103.40	107.94	114.11
Thames Valley	85.97	89.94	90.48	93.06	104.08	104.96	110.48
Warwickshire	86.87	86.31	87.33	96.42	115.96	100.96	110.31
West Mercia	82.23	82.82	86:62	91.42	108.57	97.85	101.55
West Midlands	122.96	129.04	132.80	138.23	146.43	151.75	171.37
West Yorkshire	115.77	119.90	122.66	129.50	136.76	142.66	152.24
Wiltshire	90.79	91.08	91.08	95.26	103.05	102.78	106.37

[1] Government funding includes general grant (Home Office police grant, ODPM/Welsh Assembly Government Revenue Support Grant and National Non-Domestic Rates). It also includes specific grants: Crime Fighting Fund, Rural Policing Fund, Airwave, DNA Expansion Programme, Community Support Officer funding, London and South East Allowances, Free Travel (City of London and MPS only), Basic Command Unit funding, Street Crime Initiative, Special Priority Payments, Counter Terrorism funding (MPS only) and capital grants.
[2] Source for resident population figures: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, as used in the calculation of the police funding settlements.

(b) Precept[1] per head of population[2]

£

Force	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Avon and Somerset	17.47	18.56	20.68	23.12	24.93	28.73	39.52
Bedfordshire	17.41	18.64	20.54	22.46	23.64	26.58	31.84
Cambridgeshire	16.87	15.96	17.27	20.72	22.73	31.63	39.48
Cheshire	17.51	18.68	19.71	21.55	23.04	26.32	31.84
Cleveland	15.37	13.66	17.73	18.68	20.09	27.90	36.11
Cumbria	18.82	23.61	25.61	27.79	30.29	33.87	44.77
Derbyshire	15.76	17.68	20.46	22.24	23.81	29.12	36.46
Devon and Cornwall	17.06	16.73	18.61	20.64	21.76	25.97	36.89
Dorset	24.47	27.35	30.07	32.87	35.98	40.25	48.75
Durham	14.62	13.68	14.26	15.02	16.24	18.75	23.90
Dyfed-Powys	17.33	21.43	26.45	31.18	33.41	36.22	45.88
Essex	19.44	22.55	23.72	25.03	26.26	28.53	34.96
Gloucestershire	18.18	20.54	24.72	28.27	29.89	34.38	51.92
Greater Manchester	15.58	16.32	17.50	18.26	18.97	20.21	28.10
Gwent	15.58	17.41	19.30	24.52	27.75	31.71	40.58
Hampshire	18.23	17.72	19.09	19.60	21.05	26.97	35.31
Hertfordshire	20.48	23.44	25.26	27.16	28.92	32.29	39.96
Humberside	15.11	15.34	16.14	17.95	25.79	28.90	35.28
Kent	18.50	17.47	19.03	20.27	21.92	26.80	35.35
Lancashire	16.03	16.23	17.67	19.31	21.17	23.18	27.95
Leicestershire	15.71	18.47	19.44	20.91	23.38	29.71	33.55
Lincolnshire	21.90	25.18	26.33	28.08	29.70	31.43	34.46
Merseyside	18.94	20.47	22.22	23.53	25.17	28.02	31.03
Metropolitan	24.26	29.38	31.69	34.56	44.59	49.04	61.80
Norfolk	17.10	18.04	21.73	24.42	28.38	34.14	42.23
Northamptonshire	22.40	22.20	24.69	25.99	27.42	35.22	43.99
Northumbria	14.77	13.49	14.21	14.88	16.12	17.02	19.20
North Wales	17.11	20.75	23.96	28.59	30.47	35.78	47.19
North Yorkshire	17.78	17.47	18.99	20.80	22.97	32.58	57.99
Nottinghamshire	14.46	16.32	18.13	19.36	20.97	25.71	33.83
South Wales	15.88	18.17	21.17	26.24	28.02	29.49	35.66
South Yorkshire	14.47	14.79	15.96	16.23	17.37	20.65	27.15
Staffordshire	16.77	22.34	24.36	25.92	29.83	32.08	41.11
Suffolk	17.20	17.63	18.94	20.71	23.18	28.05	38.35
Surrey	19.40	28.94	32.78	34.81	36.09	42.05	60.17
Sussex	19.87	19.69	20.58	21.51	22.83	27.00	38.71
Thames Valley	19.84	19.13	21.31	22.81	24.41	27.81	41.15
Warwickshire	18.39	22.00	25.38	27.71	30.88	37.22	43.60
West Mercia	17.64	18.83	20.79	26.21	28.09	37.48	42.85
West Midlands	15.00	13.87	14.62	15.71	16.49	18.01	21.35
West Yorkshire	15.12	15.09	15.86	17.13	17.90	22.53	26.96
Wiltshire	19.94	22.85	25.11	27.80	30.65	33.79	41.04

[1] Source for precept information: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Welsh Assembly Government.
[2] Source for resident population figures: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, as used in the calculation of the police funding settlements.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Stalybridge and Hyde has been since 1997. [168737]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Stalybridge and Hyde is part of the Tameside Metropolitan Borough Basic Command Unit (BCU). Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Tameside BCU increased by 6.7 per cent. (from 389 to 415). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Michael Todd) and within the Tameside BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in the number of full-time police officers in Heywood and Middleton has been since 1997. [168534]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Heywood & Middleton is part of the Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Basic Command Unit (BCU). Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength

for the Rochdale BCU increased by 4.2 per cent. (from 409 to 426). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Michael Todd) and within the Rochdale BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent from central Government funds per capita on policing in *(a)* the East Riding of Yorkshire, *(b)* Humberside and *(c)* the UK for each of the last five years. [155330]

Ms Blears: The Home Office is responsible for the funding of the Police Service in England and Wales. The available information for all forces in England and Wales, including Humberside, is set out in the table. The distribution of resources within a force area is a matter for the Chief Constable and the Police Authority.

Funding for the Police Service in Scotland and Northern Ireland is the responsibility of the Scottish Executive and Northern Ireland Office respectively.

Grant funding[1] per head of population[2]

£

Force	1990–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Avon and Somerset	97.60	101.29	112.31	110.15	117.18
Bedfordshire	95.42	99.91	108.29	115.56	118.92
Cambridgeshire	89.35	92.80	103.72	100.53	111.62
Cheshire	95.57	100.23	106.51	108.84	120.16
Cleveland	134.19	140.03	149.03	157.88	166.99
Cumbria	108.60	113.77	123.88	125.25	130.76
Derbyshire	94.26	95.21	106.24	105.08	112.59
Devon and Cornwall	96.17	100.10	109.74	109.35	113.03
Dorset	88.70	87.33	94.50	93.57	98.29
Durham	123.08	129.27	137.27	138.75	149.73
Dyfed-Powys	91.32	96.95	110.74	111.64	115.44
Essex	90.52	92.21	98.79	102.63	107.04
Gloucestershire	94.35	97.93	107.57	107.25	113.44
Greater Manchester	132.87	137.74	153.33	151.72	168.58
Gwent	111.61	115.73	126.18	129.40	137.76
Hampshire	94.15	97.52	104.68	107.94	118.02
Hertfordshire	97.52	94.07	102.02	102.00	107.18
Humberside	114.32	120.40	129.41	128.70	139.33
Kent	100.23	105.36	115.33	116.75	128.40
Lancashire	110.95	118.32	130.73	127.55	135.86
Leicestershire	97.15	100.26	110.95	108.92	116.95
Lincolnshire	88.14	94.19	97.01	103.72	102.31
Merseyside	154.54	160.78	170.52	180.40	194.66
Metropolitan	213.96	229.34	246.12	262.69	286.02
Norfolk	90.65	95.41	103.19	106.25	115.26
Northamptonshire	91.62	96.41	102.33	102.67	112.99
Northumbria	138.05	140.95	155.45	153.22	156.88
North Wales	98.35	102.77	112.54	119.44	124.00
North Yorkshire	89.77	90.97	101.44	98.66	103.84
Nottinghamshire	114.03	116.53	120.55	127.25	133.70
South Wales	119.86	123.00	132.89	135.82	145.63
South Yorkshire	120.09	124.84	131.32	136.86	151.49
Staffordshire	94.51	96.45	102.10	104.48	114.45
Suffolk	89.14	91.93	102.94	100.07	107.25
Surrey	98.45	89.29	87.53	86.54	93.50
Sussex	95.87	96.93	103.40	107.94	114.11
Thames Valley	90.48	93.06	104.08	104.96	110.48
Warwickshire	87.33	96.42	115.96	100.96	110.31
West Mercia	86.62	91.42	108.57	97.85	101.55
West Midlands	132.80	138.23	146.43	151.75	171.37
West Yorkshire	122.66	129.50	136.76	142.66	152.24
Wiltshire	91.08	95.26	103.05	102.78	106.37

[1] Government funding includes general grant (Home Office police grant, ODPM/Welsh Assembly Government Revenue Support Grant and National Non-Domesticate Rates). It also includes specific grants: Crime Fighting Fund, Rural Policing Fund, Airwave, DMA Expansion Programme, Community Support Officer funding, London and South East Allowances, Free Travel (City of London and MPS only), Basic Command Unit funding, Street Crime Initiative, Special Priority Payments, Counter Terrorism funding (MPS only) and capital grants.
[2] Source for resident population figures: Office of the Deputy Prime Minister as used for police funding settlements.

Prison Drug Treatments

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisons are using *(a)* naltraxone, *(b)* methadone and *(c)* subutex as part of their drug treatment. [168208]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service does not routinely collect the information requested. However, it is estimated that naltrexone, an abstinence-based treatment, is currently available in around 50 establishments for men and one for women. Methadone maintenance is available in the majority of establishments for women but is not yet widely used in men's prisons.

Subutex (buprenorphine) is included in the treatment protocols developed in conjunction with NHS services at eight establishments for men. Every establishment for women has the capacity to prescribe subutex but few do so at present because methadone is considered to meet most prisoners' needs. Subutex would, however, be made available to any woman already being prescribed it when received into custody.

Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme

Hugh Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many students were admitted to the UK under the seasonal agricultural workers scheme from *(a)* Romania and *(b)* Bulgaria in (i) 2001, (ii) 2002 and (iii) 2003. [168377]

Mr. Browne: The latest available information is for 2001 to 2003, and is given in the table. Participants under the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Scheme must be students in full-time education and aged 18 or over.

Passengers given leave to enter the United Kingdom as seasonal agricultural workers, by nationality, 2001 to 2003

Number of journeys

	2001	2002	2003[1]
Romania	125	330	545
Bulgaria	1,110	1,730	1,965

[1] Provisional and subject to change.

Note:
The figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Sentence Costs

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the average cost of administering a *(a)* community rehabilitation order, *(b)* community punishment order, *(c)* community punishment and rehabilitation order, *(d)* curfew order, *(e)* drug treatment and testing order and *(f)* attendance centre order for (i) an adult and (ii) a juvenile was in the latest year for which figures are available. [167366]

Paul Goggins: The average costs of administering adult community punishment orders in the National Probation Service and the average estimated unit costs of the juvenile orders administered by the Youth Justice Board are as follows:

£

	Adult[1]	Juvenile
Community Rehabilitation Order	3,080	2,218
Community Punishment Order	2,055	2,218
Community Punishment and Rehabilitation Order	3,000	2,218
Curfew Order	1,730	1,739
Drug Treatment and Testing Order	[2]4,080	1,916
Attendance Centre Order	196	167

[1] Forecast costs for 2003–04; include local and central overheads and training of Probation Officers

[2] Corrections' costs only; Health costs approx £3,300.

The Youth Justice Board have commissioned PA Consulting to conduct activity sampling work on Youth Offending Teams which should provide further research data on the unit costs of juvenile orders and interventions. The activity analysis report is due to be completed later this year.

Spanish Identity Cards

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what discussions he has had with the Spanish Government on proposals to introduce electronic identity cards in Spain. [166843]

Mr. Browne: Identity card schemes have existed in all EU countries for many years, with the exception of Denmark and Ireland.

Home Office officials have had detailed discussions with colleagues involved in the operation of identity card schemes in Italy, Sweden, the Netherlands and Germany and lessons learned have informed the development of policy where appropriate. Before the outrages in Madrid, my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary discussed with the then Spanish Minister of the Interior his plans to upgrade identity cards in Spain. Comprehensive information has been supplied by each of the EU member states on the operation of their card schemes. The results of this work comprise Annex 3 of "Entitlement Cards and Identity Fraud: A Consultation" (CM 5557) published in July 2002.

Home Office officials will continue to work closely with colleagues in ED member states to share experience on the design and implementation of identity card schemes.

Stowaways

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was levied by the UK authorities in fines on *(a)* drivers and *(b)* freight companies found carrying stowaways in goods vehicles in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [160375]

Mr. Browne: When the civil penalty regime was introduced by the 1999 Immigration and Asylum Act, fixed penalties of £2,000 per clandestine entrant were imposed on hauliers for which both companies and their drivers were jointly and severally liable. There were no separate penalties for freight companies and drivers.

The total amount of the penalties imposed under the old regime during 2001 was £8,888,000. The total amount of penalties imposed during 2002 up until the end of old regime on 7 December 2002 was £3,792,000.

The regime was amended by the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002. This came into effect on 8 December 2002 and introduced flexible penalties that were separately imposed on companies and drivers.

The total penalties imposed from the start of the new regime on 8 December 2002 up to 31 December 2003 was £1,365,878; of this £809,913 was imposed on freight companies and £555,965 on drivers.

The reduction in the monetary value of penalties imposed under the new regime is because:

The effectiveness of the civil penalty regime and improved control via the increasing use of new detection technology for freight searching has provided an incentive to hauliers to improve their security and lead to a marked a reduction in the number of incidents where clandestine entrants are discovered; and

The flexible penalty which takes mitigating factors into account has lead to lower average penalties per clandestine entrant.

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many vehicles were checked for stowaways at UK border checkpoints in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [160380]

Mr. Browne: Detailed records are not kept nationally on the number of vehicles checked for clandestines at UK border checkpoints.

However, locally collated provisional information for 2003 indicates that at Dover and Coquelles the numbers checked by the Immigration Service were:

January 2003 to December 2003

	Number
Dover	138,030
Coquelles	158,130

Additionally, since 31 December 2003 there has been 100 per cent. checking capability through a range of technologies at Calais.

Student Visas

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the scheme of student visas in Scotland will apply to other parts of the United Kingdom. [166039]

Mr. Browne: The Scottish Graduate Scheme, whereby non European Economic Area nationals who have graduated from Scottish Universities can apply to stay in Scotland for two years and look for work, is a pilot for a more regional approach to managed migration. The scheme, which is planned for introduction from Summer 2005, could be extended to other parts of the UK in due course, if it proves successful.

Mr. Peter Duncan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to ensure that those issued with student visas through the scheme announced by the Scottish Executive remain in Scotland. [166040]

Mr. Browne: Only overseas graduates from Scottish Universities will be able to apply for extended leave to remain under the proposed scheme. Such graduates will already have a four year history of residence in Scotland

and strong ties to the local community. In addition, the Scottish Executive will be in regular contact with those participating in this scheme through its new Relocation Advisory Service.

Study Visas

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people *(a)* in total, *(b)* from Africa and *(c)* from each country in Africa are in possession of a visa to study in the UK. [164153]

Mr. Browne: The information requested is not available.

The tables show the available statistics for students given leave to enter the United Kingdom or granted an extension of leave to remain, 1998 to 2002. These will include students who have subsequently left the country.

Data on passengers given leave to enter the United Kingdom and persons granted an extension of leave to remain in previous years are published in the Command Papers "Control of Immigration: Statistics United Kingdom" obtainable from the House Library, the Stationery Office and via the Home Office website http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hobpubs1.html.

Table 1: Passengers given leave to enter the United Kingdom as students[1], excluding EEA nationals, 1998 to 2002—United Kingdom

Number of journeys

Geographical region and nationality	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Africa[2]					
Algeria	530	410	520	930	670
Angola	250	250	190	270	355
Congo (Dem. Rep.)[3]	50	50	40	30	20
Egypt	1,190	1,050	1,100	1,210	920
Ethiopia	190	190	180	240	155
Ghana	970	1,320	1,800	2,460	2,890
Kenya	1,580	1,590	1,670	1,920	1,980
Libya	1,080	1,140	1,730	2,670	3,130
Mauritius	690	820	950	1,180	1,210
Morocco	650	700	660	530	535
Nigeria	1,660	2,070	2,430	3,220	4,320
Sierra Leone	100	130	190	280	355
Somalia	20	40	30	95	40
South Africa	860	1,050	1,180	1,300	1,380
Sudan	330	320	390	310	455
Tanzania	1,070	940	950	910	905
Tunisia	610	970	840	980	910
Uganda	580	670	800	990	1,290
Zambia	500	560	580	700	680
Zimbabwe	690	770	1,070	1,700	1,780
Other Africa	2,790	2,880	3,000	3,250	3,640
Africa	16,400	17,900	20,300	25,200	27,600
All nationalities[2] (excluding EEA)	266,000	272,000	313,000	339,000	369,000

[1] The data are of the number of journeys made; a person who makes more than one journey is counted on each occasion if given fresh leave

[2] Includes visa and non-visa nationals.

[3] The Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly known as Zaire.

Note:

Data rounded to three significant digits.

Table 2: Grants of extensions of leave to remain in the United Kingdom as students[1,2], excluding EEA nationals, 1998 to 2002—United Kingdom

Number of decisions

Geographical region and nationality	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*
Africa[3]					
Algeria	130	120	140	250	245
Angola	70	90	100	80	155
Congo (Dem. Rep.)[4]	20	20	20	30	30
Egypt	120	150	270	265	295
Ethiopia	50	60	60	50	80
Ghana	680	950	1,420	1,965	3,130
Kenya	950	1,030	1,080	1,010	1,315
Libya	720	340	690	855	1,260
Mauritius	740	780	860	890	1,280
Morocco	100	90	120	150	150
Nigeria	1,680	1,780	2,080	2,170	2,840
Sierra Leone	270	240	260	210	275
Somalia	[5]	[5]	10	10	5
South Africa	340	590	1,250	1,715	2,250
Sudan	150	170	170	165	200
Tanzania	570	780	920	815	1,170
Tunisia	20	30	30	30	40
Uganda	280	380	570	680	930
Zambia	520	670	830	695	640
Zimbabwe	1,350	3,320	5,070	5,810	9,075
Other Africa	1,270	1,570	2,010	2,200	3,135
Africa	10,050	13,150	17,970	20,045	28,495
All nationalities[3] (excluding EEA)	45,100	51,190	70,620	83,180	121,655

[1] The data are of the number of decisions; includes extensions granted to persons admitted or previously granted an extension of leave to remain

[2] Excludes dependants of principal applicants and the outcome of appeals.

[3] Includes visa and non-visa nationals.

[4] The Democratic Republic of the Congo, formerly known as Zaire.

[5] One or two.

Note:

Data rounded to the nearest five.

Sutton Inquiry

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will list the terms of reference of the inquiry by Ken Sutton into the operation of the European Communities Association Agreements scheme. [166556]

Mr. Browne: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary's statement of 30 March.

US Visitor Deportations

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many US visitors have been deported from the UK for incorrect information on their visa applications in the last 12 months. [168252]

Mr. Browne: US nationals who are coming to the UK as visitors/tourists do not require a visa.

In 2002 (the latest period for which data are available) 1,030 US nationals who had been refused leave to enter the UK were removed from the country.

Deportations are a specific subset of removals alongside persons subject to administrative removal, removal due to illegal entry action or those refused entry

at port and subsequently removed. Information on the nationality of those people removed as a result of deportation action is not available.

Work Permits

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what checks are undertaken by Work Permits (UK) to ensure that people whose work permits have expired leave the country. [166552]

Mr. Browne: Work Permits (UK) conducts post-issue checks, including visits to employers' premises in order to ensure that work permit holders are employed for the purpose for which the permit was issues on an intelligence led basis. Where it comes to light that a work permit holder has worked or stayed beyond the expiry of their work permit it is able to take enforcement action, including removal. Work Permits (UK) also operates an Intelligence Team who are responsible for investigating alleged work permit offences alongside enforcement officers in the Immigration Service and the National Crime Squad.

Wheel Clamping

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what plans he has to regulate the *(a)* status, *(b)* prevalence and *(c)* activities of private security firms which wheel clamp licensed road vehicles on (i) public and (ii) private land; [167296]

(2) what timetable he has set to bring forward regulations in respect of private companies which wheel clamp licensed vehicles for enforcement purposes under the provisions of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. [167297]

Ms Blears: On current plans the Security Industry Authority (SIA) propose to commence the licensing of wheel clampers at the end of 2004. Details of the licensing criteria are currently being finalised and are likely to include an identity check, a criminal records check for relevant previous convictions, and a check on the applicant's professional competence to do the job.

The Private Security Industry Act 2001 also provides for the establishment of an approved contractor scheme by the SIA. The timetable for the introduction of the scheme is under consideration by the Authority.

The 2001 Act does not regulate wheel-clamping on public roads. Under the provisions of the Road Traffic Act 1991, local authorities may clamp vehicles that infringe parking regulations on public roads or in local authority off-street car parks. Only a parking attendant, as defined in section 63A of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, may authorise such vehicle clamping, although a private contractor may be used to place the clamp on the vehicle. Under sections 71 and 72 of the 1991 Act the owner of a vehicle may make representations to the relevant local authority and subsequently appeal to an independent parking adjudicator about the clamping of the vehicle.

Yarl's Wood Detention Centre

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he intends to publish the report by Stephen Shaw into the allegations made by the Daily Mirror in relation to the Yarl's Wood Detention Centre; and if he will make a statement. [169227]

Mr. Browne: The report will be published on 30 April.

Alistair Burt: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he received from Mr. Stephen Shaw his report into the fire at Yarl;s Wood Detention Centre in February 2002; when he intends to publish this report; and if he will make a statement. [169228]

Mr. Browne: The Prisons and Probation Ombudsman, Mr. Stephen Shaw, is continuing his inquiry into the fire that occurred at Yarl's Wood Removal Centre in February 2002. It is expected that Mr. Shaw will submit his report this summer.

Yvonne Shitto

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what stage the work visa application number S1145670 in the name of Yvonne Shitto is at; and if he will make a statement. [165913]

Mr. Browne: The work visa application for Yvonne Shitto, reference number: S1145670, was refused on the 8 April 2004.

Written Answers to Questions

Friday 30 April 2004

CABINET OFFICE

Regulation

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office how many instances of gold plating have been brought to the attention of the Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact Unit, with particular reference to the Cabinet Office Transposition Guide, 2003, page 17. [168646]

Mr. Alexander: The Government's policy is to transpose Directives so as to achieve the objects of the European measure, on time and in accordance with other UK policy goals, including minimising the burden on business. It is Government policy not to over-implement ("gold-plate") directives unless there are exceptional reasons for doing so.

The Regulatory Impact Unit has regular discussions with departments concerning policy development, including, on occasion, possible over-implementation. Records of the number of times such discussions have taken place are not available. Since November 2001, Transposition Notes have normally accompanied all legislation laid before Parliament that transposes any European directive. These show how all the main elements of the directive have been or will be transposed into UK law.

In accordance with Cabinet Office guidelines, Departments discuss with the Regulatory Impact Unit the range of options that might be included in regulatory impact assessments. These include options that could go beyond the minimum necessary to comply with a European directive, bearing in mind that, particularly where the original directive is unclear, it is not always straightforward to know in advance whether a proposed method of implementation might represent over-or under-implementation.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Consultants

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what sum has been expended on consultants by *(a)* the Department and *(b)* its predecessors since May 1997. [169848]

Mr. Lammy: From April 1997 until March 2003, my Department's net expenditure with consultants was as follows:

	£ million
1997–98	0.7
1998–99	1.2
1999–2000	1.9
2000–01	2.6
2001–02	6.5
2002–03	5.7

The recent increase reflects the wide-ranging and fast-paced programme to modernise the Department's work, to increase efficiency, and provide better customer service and value for money for the taxpayer.

Delivering such a programme in the most effective and efficient way has necessitated the use of external expertise and skills to supplement the Department's own resources.

Expenditure details for the financial year 2003–04 are not yet available.

Immigration

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the Immigration Appeals Authority has received from the Home Office the papers relating to the case of Mr. S. M., husband of Mrs. S. K. of Aylesbury (GV100/86120; decision maker's reference: 643686; Gerrys/Fedex no: 90083389; appeal reference: 90063159); and if he will make a statement. [167245]

Mr. Lammy: The Immigration Appellate Authority (IAA) took receipt of the appeal papers of Mr. S. M. on the 14 April 2004. The appeal has been listed by the IAA for a substantive hearing before an Immigration Adjudicator on 3 June 2004. Notice to this effect was promulgated to the relevant parties to the appeal on 19 April 2004.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will set a time limit on the maximum length of time between an appeal against the withdrawal of United Kingdom nationality being lodged with the Special Immigration Appeals Commission and the appeal being heard. [169811]

Mr. Lammy: It is important that appeals before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) are dealt with quickly and efficiently and the Government are keeping the position under very close review. But there are risks to setting rigid time limits that stipulate appeals must be heard within a defined period. The complexities of a case, and the need to ensure that SIAC has the full facts at its disposal, mean there are always instances where it would not be possible. We are committed to decide each appeal on its individual merits and give that appeal the necessary time for a fair decision to be given.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what action he proposes to take to reduce delays in hearings before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission in cases of appeals against withdrawal of UK nationality; and if he will make a statement. [169813]

Mr. Lammy: The administrative processes for appeals against Deprivation of Citizenship proceedings are subject to on-going review to ensure compatibility with both the public interest and the independence of the judicial process.

Interlocutory decisions in relation to individual proceedings are the preserve of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will name all hon. Members who, since 1 August 2003, have been sent a standard departmental reply concerning the 1911 Census returns in which the Department has advised them that the period of closure in Great Britain is normally 100 years; and if he will list the decennial population Census for *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* the whole of Ireland which have been released after less than 100 years of closure to public inspection. [167310]

Mr. Lammy: Between 1 August 2003 and 31 March 2004 the following hon. Members have received letters explaining why the 1911 Census returns for England and Wales are subject to a closure period of 100 years:

Andrew Smith, John Baron, Ann Winterton, Andrew MacKay, Judy Mallaber, Paul Burstow, Claire Ward, Nick Hawkins, Kevin Barron, Steven Webb, Andrew Tyrie, Sandra Gidley, Gerald Kaufman, Andrew Rosindell, Joe Benton, Nick Harvey, Mark Oaten, Helen Jackson, Robert Jackson, Andrew Murrison, John Grogan, David Borrow, David Taylor, Doug Naysmith, Roger Williams, Richard Ottaway, Alan Howarth, Philip Sawford, Vernon Coaker, Tim Yeo, Patricia Hewitt, Stephen Pound, Michael Mates, Michael Portillo, Jeff Ennis, Robert Key, Michael Wills, Siobhain McDonagh, Nick Gibb, Martin Caton, Ian Taylor, James Arbuthnot, Norman Lamb, Candy Atherton, Nicholas Winterton, John Hutton, Kenneth Clarke, Tim Loughton, Linda Gilroy, Hilary Benn, Michael Foster, David Drew, George Young, Paul Truswell, John Randall, Ian Stewart, Teddy Taylor, Wayne David, Ashok Kumar, Richard Burden, Andrew Turner, Mike O'Brien, Andrew Miller, Hazel Blears, John Horam, Edward Leigh, David Blunkett, Gwyneth Dunwoody, David Lidington, William Cash, Jim Cunningham, Robert Ainsworth, Shona McIsaac, John Taylor, David Winnick, Michael Wills, Geoffrey Clifton-Brown, Gregory Campbell, Martin Salter, Andrew Hunter, and Paul Clark.

(a) The censuses for 1841 and 1851 in England and Wales, which contained less detailed information than 20th century censuses, were opened to public inspection in 1912. The 1861 to 1901 censuses were all released after 100 years.

(b) The opening of census returns in Scotland is a matter for the General Register Office for Scotland, an associated Department of the Scottish Executive. However, I can refer the right hon. Member to the answer of 24 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 347W which my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Constitutional Affairs with responsibility for Scotland gave to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland on this subject.

(c) The returns for the all-Ireland censuses conducted in 1901 and 1911 can be consulted at the National Archives in Dublin, in accordance with decisions taken by the Government of the Republic of Ireland.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

BBC (Commercial Advertising)

Andy Burnham: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to her answer of 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1454W, on BBC (commercial advertising), how much the BBC spent in each of the last five years on *(a)* billboard advertising and *(b)* other commercial advertising. [168817]

Estelle Morris *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The cost of promoting BBC services is a matter for the BBC. However, the figures show the BBC's media spend over the last five years.

The BBC's total bought media spend for the last five years has been as follows:

	£ million	*Of which: billboard advertising*
2000	8.6	negligible
2001	9.6	negligible
2002	14.7	10.85
2003	13.8	11.7
2004	[1]12.0	[1]11.5

[1] Estimate.

I understand that the BBC made a significant change to its strategy in 2002 by developing a permanent holding of poster sites and switching much of its spending from other media, such as Press.

The BBC's spend has also of course risen significantly since 2002 in order to support the launches of its new digital TV and radio services and to promote digital take up in accordance with its commitments to the Secretary of State.

Departmental Communications

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what the total expenditure on communications for her Department has been in 2003–04, broken down by expenditure on *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others. [158208]

Mr. Caborn: The total expenditure on communications in my Department in 2003–04 was £927,744. This figure includes staff costs for the Group Head, the Press Office, the Promotions and Publicity Unit and administrative support staff. A break down of this figure between competencies, or by membership of the Government Information and Communication Service could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

The totals, do not include costs for special advisers, figures for which are given on an annual basis. Information for the year 2003–04 will be published in due course.

Matthew Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many staff were employed in the Department to work in the communications field, and what the total expenditure on communications for the Department was, broken

down by *(a)* Government Information and Communication Service staff and *(b)* other staff, broken down by (i) press officers, (ii) special advisers and (iii) others, in (A) 1994–95, (B) 1996–97, (C) 1997–98 and (D) 2001–02. [168683]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Press Officers

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many press officers were employed in her Department in each year from 1990–91 to 2003–04; what the total cost was in each year; and if she will make a statement. [162854]

Mr. Caborn: Numbers of press officers employed in each year from 1992–93 when the Department came into existence are as follows. Total cost for each year is available only for 2002–03 and 2003–04 as the information requested for earlier years could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

	Number	*Total cost (£)*
1992–93	7	—
1993–94	7	—
1994–95	7	—
1995–96	7	—
1996–97	7	—
1997–98	7	—
1998–99	9	—
1999–2000	8	—
2000–01	9	—
2001–02	8	—
2002–03	9	459,952
2003–04	10	552,677

DEFENCE

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166394]

Mr. Caplin: Information on Ministry of Defence civilian staff is given in United Kingdom Defence Statistics 2003 a copy of which is available in the House of Commons Library. Summary data for the civil service as a whole are published in the Civil Service Statistics 2002 publication. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004. The further information requested for the Ministry of Defence is given in the following tables:

Number of civilian staff in Ministry of Defence by gender, ethnic origin and disability (excludes trading funds and agencies

	Ministry of Defence			
1 March 2004	*Male*	*Female*	*Ethnic minorities*[1]	*Disabled*[2]
SCS	200	20	—	—
Band B	1,160	250	30	30
Band C	6,810	2,170	160	360
Band D	4,450	3,020	190	300
Band E	6,860	11,010	540	680
Industrial[4]	6,910	2,220	120	460
Other[5]	30	10	—	30
Grand total	26,410	18,690	1,040	1,870

Number of civilian staff in Ministry of Defence agencies and trading funds by gender, ethnic origin and disability

	Agencies and trading funds			
1 March 2004	*Male*	*Female*	*Ethnic minorities*[1]	*Disabled*[2]
SCS	70	10	—	—
Band B	970	160	20	20
Band C	5,890	2,000	150	320
Band D	4,610	2,260	140	300
Band E	5,340	6,890	320	460
Industrial[4]	4,120	870	80	340
Other[5]	—	—	—	—
Total	21,000	12,200	710	1,440
Trading Funds[3, 4]	9,400	2,010	110	400
Grand total	30,400	14,210	820	1,850

[1] Figures for ethnic minorities represent those who have declared themselves to be a member of an ethnic minority group. A total of 14,340 staff in the agencies and trading funds, and 12,550 in the remainder of the Ministry of Defence had not declared their ethnicity.

[2] Figures for disabled staff represent those who have declared themselves to be disabled. A total of 14,830 civilian staff in the agencies and trading Hinds, and 16,320 in the remainder of the Ministry of Defence had not declared their disability status.

[3] A breakdown by Grade is not available for Trading Funds.

[4] Industrial and Trading Funds data are based on estimates from November 2003.

[5] Other grade includes industrials on temporary promotion, and unknowns.

Notes:

1. Figures are headcount and have been rounded to the nearest 10 to preserve confidentiality.
2. Dashes represent numbers between 0 and 5.

Number of civilian staff in Ministry of Defence by age and grade (excludes trading funds and agencies): As at 1 March 2004

Grade	*16–24*	*25–29*	*30–34*	*35–39*	*40–44*	*45–49*
SCS	—	—	—	10	20	40
Band B	—	20	70	180	220	300
Band C	60	360	730	1,220	1,490	1,450
Band D	380	570	870	1,120	1,220	1,080
Band E	1,540	1,220	1,950	2,520	2,560	2,260
Industrial[4]	380	300	660	1,070	1,480	1,430
Other[5]	—	—	—	—	—	—

Grade	50–54	55–59	60–64	65+	Unknown	Grand total
SCS	80	50	10	—	—	220
Band B	330	260	30	—	—	1,420
Band C	1,460	1750	330	20	—	8,980
Band D	1,050	980	170	10	—	7,460
Band E	2,240	2420	1100	30	10	17,870
Industrial[4]	1,400	1410	970	20	—	9,120
Other[5]	—	—	—	—	10	30
Grand total	6,570	6,870	2,730	80	30	45,100

Number of civilian staff in Ministry of Defence agencies and trading funds age by grade: As at 1 March 2004

Grade	16,24	25–29	30–34	35–39	40–44	45–49
SCS	—	—	—	—	10	20
Band B	—	—	30	120	220	230
Band C	40	320	690	1,080	1,360	1,390
Band D	290	440	670	960	1,190	1,200
Band E	1,310	870	1,160	1,810	1,840	1,610
Industrial[4]	350	210	360	510	710	730
Other[5]	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	1,990	1,840	2,910	4,470	5,320	5,180
Trading funds[3,4]	980	1,100	1,390	1,600	1,720	1,550
Grand total	2,970	2,940	4,300	6,070	7,040	6,730

Grade	50–54	55–59	60–64	65+	Unknown	Grand total
SCS	20	20	—	—	—	80
Band B	290	210	30	—	—	1,130
Band C	1,370	1,290	310	10	10	7,890
Band D	990	900	230	—	—	6,870
Band E	1,490	1,530	600	10	10	12,230
Industrial[4]	700	850	580	10	—	4,990
Other[5]	—	—	—	—	—	10
Total	4,870	4,800	1,740	30	20	33,190
Trading funds[4,3]	1,380	1,260	430	10	—	11,420
Grand total	6,250	6,060	2,180	40	20	44,610

[1] Figures for ethnic minorities represent those who have declared themselves to be a member of an ethnic minority group.
A total of 14,340 staff in the agencies and trading funds, and 12,550 in the remainder of the Ministry of Defence had not declared their ethnicity.
[2] Figures for disabled staff represent those who have declared themselves to be disabled.
A total of 14,830 civilian staff in the agencies and trading funds, and 16,320 in the remainder of the Ministry of Defence had not declared their disability status.
[3] A breakdown by Grade is not available for Trading Funds.
[4] Industrial and Trading Funds data are based on estimates from November 2003.
[5] Other grade includes industrials on temporary promotion, and unknowns.
Notes:
1. Figures are headcount and have been rounded to the nearest 10 to preserve confidentiality.
2. Dashes represent numbers between 0 and 5.

Iraq

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what recent changes have been made regarding the use of free postage for military personnel serving in Iraq; and if he will make a statement. [170106]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my Written Ministerial Statement of 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 70WS, and subsequent answers of 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1155W, to the hon. Member for Portsmouth South (Mr. Hancock), and 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1605W, to the hon. Member for Mid Norfolk (Mr. Simpson).

Manning Control

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many soldiers subject to manning control in the last 10 years are *(a)* still serving on an S-type contract and *(b)* have been discharged, and under what careers regulations; and if he will make a statement. [169171]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* The number of soldiers discharged under Queen's Regulations 9.413 'Not required for a full Army career' following manning control review in the last 15 calendar years to 2002 was given in the answer on 27 November 2002, *Official Report*, columns 332–34W, as updated by the answers given on 16 September 2003, *Official Report*, columns 705–06W, and 13 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 386W.

Of these, 319 soldiers are currently serving on an S-Type engagement.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many soldiers who were subject to manning control and were discharged or signed on to S-type contracts and subsequently discharged since 1994 have been called up for service in UK operational deployment *(a)* in each of the last eight years and *(b)* on Operation Telic; and if he will make a statement. [169172]

Mr. Caplin *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* I will write to the hon. Member and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

Defence Statistics

Mr. Kidney: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what estimate he has made of the contribution his Department makes to the West Midlands economy. [168466]

Mr. Caplin: Publication of this information in the annual Defence Statistics report was suspended in 2002 because of concerns about its quality. Work is in place to improve the quality of these statistics with a view to their inclusion in the future.

Defence makes an important contribution to the West Midlands economy through the presence of service and civilian personnel in their local communities, and through expenditure with companies based in the West Midlands and payments by the Department to local authorities. The Department's Defence Bills Agency database records that in 2002–03 the Ministry of Defence spent some £300 million of equipment and non-equipment expenditure to firms based in the West Midlands.

The Department also conducts regional impact assessments to inform decisions affecting Defence estate and personnel.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Antisocial Behaviour

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many evictions by housing authorities for antisocial behaviour took place in *(a)* the last three months of 2003 and *(b)* the first three months of 2004. [169807]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not request that local authorities supply information on the number of evictions they have carried out due to the antisocial behaviour of tenants.

Betting Shops

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance he gives to local authorities in consideration of an application for planning permission to open a betting shop from someone who has already successfully applied for a licence to run that business. [170138]

Keith Hill: There is no specific guidance on applying for planning permission for a betting shop, although we published "Planning Permission: A Guide for Business" in 1998 which informs applicants that betting offices are in the A2 (Financial and Professional Services) Use Class as set out in the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987. The Use Classes Order makes clear that planning permission is needed to change the use of premises to a betting office. The Order is currently being revised, but the announcement on 27 November 2003 on proposed changes does not include any proposal to change the position of betting offices.

Even if an applicant has a bookmaker's permit to run a betting office in a particular location, he will still require permission to change the use of premises under the Town and Country Planning Act. We have no proposals to issue any guidance.

Planning (Flag Poles)

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) what planning restrictions apply to *(a)* the erection of flag poles and *(b)* the flying of national flags; and if he will make a statement; [169752]

(2) if he will make it his policy to issue planning guidance to remove the need for planning permission for flag poles up to 18 feet in height in or on domestic properties. [169751]

Keith Hill: Under the Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992 ("the regulations"), prior local planning authority consent is not required, in respect of a site where planning permission has been granted for residential development, so long as the flagstaff is vertical, does not exceed 4.6 metres in height, and is not within a conservation area, area of outstanding natural beauty, National Park, the Broads area or an area of special control under the regulations. The flag advertisement can only be displayed for the period of one year. Otherwise express consent from the local planning authority is required.

National flags are exempt from control under the regulations provided each flag is flown from a single vertical flagstaff and it does not have anything else added to the design of the flag or any advertising material added to the flagstaff. We shall be amending the Regulations to exempt from control national flags however they are flown from a flagstaff.

Land Use Change

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much land changing to residential use was within 1997-designated Green Belt in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [169495]

Keith Hill: The available estimates are from Land Use Change Statistics for 1997, 1998 and 2000, are in the following table. Much of the development was on land that was already developed and the second part of the table shows the amounts of greenfield land used for residential development.

Land changing to residential use within 1997 designated Green Belt

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*2000*
		Hectares	
All on Greenbelt land			
North East	5	10	0
North West	75	90	65
Yorkshire and the Humber	60	50	30
East Midlands	10	10	20
West Midlands	45	35	55
East of England	40	60	50
London	10	20	25
South East	135	85	145
South West	25	30	40
England	405	395	430
On greenfield (not previously developed) Land			
North East	5	10	0
North West	50	65	30
Yorkshire and the Humber	40	35	25
East Midlands	5	5	5
West Midlands	30	20	35
East of England	15	20	25
London	0	10	10
South East	90	50	100
South West	20	25	35
England	255	230	265

Mrs Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many new dwellings were built within 1997-designated Green Belt in each year since 1997, broken down by region. [169496]

Keith Hill: The available estimates are from Land Use Change Statistics for 1997, 1998 and 2000, in the following table. Many of the dwellings were built on land that was already developed and the second part of the table shows the numbers just on greenfield land.

New dwellings built within 1997 designated Green Belt

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*2000*
		Dwellings	
All on Green Belt land			
North East	50	140	20
North West	930	855	945
Yorkshire and the Humber	630	675	505
East Midlands	225	145	270
West Midlands	660	600	705
East of England	470	845	625
London	180	655	590
South East	855	800	890
South West	155	310	160
England	4,155	5,015	4,710
On greenfield (not previously developed) Land			
North East	35	130	15
NorthWest	495	410	330
Yorkshire and the Humber	335	360	370
East Midlands	95	75	35
West Midlands	335	220	335
East of England	105	135	280
London	5	240	205
South East	300	300	220
SouthWest	90	195	70
England	1,790	1,985	1,895

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much land within 1997-designated Green Belt changed to developed use each year since 1997, broken down by region. [169545]

Keith Hill: The available estimates are from Land Use Change Statistics for 1997, 1998 and 2000, tabled as follows:

Land changing to developed use within 1997 designated Green Belt

Region	*1997*	*1998*	*hectares 2000*
On green field (not previously developed) land			
North East	110	10	45
North West	335	295	110
Yorkshire and the Humber	295	290	60
East Midlands	60	75	70
West Midlands	85	65	75
East of England	155	85	50
London	50	20	15
South East	270	100	430
South West	55	70	115
England	1,410	1,005	965

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the locations of each development on *(a)* Green Belt land and *(b)* non-Green Belt green field land for which he or his predecessors have given planning permission since 1 May 1997. [169546]

Keith Hill: My right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister or his predecessors have granted planning permission on 162 sites on Green Belt land between 1 May 1997 and 31 March 2004. A table of the locations of these sites has been made available in the Libraries of the House.

Information on non-Green Belt green field land is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Local Authority Housing

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Preston since 1997. [169692]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Preston's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by over 35 per cent. In addition to this welcome increase there is support through the Community Housing Task Force and Government Office for the North West to help the local authority and its tenants to choose the best strategy for long-term improvement.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Bootle since 1997. [170076]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Sefton's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by over 200 per cent. and have been supplemented by the announcement of £86 million to be made available to the Merseyside Housing Market Renewal Pathfinder, NewHeartlands, between 2003–04 and 2005–06. In addition to this, there is support through the Community Housing Task Force and Government Office for the North West to help the local authority and its tenants to choose the best strategy for long-term improvement.

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will reply to the questions tabled by the hon. Member for Cotswold on 25 March, ref 163886, on Coverage Care (Gloucestershire) Ltd. [169894]

Yvette Cooper: I replied to the hon. Member on 29 April 2004.

Roadside Advertising

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice his Department offers local authorities regarding planning for roadside and roundabout advertising. [169247]

Keith Hill: Advice to local planning authorities is contained in Circular 5/92: The Town and Country Planning (Control of Advertisements) Regulations 1992. The Circular advises local planning authorities that particular consideration should be given to proposals to site advertisements at points where drivers need to take particular care, such as junctions, roundabouts or other places where local conditions present special traffic hazards. Local planning authorities are advised to consult the local highways authority (or the Highways Agency in the case of a motorway or trunk roads).

Site Development

Mr. Mark Hoban To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) when the sites owned by the Department of Health

will be sold to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, in accordance with the announcement made by him and the Secretary of State for Health on 7 April; [168327]

(2) what local consultation there will be on the development of NHS sites to be sold to his Department; [168328]

(3) when he will announce the programme for the development of the sites to be sold to his Department by the Department of Health; [168329]

(4) what mechanism he will put in place to prevent a conflict of interest when the Department is seeking either directly or indirectly to develop sites it owns; [168330]

(5) whether the sites to be sold to the Department by the Department of Health will be sold on to developers to enable them to be developed; [168331]

(6) whether the sites to be acquired from the Department of Health will be *(a)* sold on a site by site basis to developers and *(b)* sub-divided and sold individually to developers; [168332]

(7) what the timetable is for the development of sites in Hampshire to be acquired by his Department from the Department of Health; [168333]

(8) when an assessment will be carried out of the infrastructure needed to develop the sites to be acquired from the Department of Health; [168334]

(9) what period the sites to be acquired from the Department of Health will be developed; [168335]

(10) what basis the sites to be acquired from the Department of Health have been valued for the purpose of this acquisition; [168336]

(11) if he will list the value of each of the sites to be acquired from the Department of Health; [168337]

(12) how many houses will be built on each of the sites it will acquire from the Department of Health; and what proportion of these will be *(a)* affordable and *(b)* available for rent through registered social landlords; [168338]

(13) whether the Department intends to secure outline planning permission on each site to be acquired from the Department of Health prior to the sale of these sites to developers; [168339]

(14) what planning procedure is followed when a Government Department seeks planning permission for residential housing development; [168340]

(15) what measures will be taken to ensure the Department's target for the number of affordable housing units will be met on the sites to be acquired from the Department of Health; [168341]

(16) who will own the sites to be acquired by the Department from the Department of Health; [168342]

(17) whether the number of houses to be built on the sites to be acquired from the Department of Health will *(a)* be counted towards regional house building targets and *(b)* be in addition to those targets; [168343]

(18) when the Department commenced discussion with the Department of Health on the acquisition of surplus NHS sites; [168344]

(19) what discussions he or his officials had with the Department of Health concerning the plans by HBOS/Miller to develop the surplus NHS sites; and when they commenced. [168345]

Yvette Cooper: My right hon. Friends the Deputy Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Health announced on 7 April 2004 an agreement in principle to transfer over 100 surplus NHS sites to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The announcement follows an earlier decision by the Department of Health not to pursue a public/private partnership with Miller Homes/HBOS but instead to open discussions with to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister about the contribution the sites might make to delivering the action set out in the Sustainable Communities Plan (February 2003). Discussions commenced between ODPM and DoH officials after a decision by DoH to reconsider pursuing the proposed Miller/HBOS deal.

Following the in-principle agreement to transfer the sites, there will now be an intensive process to establish the terms of the transfer and the implications for individual sites. It is not possible at this stage to say when individual sites, including sites in Hampshire, will be brought forward for development. Those sites which are currently vacant are likely to transfer from the Department of Health later this financial year. The terms of the transfer will be informed by the market value of the sites. An independent valuation is under way to determine an overall value for the portfolio.

While many of the sites are already vacant, others remain occupied—if only in part. The timing of individual sites becoming available for development will vary from site to site. Each site will be considered separately in its local planning context before decisions are taken on future development options. The role that English Partnerships (EP), the national regeneration agency, will play in this process has still to be determined but we would expect it to be significant. There will also be a role for other public sector bodies such as the Regional Development Agencies.

It is likely that EP will be asked to undertake a master-planning exercise of some of the key sites to maximise their potential to deliver high quality developments. These will be exemplar projects to demonstrate best practice in creating sustainable communities. We would expect EP to engage with the local authorities concerned at an early stage and to involve the wider community and other stakeholders in pre-application discussions. This will help to determine issues such as the number of houses to be developed on each site and the appropriate proportion that should be affordable, as well as the

infrastructure required to ensure development is sustainable. Appropriate arrangements will be put in place to ensure that there is no conflict between the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's role in bringing these sites forward for development and its role in the planning process.

The public sector will prepare sites for development and ensure their potential to contribute to the establishment of sustainable communities is realised. Development opportunities will then be marketed to the private sector. How individual sites are marketed will be determined through the master planning process and is likely to vary from site to site. The private sector will therefore have a major role in the development of these sites.

Rent Arrears

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many evictions there were from local authority housing stock for rent arrears during each of the last three years. [169734]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Ms Keeble: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the latest figures for rent arrears in council housing stock are, broken down by region; and what the figures were for *(a)* 2003 and *(b)* 2002. [169735]

Keith Hill: Estimates of total rent arrears due to local authorities as at 31 March for each of the years 2002–04, and aggregated to regional level, are tabled as follows:

£ million

Region	*2002*	*2003*	*2004*
North East	32.8	34.1	32.5
North West	77.5	64.3	65.2
Yorkshire and the Humber	58.8	61.1	53.0
East Midlands	37.5	37.3	36.5
West Midlands	47.8	44.7	40.7
East	32.7	30.4	28.3
London	215.6	185.4	181.7
South East	33.5	32.9	31.5
South West	20.5	21.7	23.3
England	556.8	512.0	492.8

Notes:

1. The above estimates are based on unaudited figures supplied by local authorities in response to a regular survey called "Entitlement to Housing Subsidies and Grants" and, in particular, the First/Second Advance Claim forms.
2. The total arrears reflect arrears due from both former tenants and current tenants.
3. The change in cumulative rent arrears from one year to the next can be affected both by the success of a local authority in chasing up rent arrears and by the fact that local authorities can simply write-off outstanding arrears at any time.

Wind Farms

Mr. Walter: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the installed capacity and location of wind turbines granted planning permission was in *(a)* England, *(b)* Wales, *(c)* Scotland and *(d)* Northern Ireland in each year since 1990; how many wind farms were awaiting planning permission at 31 March; and what the generating capacity is in each case. [168830]

Keith Hill: Apart from Northern Ireland, where all applications are dealt with centrally, Government do not hold records of proposals for on-shore wind farms below 50 megawatts (MW) as these fall to be determined by the local planning authority under the normal planning regime. However, proposals to construct and operate generating stations with a capacity greater than 50 MW in England and Wales require my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's consent under section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989. This information is also collated by the devolved Administrations in Scotland. For all such applications, the information requested is in the tables.

Section 36 of the Electricity Act 1989—applications approved

There have been no applications approved in England.

Country	*Location*	*Date received*	*Generating capacity*	*Date approved*
Wales	Cefn Croes Ceredigion	24 July 2000	60 MW	23 May 2002
Scotland	Caim Uish, Moray	27 September 2001	56 MW	21 January 2003
	Pauls Hill, Moray	27 September 2001	56 MW	31 March 2003
	Hadyard Hill, South Ayrshire	31 July 2002	130MW	24 December 2003
	Black Law, North and South Lanarkshire	9 August 2001	142.6 MW	13 February 2004

English and Scottish S 36 Applications submitted 2001–02

There are no outstanding applications in respect of Wales.

Date of application	*Project title/type*	*Location, including grid ref (Easting and Northing) if available*	*Maximum output*
14 December 2001	Windy Standard Windfarm Extension	Dumfries and Galloway E 252 500/N 604 500 South Lanarkshire, East Ayrshire, East	90 MW
23 January 2002	Whitelee Windfarm	Renfrewshire E 256 800/N 645 435	322 MW
11 September 2002 (14 March 2002)	Farr Windfarm	Highland Council NH 731 292	112.5 MW
31 October 2002 (5 April 2002)	Braes of Doune Windfarm	Stirling Council E 269500/N 705500	100 MW
15 November 2002	Little Cheyne Court	Walland Marsh Kent	75 MW

English and Scottish S 36 Applications submitted 2003

Date of application	*Project title/type*	*Location, including grid ref (Easting and Northing) if available*	*Maximum output*
21 January 2003 (N/A)	Crystal Rig Windfarm Extension	Scottish Borders Council E 372 847 N 660 603	62.5 MW
9 May 2003 (N/A)	Greenock Windfarm	Inverclyde Council	59 MW
14 May 2003 (N/A)	Paul's Hill Extension	Moray Council E 311 050 N 840 050	77 MW (additional 21 MW)
18 June 2003 (12 July 2002)	Gordonbush Windf[illegible]	Highland Council NC 2860 9150	*100 MW*
4 July 2003	Scout Moor	Lancashire	Approximately 65 MW
11 July 2003 (15 August 2002)	Clashindarroch Windfarm	Aberdeenshire Council E 348 500 N 831 500	129 MW
29 September 2003	Whinash	Tebay, Cumbria	67.5 MW
24 October 2003	Keadby	North Lincolnshire	78 MW
27 October 2003 (15 August 2002)	Aultmore Windfarm	Moray Council E 345 000 N 860 000	62 MW
5 December 2003 (N/A)	Kilpatrick Hills Windfarm	West Dunbartonshire	60 MW

English and Scottish S 36 Applications submitted 2004

Date of application	*Project title/type*	*Location, including grid ref (Easting and Northing) if available*	*Maximum output*
5 January 2004	Tween Bridge	Thorne	Approximately 84 MW
9 January 2004 (6 August 2003)	Abercairny Windfarm	Perth and Kinross Council NN 890 270	66 MW
16 February 2004 (7 August 2003)	Calliacher Windfarm	Perth and Kinross Council E 285 000 N 750 000	93 MW
15 March 2004	Causeymire Wind Farm	Highland Council	55.2 MW
(7 March 2003)	Harestanes Windfarm	Dumfries and Galloway E 301 000 N 595 000	282 MW
(24 April 2003)	Lochelbank Windfarm	Perth and Kinross Council E 311 440 N 713 477	51 MW
(31 July 2003)	Ewehill Windfarm	Dumfries and Galloway E 265 500 N 600 500	80 MW

For Northern Ireland

All applications approved

Location	*Generating capacity*	*Approved*
Slieve Rushen	5MW	1992
Corkey	5MW	1994
Rigged Hill	5MW	1994
Eliot's Hill	5MW	1994
Beaty Bell	5MW	1994
Owenreagh	5MW	1996
Lendrum's Bridge, Fivemiletown	13.2 MW	2002
Altahullion, Londonderry	26 MW	2002
Lough Hill	12.25 MW	2003
Tappaghan, Co. Fermanagh	19.5 MW	2004
Callagheen	22.75 MW	2004

All applications submitted as at 31 March 2004

Location	*Generating capacity*
Dunloy	16 MW
Beltany	11.7 MW
Rosslea	17.5 MW
Clogher	30 MW
Binnawoods	9 MW

Janet Anderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance he issues on the minimum acceptable distance between sizes of proposed windfarms and the nearest dwelling. [169489]

Keith Hill: Paragraph 47 of the annex on Wind Energy in Policy Planning Guidance Note 22 (PPG22) contains guidelines about turbine separation distances from residential dwellings, specifically in relation to noise. This matter was also covered in paragraph 18 of our revision to PPG22, which was issued as a draft for consultation last November.

Janet Anderson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to *(a)* amend and *(b)* relax the planning guidance in respect of planning permission for windfarms. [169490]

Keith Hill: The Government's proposals for amending the current planning policy guidance note 22: renewable energy (PPG22) were set out in draft Planning Policy Statement 22 (PPS22) published for public consultation on 5 November 2003. This document covered the handling of all types of renewable energy projects through the planning system. Copies have been made available in the Libraries of the House. The consultation period ended on 30 January. The final version of PPS22 will be published later this year following careful consideration of the consultation responses received.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Children (Residential Care)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children were placed in residential care by each local authority in the last year for which figures are available. [167135]

Margaret Hodge: The number of children in residential care in each local authority at 31 March 2003 is shown in the following table.

Children looked after at 31 March 2003 in residential care[1, 2, 3]

	Number
England	*8,400*
North East	
Shire Counties	
Durham	55
Northumberland	50

Children looked after at 31 March 2003 in residential care[1, 2, 3]

	Number
Unitary Authorities	
Darlington	20
Hartlepool	10
Middlesbrough	35
Redcar and Cleveland	20
Stockton on Tees	35
Metropolitan Districts	
Gateshead	30
Newcastle Upon Tyne	40
North Tyneside	35
South Tyneside	30
Sunderland	70
North West	
Shire Counties	
Cheshire	50
Cumbria	45
Lancashire	220
Unitary Authorities	
Blackburn and Darwen	30
Blackpool	30
Halton	20
Warrington	15
Metropolitan Districts	
Bolton	40
Bury	20
Knowsley	30
Liverpool	175
Manchester	185
Oldham	45
Rochdale	35
Salford	105
Sefton	100
St. Helens	45
Stockport	55
Tameside	45
Trafford	45
Wigan	55
Wirral	75
Yorkshire and The Humber	
Shire Counties	
North Yorkshire	45
Unitary Authorities	
East Riding Yorkshire	35
Kingston Upon Hull	85
North East Lincolnshire	30
North Lincolnshire	35
York	20
Metropolitan Districts	
Barnsley	45
Bradford	110
Calderdale	30
Doncaster	45
Kirklees	55
Leeds	165
Rotherham	35
Sheffield	100
Wakefield	50
East Midlands	
Shire Counties	
Derbyshire	65
Leicestershire	40
Lincolnshire	50
Northamptonshire	75
Nottinghamshire	35
Unitary Authorities	
Derby	50
Leicester	40
Nottingham	60
Rutland	—

Children looked after at 31 March 2003 in residential care[1, 2, 3]

	Number
West Midlands	
Shire Counties	
Shropshire	30
Staffordshire	90
Warwickshire	35
Worcestershire	50
Unitary Authorities	
Herefordshire	15
Stoke-on-Trent	65
Telford and Wrekin	30
Metropolitan Districts	
Birmingham	295
Coventry	50
Dudley	45
Sandwell	50
Solihull	30
Walsall	60
Wolverhampton	35
East of England	
Shire Counties	
Bedfordshire	75
Cambridgeshire	45
Essex	185
Hertfordshire	125
Norfolk	135
Suffolk	85
Unitary Authorities	
Luton	35
Peterborough	25
Southend	30
Thurrock	30
London	
Inner London	
Camden	65
City of London	—
Greenwich	80
Hackney	60
Hammersmith and Fulham	60
Islington	115
Kensington and Chelsea	50
Lambeth	140
Lewisham	135
Southwark	90
Tower Hamlets	65
Wandsworth	40
Westminster	45
Outer London	
Barking and Dagenham	95
Barnet	60
Bexley	20
Brent	70
Bromley	70
Croydon	90
Ealing	80
Enfield	60
Haringey	120
Harrow	30
Havering	40
Hillingdon	65
Hounslow	45
Kingston Upon Thames	20
Merton	20
Newham	80
Redbridge	25
Richmond Upon Thames	25
Sutton	20
Waltham Forest	95
South East	
Shire Counties	
Buckinghamshire	40

Children looked after at 31 March 2003 in residential care[1, 2, 3]

	Number
East Sussex	45
Hampshire	125
Kent	120
Oxfordshire	65
Surrey	135
West Sussex	85
Unitary Authorities	
Bracknell Forest	15
Brighton and Hove	35
Isle of Wight	10
Medway Towns	25
Milton Keynes	35
Portsmouth	35
Reading	25
Slough	20
Southampton	25
West Berkshire	20
Windsor and Maidenhead	15
Wokingham	10
South West	
Shire Counties	
Cornwall	65
Devon	75
Dorset	40
Gloucestershire	55
Isles of Scilly	0
Somerset	60
Wiltshire	40
Unitary Authorities	
Bath and North East Somerset	20
Bournemouth	30
Bristol	75
North Somerset	10
Plymouth	35
Poole	15
South Gloucestershire	20
Swindon	20
Torbay	25

[1] Residential care includes secure units, homes and hostels, residential schools, and other residential settings.

[2] Figures in this table exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short-term placements.

[3] Figures over 1,000 are rounded to the nearest 100. Figures between 1 and 5 have been suppressed. All other figures are rounded to the nearest 5.

Source:

Children Looked After by Local Authorities, Year Ending 31 March 2003.

Pre-school Places

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Burnley in each of the last seven years. [167918]

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four-year-olds in Preston in each of the last seven years. [168135]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested.

Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year olds in Lancashire local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for three and four-year-olds in England were published in a Statistical Bulletin "Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003" which is available on the Department's website www.dfes.gov.uk/rsgateway/.

Since the beginning of April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three-year-olds in England whose parents want one, are eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Number of free nursery education places[1,2] *taken up by three and four-year-old children in maintained nursery and primary schools and private, voluntary and independent providers—Lancashire local education authority area—1997 to 2003*

	Position in January each year	
	Three-year-olds	Four-year-olds
1997	4,400	12,400
1998	4,400	13,500
1999	4,400	16,000
2000	4,300	15,900
2001	9,400	15,700
2002	9,400	13,000
2003	10,100	12,600

[1] Part-time equivalent number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four-year-old children.

[2] A free nursery education place comprises five two and a half hour sessions of early years education per week, for 33 weeks of the year, usually three terms of 11 weeks.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Illegal Meat Imports

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what estimate she has made of the amount of meat illegally imported into the UK in each of the last 10 years; [160630]

(2) what estimates she has made of the quantity of meat illegally imported into the UK in the last 12 months. [165199]

Mr. Bradshaw: Estimates of the amount of illegal meat imports may be made on the basis of the amount of such meat detected. However prior to 2001 information on seizures of illegal meat imports by enforcement authorities was not collected centrally. In August 2001, Defra set up the first national database to capture data on seizures of illegally imported products of animal origin (POAO).

The Veterinary Laboratories Agency's 'Risk Assessment for the Import of Meat and Meat Products Contaminated with Foot and Mouth Disease Virus into Great Britain and the Subsequent Exposure of GB Livestock', published in March 2003, used the seizure database to estimate that the total amount of illegal meat entering GB each year is 7,431 tonnes on average, with 90 per cent. certainty that this is between 2,771 and 14,484 tonnes per year.

Information on seizures of illegal imports continues to be collected centrally and will be published in Defra's annual review of controls on imports of animal products.

Abattoirs

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 16 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 156W, on abattoirs, how many individual case files there are in which are recorded the details of charges which are brought against abattoirs that were withdrawn before they come to court; and where they are kept. [166078]

Mr. Bradshaw: Details of all charges laid against abattoirs for meat hygiene and animal welfare offences are recorded on individual case files. There are 49 case files relating to prosecutions brought against abattoirs in 2002 and 2003. Details of any charges withdrawn before cases came to court are recorded on the individual files, which are either retained by the Food Standards Agency at their headquarters in London or held in storage in Derbyshire.

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average cost was to the Department in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 of a charge successfully brought against an abattoir for breach of meat hygiene and animal welfare regulations. [166080]

Mr. Bradshaw: The average legal cost incurred by this Department and the Food Standards Agency in pursuit of a charge successfully brought against an abattoir for a breach of meat hygiene or animal welfare regulations was:

	Per charge (£)
2002–03	1,190.04
2003–04	975.79

Mr. O'Hara: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average cost was to the Department in financial years *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04 of a charge brought against an abattoir for breach of the meat hygiene and animal welfare regulations but which it dropped before it came to court. [166091]

Mr. Bradshaw: The average legal cost incurred by both this Department and the Food Standards Agency in pursuit of charges brought against abattoirs for a breach of the meat hygiene or animal welfare regulations, which were dropped before coming to court was:

	Per charge (£)
2002–03	1,426.54
2003–04	390.26

Animal Welfare Bill

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to introduce an Animal Welfare Bill. [166478]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Department is proposing to introduce an Animal Welfare Bill that will update and consolidate legislation relating to the welfare of captive and domestic animals. The earliest the Bill could be introduced into Parliament is the session beginning November 2004.

Sea Bass

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make it her Department's policy to source sea bass used in catering outlets for which her Department is responsible from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167539]

Mr. Bradshaw: Defra supports the sourcing of sea bass from sustainable fisheries and handlining, as a relatively low impact method of fishing, can play a part in ensuring fisheries remain sustainable. However, the last report in 2003 by the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas on sea bass advised that the level of exploitation of the stock at that time was sustainable and did not recommend closure of the offshore pair trawl fishery. There are currently no restrictions at a UK or Community level on the method of fishing that can be used to target bass. In addition, to address the dolphin bycatch problem associated with the pair trawl fishery, Defra-funded trials of a separate grid device to reduce dolphin bycatch are currently taking place, with the co-operation of the fishing industry.

In these circumstances, I do not believe that recommending a specific source of supply for bass could be justified at this stage.

Blue Tongue Virus

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the risks of a blue tongue virus outbreak in the United Kingdom. [168949]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* Defra have prepared a technical review which describes the virus, its hosts and vectors, and a control strategy for the various scenarios whereby the bluetongue virus could be introduced to the United Kingdom. These documents can be found online at the Defra website at the following locations:

Technical Review

http://defraweb/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/bluetongue_technical.PDF

Control Strategy

http://defraweb/animalh/diseases/notifiable/disease/bluetongue_control_strategy.pdf

Whenever there is a serious disease outbreak in another country that could affect the UK via trade in animals and animal products, we prepare a risk assessment and post it on the Defra website The most recent one in respect of blue tongue was prepared in October last year following an outbreak of the disease in the Balearics.

Bovine TB

Mr. Paterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what lessons can be learned in respect of UK TB control measures from the New Zealand experiences of possum clearance. [158291]

Mr. Bradshaw: There are two main lessons to be learned from the New Zealand experience of possum clearance. Firstly, in a situation where a wild mammal acts as a maintenance host of TB, a successful eradication scheme must include a strategy to limit the infective contacts between the wildlife reservoir and cattle. This must be in addition to a programme of frequent tuberculin testing of cattle herds, removal of reactors, slaughterhouse surveillance and controls of cattle movements from infected herds. The second lesson is that this multi-pronged approach is an effort that must be maintained over time.

Cotswold Conservation Board

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out the *(a)* proposed role and *(b)* level of funding planned for the Cotswold Conservation Board; whether it will be liable for VAT; and if she will make a statement. [166895]

Mr. Bradshaw: The information requested is as follows:

(a) The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 states that the two purposes of a Conservation Board are:

(i) conserving and enhancing the natural beauty of the area of outstanding natural beauty, and

(ii) increasing the understanding and enjoyment by the public of the special qualities of the area of outstanding natural beauty.

Additionally, a Conservation Board, while having regard to these purposes, should seek to foster the economic and social well-being of local communities within the area, but without incurring significant expenditure.

(b) If created, the Cotswolds AONB Conservation Board would receive Countryside Agency funding to meet 80 per cent. of its core costs. This compares to a 75 per cent. contribution in AONBs managed by local authorities, which can reclaim their VAT payments. The increased contribution is to offset the Boards not being able to reclaim their VAT payments.

EU Rural Development Regulation

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the new requirements which will be imposed by the 2007 EU Rural Development Regulation. [168036]

Alun Michael: The European Commission is expected to publish legislative proposals on EU rural development spending later this year. The United Kingdom's position on the draft regulation will be developed in discussion with the devolved Administrations in Scotland and Wales, and with the Northern Ireland Administration, and following consultation with stakeholders. We hope to see a significant simplification in comparison with the current rural development regulation and a greater focus on rural development in general.

Fisheries

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what her policy is on the lease of sea bed for fish farming. [167201]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government's policy on marine fish farming is to encourage the development of viable, competitive and sustainable fish farming enterprises providing this can be done within a framework which protects the health and welfare of farmed and wild stocks. Central to that policy is the sustainable use of the marine environment and the prosperity of the economies and communities in associated areas.

Policy responsibility on the lease of sea bed for fish farming is a matter for the Crown Estate.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will request that the European Commission conduct as a matter of urgency a study to establish for each EU member state, under the provisions of the new Regulation concerning incidental catches of cetaceans in fisheries; and on the basis of current fishing data, the number of vessels that will be *(a)* required to use pingers and *(b)* required to carry observers; and what proportion of national fishing effort in relevant fleets will be exempt from each of the above requirements as a result of the exclusions of vessels (i) smaller than 12 metres, (ii) smaller than 15 metres and (iii) using pingers. [168241]

Mr. Bradshaw: The UK has been seeking Community action for some time to address the accidental deaths of dolphins and porpoises from fishing activity. I am pleased therefore that agreement was reached on a new Council Regulation to address this problem at the Agriculture and Fisheries Council of Ministers Meeting on 22 and 23 March. The UK would have preferred the Regulation to have been stricter in certain areas but the agreed Regulation represented a package that was acceptable to the majority of member states, in the light of available scientific data. The review clause in the Regulation provides the opportunity to press for further action to refine and target measures at other sectors of the fleet if justified. In these circumstances, I do not believe a request at this stage to the Commission to conduct a further study in relation to cetacean bycatch would be justified or successful.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what proportion of UK fishing effort in fisheries under the provisions of the new Regulation agreed at the Fisheries Council on 22 and 23 March will be exempt from the observer requirement on the basis of the exclusion of *(a)* vessels smaller than 15 metres and *(b)* vessels that are using pingers; [168242]

(2) how many UK fishing vessels will be required to use pingers in gillnet fisheries in areas IV and VII under the provisions of the new regulation agreed at the Fisheries Council on 22 and 23 March, on the basis of current fishing effort. [168244]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Council Regulation laying down measures concerning the incidental catches of cetaceans in fisheries will require member states to design and

implement monitoring schemes to observe bycatch on vessels of 15 metres or over. Such schemes need to provide representative data for bycatch in a range of fisheries. For vessels under 15 metres, members states need ot take steps to collect data on incidental catches by means of appropriate scientific studies or pilot projects. The Regulation is not expected to enter into force until 1 July 2004 and the start date for the monitoring requirements will be 1 January 2005. The UK monitoring scheme will be designed in the coming months and I am therefore not in a position at present to provide detailed data on the coverage or otherwise of the scheme.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when the Government will *(a)* publish and *(b)* implement their Cetacean Bycatch Response Strategy. [168245]

Mr. Bradshaw: I shall be assessing the best way in which to take forward the UK Small Cetacean Bycatch Response Strategy in light of the agreement reached at the March meeting of the EC Agriculture and Fisheries Council to proposals for a new EC Regulation on bycatch.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many UK vessels were fishing in the pelagic trawl fishery in area VII for bass during *(a)* March and *(b)* April on the latest date for which figures are available; how many of these vessels are being monitored for cetacean bycatch by onboard observers; how many are engaged in trialling bycatch mitigation measures; and if she will introduce emergency restrictions on this fishery unless and until effective measures to prevent cetacean bycatch can be put in place. [168247]

Mr. Bradshaw: A maximum of seven pairs of UK vessels were in the pelagic trawl fishery in area VII fishing for bass in March and early April. This has since dropped to one pair of vessels. Defra-funded observers have been onboard two pairs of vessels to monitor bycatch and one pair of vessels has been engaged in trialling mitigation measures since December 2003 as part of Defra-funded research.

I do not rule out action to restrict this fishery but, given the involvement of other member states, Community action would be most effective means of addressing bycatch in this fishery. Consideration of emergency restrictions would be premature before this season's trials of mitigation measures have been completed and the results considered.

Growth Promoters (Animal Feeds)

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the EU ban on the use of antimicrobial growth promoters in animal feeds; and if she will make a statement. [167071]

Mr. Bradshaw: The EU-wide ban on the use of antimicrobial growth promoters comes into effect on 1 January 2006. The VMD collects and publishes annual figures of sales of all veterinary therapeutic and growth promoting antimicrobials to monitor changes in sales of these products. The latest figures available show that sales of antimicrobial growth promoters had reduced to 27 tonnes of active ingredients in 2002.

Officials from the Veterinary Medicines Directorate (VMD) have held a number of discussions with colleagues from Denmark and other countries that have already voluntarily banned the use of antimicrobial growth promoters. They have considered their experiences and the success of the measures put into place to minimise any adverse effects from the loss of these products. In the period following the ban an increase in animal illness had been noticed that lead to an increase in use of therapeutic antimicrobials.

This information is being shared with industry through VMD's regular meetings with the Responsible Use of Medicines In Agriculture (RUMA) alliance. A representative from RUMA also recently attended a meeting of the Defra Antimicrobial Resistance Coordination (DARC) group to discuss this issue. Further such meetings are planned.

Another part of the Government's efforts to help farmers prepare for the ban was to fund a research and development project to look at the potential effects of the withdrawal of antimicrobial growth promoters on the pig industry. The results have shown ways farmers can adapt their herd management to cope with the ban on antimicrobial growth promoters without increasing the risk of disease and therefore the need to treat with therapeutic antimicrobials. Two meetings have been held with pig farmers to inform them of the results. Details of the project can be found at www.vmd.defra.gov.uk.

Japanese Knotweed

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has for a coordinated and strategic approach to the problem of Japanese knotweed. [167851]

Mr. Bradshaw: I am aware of the problems caused by the spread of the introduced non-native plant, Japanese knotweed. Current legislative controls exist under section 14 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981) to prevent its deliberate planting or growing in the wild. The Department is also collaborating with a consortium led by Cornwall County Council to undertake a four-year project researching the natural control of Japanese knotweed. The study began last year and will undertake the necessary research to establish whether natural control is a feasible method for the long-term, sustainable management of Japanese knotweed in the UK.

Recognising the importance of a strategic approach for non-native species policy, the Department recently consulted on the development of a strategy, and officials are currently analysing the responses. It is essential that limited resources are targeted to the most problematic species, and the outcome of the consultation will assist my Department and the Devolved Administrations in developing a strategy that will help prioritise action.

The hon. Member may be interested to learn that in the meantime, my Department has commissioned research to develop a standardised risk assessment system enabling species to be routinely assessed. Following the development and introduction of risk assessment procedures, the aim would be to identify those species constituting the highest risk(s). The risk assessment procedure may also be of use in identifying those established invasive non-native species where action may be appropriate.

Litter (Fines)

Mr. Dhanda: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to allow local councils to keep income from on the spot fines for dropping litter. [169982]

Alun Michael: Section 119 of the Local Government Act 2003, which allows local authorities to keep receipts from litter fixed penalty notices, came into force on 18 November 2003.

Sites of Special Scientific Interest

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs why English Nature did not inform the hon. Member for Totnes of its wish to extend, under section 28C of the Wildlife Countryside Act 1981, the site boundaries of Slapton Ley site of Special Scientific Interest. [167491]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Notification of the boundary extension and addition of interest features, to Slapton Ley Site of Special Scientific Interest was made on 11 February 2004 and in accordance with the requirements specified in the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Also according to those requirements, a public notice appeared in the *Western Morning News* on 17 February 2004. The consultation period on this notification ends on the 11 June 2004. English Nature must decide whether to confirm the notification within nine months. Any unresolved objections will be considered by English Nature's Council at its meeting in September 2004.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many changes to the geographical boundaries of sites of Special Scientific Interest have been made in each of the last three years; and which have *(a)* increased and *(b)* decreased in area. [167492]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* In the last three years there have been 15 geographical changes to SSSIs boundaries made under section 28B and section 28C of the Wildlife And Countryside Act 1981, as amended. Those that have had their areas increased are shown in the list. None of the changes resulted in decreases to a SSSI area.

2001–02

Porlock Ridge and Saltmarsh

River Dee

Thatcham Reed Beds

Dubbie Bank

Ravenhead Brickworks

Total: 5

2002–03

Compton Chine to Steephill Cove

Purfleet Chalk Pit

Crookhill Brick Pit[1]

Ebernoe Common[1]

Eversden and Wimpole Woods

Stour Estuary

Orwell Estuary

Total: 7

2003–04 (to present)

Humber Estuary[1]

Orton Pit[1]

Slapton Ley[1]

Total: 3

1 Changes to these SSSIs have been notified but not yet confirmed, as the nine month period for doing so is on-going.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what changes have been proposed by English Nature to the rules and regulations affecting sites of Special Scientific Interest; and whether the changes as proposed in relation to the Slapton Ley site are part of a national change. [167493]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) are notified and protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (WCA) 1981, as amended by the Countryside and Rights of Way (CROW) Act 2000. No changes to this regime have been proposed by English Nature. Under this regime, English Nature has a duty to notify land as a SSSI, and may amend existing SSSIs, where it is of the opinion that land is of special interest by reason of the flora, fauna or geological or physiographical features. The changes at Slapton Ley SSSI have been notified under section 28C of the WCA 1981.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many sites of special scientific interest there are, broken down by region; and if she will list the additional sites declared in each of the last three years. [167494]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* There are a total of 4,111 sites of special scientific interest (SSSIs) in England. Some SSSIs cross regional boundaries, and will therefore have been double counted in the table below.

Government region	*Number of SSSIs*
Eastern	569
East Midlands	391
London	34
North East	256
North West	442
South East	703
South West	978
West Midlands	446
Yorks	375

19 new SSSIs have been confirmed in the last three years. They are:

2001–2002	2002–2003	2003–2004
Birklands West and Ollerton Corner	Chapel Point to Walla Bank	Slade Brook
Roecliffe Manor Lawns	Caen Valley Bats	
Mattishall Moor	Withcall and South Willingham Tunnels	
Lower Coombe and Ferne Brook Meadow	Normanby Meadows	
Barn Elms Wetland Centre	Stiffkey Valley	
Long Lye Meadows	Briddlesford Copses	
Cranmore Common	Holehaven Creek	
Sutton and Lound Gravel Pits	Harries Ground, Rodbourne	
Beck Dale Meadows	Mottisfont Bats	
Total: 9	Total: 9	Total: 1

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the reasons were for the Standard Types of Operation 19 and 21, in Annex 3 of English Nature's notification under section 28C of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 issued on 11 February 2004 relating to Slapton Ley Site of Special Scientific Interest. [167868]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* English Nature is required under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended, to notify any operations which appear to it to be likely to damage the special interest of the Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). English Nature must consent before any such operations are carried out. I understand from English Nature that Operation 19 and Operation 21 were specified as likely to damage the special interest of Slapton Ley SSSI when the site was re-notified in 1984. They remain applicable to Slapton Ley SSSI because it is considered that such operations would have the potential to cause damage to the site. The legislation requires English Nature to notify any such operations anew when exercising its powers under section 28C of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, as amended.

Civil Servants

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many officials in *(a)* her Department and *(b)* executive agencies reporting to her Department are employed in the Vale of York. [170011]

Alun Michael: Defra has one office located in the Vale of the York. It is the Thirsk office of the Veterinary Laboratories Agency, where 28 officials are employed.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Human Rights

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs whether he plans to sign and ratify the First Optional Protocol to the International Council on Civil and Political Rights on behalf of the United Kingdom. [170185]

Mr. Rammell: The Government are currently reviewing the United Kingdom's position in relation to a number of international human rights instruments. This review includes the First Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, which allows the right of individual petition. We will announce the outcomes of the Review to Parliament as soon as is reasonably possible.

Cyprus

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what his policy is towards *(a)* Cyprus and *(b)* Turkey in the light of the outcome of the referendums in Cyprus on 24 April. [R][169809]

Mr. MacShane: I draw my hon. Friend's attention to the Foreign Secretary's written statement of 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 44–46WS. The statement contained the Government's response to the outcome of the voting on 24 April and referred to the conclusions on Cyprus from the General Affairs and External Relations Council of 26 April 2004. UK policy is fully reflected in these decisions of the European Union, which I very much welcome.

I very much value our close relationship with the Republic of Cyprus. I look forward to this continuing, enhanced by the new dimension of EU membership after 1 May.

Like our EU partners, the UK is keen to see an end to the international isolation of the Turkish Cypriots. This does not mean a change in the government's policy of not recognising the "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus". But the situation in the north of the island has changed—the Turkish Cypriots have expressed a clear desire for a future within the EU, and on the basis of a reunified island. That is our objective too. As we work to achieve it, the EU is committed to addressing the economic disparity between the north and south.

The EU has also welcomed Turkey's constructive approach to the settlement negotiations. The lack of a Cyprus settlement should not impede the opening of accession negotiations on the basis of the Copenhagen criteria. We will continue to work with Turkey to encourage the implementation of the necessary reforms, so that the European Council can take a positive decision in December 2004.

Managed Migration

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how long embassies will retain the passports of citizens of *(a)* Romania and

(b) Bulgaria seeking managed migration employment visas as a result of the conduct of the Ken Sutton inquiry. [170021]

Mr. Mullin: Applications by Romanian and Bulgarian citizens for managed migration visas have been suspended pending the completion of Ken Sutton's inquiry. Passports that are retained by our Embassies in connection with managed migration applications will be held until the application can be resolved, or until the applicant requests the return of their passport in person at the embassy. Applications can be held open despite the return of the passport, if the request is made in person.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what recent discussions he has held with the National Islamic Front Government of the Sudan over the continuing use of Hudud. [168794]

Mr. Mullin: Amputations and flogging are incompatible with international human rights law. We regularly raise the matter with the Sudanese Government, both bilaterally and as part of the EU-Sudan dialogue. Indeed, I discussed the application of hudud punishments with the Sudanese ambassador on 2 December 2003, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for International Development (Hilary Benn), discussed the human rights situation generally with the President of Sudan in Khartoum on 10 December.

Departmental Wine Cellars

Mr. Liddell-Grainger: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many bottles of wine are held by his Department. [162012]

Mr. Rammell: The Foreign and Commonwealth Office does not hold central records of the wines held by UK missions overseas. In the UK, the principal holding is the Government Wine Cellar, managed by Government Hospitality on behalf of all Government Departments. The stock of approximately 37,000 bottles is a mixture of fine wines, less expensive beverage wines and spirits. The cellar is generally stocked by purchasing when they are young and relatively inexpensive and then allowing them to mature. This allows the government to use fully mature wines of considerable value for its hospitality requirements, while representing a considerable saving to the taxpayer compared to the cost of buying mature wines in the open market.

HEALTH

"Winning Ways"

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what progress has been made in setting up a rapid review process for new procedures and products claiming to prevent or control healthcare-associated infection as announced in Winning Ways; [167461]

(2) when he expects the first procedures and products to be reviewed under Winning Ways; and how recommendations will be implemented. [167462]

Mr. Hutton: Action is being taken jointly between officials in the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency, the national health service health technology assessment programme and the Health Protection Agency. We are still exploring the options for this new rapid review process but hope that evaluations will start later this year.

Agency Nurses (Weston Area)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 7 April 2004, refs 163515 to 163518 on public bodies, what he estimates the staff and administration costs have been to his Department of those bodies referred to which are still in existence. [167547]

Ms Rosie Winterton: As the previous reply explained, information on the Department's task forces, ad hoc advisory groups and reviews is given in the annual publication, "Public Bodies". This publication explains that such groups have a short-term focus and when their work comes to an end they are disbanded. These groups are usually created to give expert advice to the Government on a specific issue and are usually expected to remain in operation for less than two years. They are not separate statutory bodies. As such, they have no capacity to employ staff or hold assets in their own right and rely on secretariat and other support from the Department and, sometimes, other interested bodies. They will not normally have any formal separate budget allocated to them, and accountability for expenditure will remain with the body to whom any funding is allocated.

Anaesthesia

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what evaluation he has made of international trials to examine awareness devices that monitor the depth of anaesthesia. [166882]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The New Scientist published on 14 April a research paper from the Alfred hospital in Melbourne, Australia, which reported that the BIS (Bispectral Index) monitor can aid evaluation of the depth of anaesthesia in a patient undergoing surgery. The research recommended that the BIS monitor be used in the small number of operations where there is a high risk of the patient becoming aware during the operation. A different system has been developed at the University of Glasgow. The Auditory Evoked Potential System measures the depth of anaesthesia in a different way to that of the BIS monitor. As further trials are carried out, our understanding of the safety and efficacy of these systems will increase.

Kidney Transplants

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many kidney transplants have been carried out by the NHS in each year since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [168604]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows kidney transplants in the United Kingdom, since April 1997 by financial year.

Transplant type	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Cadaveric kidney	1,426	1,309	1,359	1,308	1,264	1,337	1,330
Living donor kidney	197	241	302	341	372	379	450
All kidney only	1,623	1,550	1,661	1,649	1,636	1,716	1,780
Kidney-pancreas	25	21	25	41	41	48	45
Kidney-liver	18	5	8	9	5	13	10
Kidney/heart	3	3	1	1	3	1	1
Kidney-liver- pancreas	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
Total kidney	1,669	1,580	1,695	1,700	1,685	1,778	1,836

In the UK we have invested in a number of initiatives to boost organ donation. Between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004 there were 2,854 transplants—the highest number of organ transplants in seven years. The highest number of patients for fourteen years received a kidney-only transplant with living donation now representing one in four of all kidney-only transplants. We saw a 20 per cent. increase in non-heartbeating donation and more than 800,000 people added their names to the NHS organ donor register.

Knee/Hip Operations

Mr. Battle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many replacement *(a)* knee and *(b)* hip joint operations have been carried out in each year since 1980. [168603]

Mr. Hutton: The following table shows the counts of finished consultant episodes for knee and hip replacement operations carried out in national health service hospitals in England for the years 1989–1990 to 2002–03. The Department is unable to provide data before 1989–1990, as the data collected before that year is not directly comparable to the hospital episode statistics currently collected.

	Count of hip replacement operations	Count of knee replacement operations
1989–90	51,732	12,817
1990–91	51,276	14,464
1991–92	56,973	17,688
1992–93	59,033	20,404
1993–94	60,363	23,052
1994–95	65,158	26,125
1995–96	66,436	29,750
1996–97	64,507	27,150
1997–98	63,033	27,592
1998–99	70,101	32,761
1999–2000	70,672	33,750
2000–01	73,444	37,412
2001–02	72,788	39,132
2002–03	77,902	46,036

Source:
Hospital episode statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Medication Review Curriculum

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made towards developing a medication review curriculum for *(a)* providers of education and *(b)* those seeking training on medication reviews; and if he will make a statement. [168708]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is not responsible for setting curricula for health professional training; that is rightly the responsibility of the statutory and professional bodies. However, we do share a commitment with those bodies that all health professionals are trained so that they have the skills and knowledge to deliver a high quality health service to all groups of the population with whom they deal.

National Service Frameworks

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what specific funding has been allocated for the implementation of each of the national service frameworks in each of the last three years. [168805]

Mr. Hutton: For 2002–03, there was limited earmarking of funds within health authorities' revenue allocations. The following sums formed part of the allocations with the intention that they were spent on the purpose for which they were included:

£76 million for cancer;

£60 million for CHD; and

£75 million for mental health.

For 2003–04 to 2005–06 there has been no earmarking of funds within primary care trust revenue allocations. None of the growth money has been identified for specific purposes.

Neurosurgical Consultants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many neurosurgical consultants are expected to retire in each of the next five years. [167060]

Mr. Hutton: Analysis of recent past data suggests that if we take account of those leaving for career breaks and other reasons, as well as those leaving for retirement, a total of around 11 or 12 neurosurgical consultants leave each year. This is more than offset by the number of new joiners, rejoiners and those recruited through various recruitment and retention initiatives. We would not expect the number of leavers to change very much over time.

North Bristol NHS Trust

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much has been lent by the NHS Bank to North Bristol NHS Trust in *(a)* 2002–03 and *(b)* 2003–04; and how much is expected to be lent in *(c)* 2004–05 and *(d)* 2005–06 and beyond; how much of this is expected to be repaid, and over what timescale; and if he will make a statement. [169014]

Ms Rosie Winterton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* Applications for NHS Bank assistance are made on behalf of national health service trusts by the managing strategic health authority (SHA). The North Bristol

trust received the following sums from the overall sums made available to Avon Gloucestershire and Wiltshire SHA area.

	£ million
2002–2003	0
2003–2004	18.1

Final decisions have not been made on the level of special assistance for the SHA, but they expect the North Bristol trust to receive £20 million in 2004–05. No decision has been made on funding for 2005–06.

Decisions on recovery of funds will be determined at a later stage and may well involve reductions to capital resources as well as or instead of revenue.

Patient Experience

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 7 April 2004, ref. 162425, on Patient Experience, if he will set out how the money for the Patient Experience project was spent. [167398]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The project sought the views of patients, the public and national health service staff to understand the key components of a positive patient experience.

The total cost of the patient experience project was £39,722.60. This figure can be broken down into the project fee and miscellaneous expenses, as shown in the tables.

	£
Project fee	36,190.00
Miscellaneous expenses	3,532.60
Total cost of project	39,722.60

These figures can be further broken down as follows:

	£
Project fee	
2 x 1 day workshops with patients (@ £8,000 each)	16,000
2 x groups with the public (@ £2,000 each)	4,000
2 x mini-groups with young people (@ £1,600 each)	3,200
3 x depth interviews with people with mental health problems (@ £600 each)	1,800
2 x groups with health practitioners (@ £2,500 each)	5,000
30 x on-street interviews with public	800
VAT (17.5 per cent. of £30,800)	5,390
Total Project Fee (excluding miscellaneous expenses)	36,190
Miscellaneous expenses	
Technical costs	1035.10
Accommodation and venue hire	1145.64
Travel expenses	825.58
VAT (17.5 per cent. of £3,007.32)	526.28
Total Miscellaneous Expenses (including VAT)	3532.60

Pension Schemes

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 865W, on pension schemes, how many people have *(a)* transferred their pensions into the NHS scheme and *(b)* been refused such transfers in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [168047]

Mr. Hutton: The number of transfer payments accepted by the National Health Service Pension Scheme in England and Wales for each of the last five years is shown in the table. The NHS Pensions Agency does not record information about transfer applications that are rejected.

1 April to 31 March	*Transfer payments accepted*
2003–04	8,129
2002–03	8,223
2001–02	7,781
2000–01	7,591
1999–2000	8,382

HOME DEPARTMENT

Operation Artemis

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department, under (1) what authority police officers on Operation Artemis ask gamekeepers to sign a pledge supporting the Operation; and what penalty applies to any gamekeeper who refuses to do so; [167194]

(2) what precedent there is for members of the public being asked to sign a pledge in support of a police operation; [167195]

(3) what statutory basis there is for police officers on Operation Artemis to demand access to private land without a search warrant; [167196]

(4) what the cost is of Operation Artemis. [167198]

Ms Blears: Police officers have no legal authority to ask gamekeepers to sign a pledge supporting Operation Artemis. Police officers request that pledge but nobody is compelled to make it impracticable to visit each person to ask them to sign a pledge. Operation Artemis is innovative in that it has identified and seeks to raise awareness specifically amongst those who may have a motive for committing offences against Hen Harriers. Given the numbers of breeding birds the Police service considered it possible to visit many of those persons who may have a motive for criminal action. The purpose of such visits is to make people aware of the importance of complying with the criminal law and advising them individually that the Police would be embarking upon enforcement action against those who choose not to comply with the law and commit criminal offences. The request to sign up to Operation Artemis amounts to confirmation that such advice has been received.

Police officers have no power to demand access to private land. They have powers to enter such land without search warrants if they have reasonable suspicion that certain offences may have taken place or under other authorities to carry out operations such as surveillance.

The statutory basis allowing police officers on Operation Artemis in England and Wales to enter any land without a search warrant is Section 19 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981.

The costs of Operation Artemis cannot be quantified as in the main they have been met from existing Police budgets utilising officers whose duties are to address wildlife crime .Costs relating to the production of literature and other media have been met from contributions made by the Home Office, Defra and the Statutory Nature Conservation Organisations. The Home Office has provided 3,500 for CCTV cameras at nesting sites.

International Terrorism

Mr. Robathan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what extra funding has been directed to individual constabularies to make contingency preparations, including training and extra manpower, for the possibility of terrorist attack; and to which constabularies such funding has been directed. [168046]

Ms Blears: We are unable to provide details of the allocation of counter terrorist funding for individual forces for security reasons. However the Police Service in England and Wales will receive a total of £84 million in 2004–05 for the purposes of countering the increased threat from international terrorism since September 2001.

Animal Experiments

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what provision is made to alleviate the suffering of animals in xenotransplantation experiments. [165852]

Caroline Flint: Xenotransplantation is the grafting, or transplantation, of cells, tissues or organs between species. It encompasses a wide range of techniques from the injection of cells to solid organ transplantation. As with all research licensed under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986, suffering in xenotransplantation experiments is minimised by removing causes of pain and distress and implementing measures to detect and alleviate any suffering that is caused. In the case of surgical procedures this would include the use of appropriate analgesic and anaesthetic regimens and other forms of post-operative care.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make it his policy to commission an evaluation of the efficacy of animal experimentation. [167249]

Caroline Flint: The Government have no plans to do so.

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment the Government have made of the level of harassment of suppliers and customers of businesses regulated under the Animals (Scientific Procedures) Act 1986. [167399]

Caroline Flint: From correspondence and meetings with victims of intimidation, we are well aware of the seriousness of animal rights extremism for the bioscience sector and for companies doing business with the sector. The Government have made it clear that intimidation and harassment of those going about their lawful business is totally unacceptable.

Asylum Seekers

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department for what reasons the asylum appeals of *(a)* Fariborz Gravindi, *(b)* Mokhtar Haydary and *(c)* Faroq Haidari were dismissed; under what circumstances they would be allowed to remain in the UK; and what representations he has received on their cases. [163129]

Mr. Browne: All Home Office records relating to individuals are confidential. I am therefore not able to comment on individual cases. I have however written to the hon. Member.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of failed asylum seekers absconded in the last 12 months. [165835]

Mr. Browne: Information on the number or proportion of asylum applicants who have absconded is not available except by examination of individual case-files at disproportionate cost.

Some asylum seekers who have 'absconded' may have left the UK voluntarily; others may remain in the UK illegally. Applicants do not always inform the Immigration Service prior to leaving the UK. We are making improvements in the area of contact management as detailed in the White Paper: Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain, paragraph 4.42.

CCTV

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Heywood and Middleton since 1997. [168536]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £209,536 to Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council, which includes the Heywood and Middleton constituency.

Allocation of that funding locally is a matter for Rochdale Metropolitan Borough Council and the Greater Manchester police. The information is not held centrally.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV cameras in Stalybridge and Hyde since 1997. [168735]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £337,000 to Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council, which includes the Stalybridge and Hyde constituency.

Allocation of that funding locally, is a matter for Tameside Metropolitan Borough Council and the Greater Manchester police. The information is not held centrally.

Drugs Misuse

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Burnley in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [168318]

Caroline Flint: The amount spent on tackling drug misuse in Burnley in 1997–98 was £670,000. This was prior to the formation of the National Drugs Strategy, and this figure has been provided from locally held information.

Figures are not available for Burnley alone in 2003–04. The figures for Lancashire as a whole were:

	£
Pooled Treatment Budget	3,980,000
Young People	735,000
Building Safer Communities	1,147,000
DAT CAD	48,000
DAT Development	70,000
Through Care and Aftercare	35,000
Total	6,015,000

Please note that the Building Safer Communities figure is only partly spent on tackling drugs.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Heywood and Middleton in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [168537]

Caroline Flint: Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available in the form requested as funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) area (Rochdale DAT).

The period for 1997–98 is prior to the formation of the National Drug Strategy and there is no locally held information on funding available for that financial year.

The figures for Rochdale as a whole for 2003–04 are as follows:

	£
Pooled Treatment:	1,023,000
Young People (including CJIP)	241,000
Building Safer Communities	297,000
DAT CAD	31,000
DAT Development	37,000
CJIP Capacity Building	178,000
Throughcare and Aftercare	62,000
Total	1,869,000

Please note that the Building Safer Communities Fund is only partly spent on tackling drugs.

Linda Perham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was spent by the Government on crime reduction, protection and security in the London Borough of Redbridge since 1997. [164879]

Ms Blears: Money allocated to the London Borough of Redbridge for crime reduction through a number of funding streams and for a range of projects totals £2,267,311 over the period 2000–2004. Figures before 2000 are not readily available.

For protection and security, this information is not available in the form requested. However, the Metropolitan police did receive £47 million in 2003–04 for the purposes of enhancing its ability to respond to the threat posed by international terrorism.

Dangerous Driving

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to increase penalties for drivers who cause accidents *(a)* while banned from driving and *(b)* who do not have the required (i) insurance and (ii) MOT cover. [169068]

Caroline Flint: Where an accident appears to be the result of an offence, the driver will be prosecuted for the appropriate offence or offences committed. We have recently increased the maximum penalty for causing death offences to 14 years.

Charges in respect of driving while disqualified, with no insurance or with no MOT cover can be brought whether or not a driver has been involved in an accident. The maximum penalties are respectively six months' imprisonment or a fine at Level 5 on the standard scale, a fine at Level 5 and a fine at either Level 3 or Level 4 according to the number of passengers a vehicle is adapted to carry. We have no current plans to increase these maxima.

Mobile Phones

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what resources he has devoted to enforcing new laws to combat driving while using mobile phones. [169027]

Caroline Flint: The new, specific, offence of using a hand-held phone while driving is intended to provide a simple, objective offence the enforcement and prosecution of which does not depend on judgments of degree of control or carelessness. The Association of Chief Police Officers have welcomed it as a straightforward method of dealing with this dangerous behaviour. The allocation of resources is a matter for individual chief officers and the police will enforce the offence as operationally appropriate.

NCIS

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what representations he or his Department have had from *(a)* Greater Manchester police, *(b)* South Wales police and *(c)* the UK Immigration Service regarding their future working relationship with the National Criminal Intelligence Service or the Serious and Organised Crime Agency. [166601]

Ms Blears: None.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the likely effects of the proposed new powers of the Serious and Organised Crime Agency on client confidentiality in relation to the work of tax advisers and accountants. [167513]

Ms Blears: We have invited comments on the proposals in the White Paper, One Step Ahead, A 21st Century Strategy to Defeat Organised Crime, by 30 July. We will consider those comments carefully before introducing any new powers.

Substance Abuse

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answers of 19 April, *Official Report*, column 116W, on substance abuse, what mechanisms he uses to gauge the level of misuse of volatile substances by young people. [168597]

Caroline Flint: Information on the use of volatile substances among young people aged 11–15 years is collected in an annual national survey of secondary schoolchildren commissioned by the Department of Health. "Drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England in 2003" was based on 10,000 completed questionnaires from 321 schools in England. The survey showed eight per cent reported taking volatile substances in 2003, compared with six per cent in 2002 and seven per cent in 2001. The Home Office also produces its own statistics on general drug usage through its British Crime Survey. The last figures published were for the year 2002–2003.

Under-12s Concession

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the decision was made to withdraw the concession for under-12s to join a parent in the UK; and when the information was posted on the Immigration and Nationality Directorate website. [167969]

Mr. Browne: Following careful consideration, my predecessor, my right hon. Friend the Member for Stretford and Urmston (Beverley Hughes), decided on 13 March 2003 to withdraw the Under 12 Concession with effect from 29 March 2003.

The section of the Immigration and Nationality Directorate website relating to children was updated on 12 August 2003. However, a different section of the website relating to spouses and maintenance and accommodation was found to contain a reference to the concession only recently and was amended on 13 April 2004.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Water Services

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission what change in water consumption was achieved by the rationalisation of water services undertaken in 1999–2000 in *(a)* actual and *(b)* percentage terms. [169858]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The rationalisation of water services was designed to improve water quality and meet required legal standards. It was not a consumption saving measure. There was therefore no change in water consumption as a result of this rationalisation.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Official Photographs

Bob Spink: To ask the Leader of the House if he will place in the Library the most recent set of official photographs taken in the House while it was sitting. [168878]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: I have been asked to reply.

I understand that Mr. Speaker will be considering this matter shortly.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Mobile Telephone Industry (Hacking)

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with the mobile telephone industry to reduce the vulnerability to hacking of Bluetooth-enabled telephones and wireless headsets. [169237]

Mr. Timms: DTI officials are in regular contact with mobile industry bodies and have raised this issue with them.

All Bluetooth devices adhere to the Bluetooth technical specification in order to ensure worldwide compatibility. Action to address the vulnerability of Bluetooth enabled devices to hacking would therefore need to be taken at the international level to be effective across all devices. However, not all Bluetooth devices are vulnerable to this security threat.

I understand that the industry is working both to address the vulnerability of all new devices (of the type affected) to hacking, and to tackle the present threat.

Civil Partnerships

Mr. Leigh: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 861W, on civil partnerships, whether legal rights and benefits to which married couples are entitled have not been included in the Civil Partnership Bill. [169142]

Ms Hewitt *[holding answer 28 April 2004]:* The purpose of the Civil Partnership Bill is to establish a new legal relationship for same-sex couples and to enable those couples who register as civil partners of each other to access many of the legal rights and responsibilities to which married couples are entitled. The Government have therefore aimed to provide parity of treatment for civil partners.

Departmental Entertainment

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what her latest estimate is of the amount spent by her Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [168998]

Ms Hewitt: The following table shows the expenditure on entertainment by the Department of Trade and Industry in each year between 1999–2000 and 2003–04.

	£000
1999–2000	887
2000–01	1,089
2001–02	1,165
2002–03	1,311
2003–04	1,110

Notes:
1. The expenditure represents less than 0.016 per cent. of the Department's total gross expenditure.

2. The Department expects expenditure for 2004-05 to be of a similar order.
3. Figures for earlier periods are not available on a consistent basis.

Post Office Closures

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions a decision to close a post office in Scotland as part of the urban reinvention programme was reversed following the six week consultation in the last five years. [169902]

Mr. Timms: Decisions on post office closures are an operational matter for Post Office Ltd. and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make electronically accessible the Royal Mail's estimates of delivery times for the Isle of Wight under the single delivery reforms, broken down by postcode. [169730]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* Delivery times are the operational concern of Royal Mail Group and I have therefore asked the Chief Executive to reply direct to the hon. Member.

Renewable Energy

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent meetings *(a)* she and *(b)* the Minister for Energy have had with organisations concerned with development of the renewable energy industries. [167370]

Mr. Timms: Both my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry and I regularly meet with groups and organisations concerned with the development of the renewable energy industry. I have attended numerous events outside the Department for discussions about renewable energy. For example, on Monday I addressed the Investing in Renewable Energy Conference in the City of London.

Science Strategy

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps she has taken to enhance science in her Department since the publication of the Government's science strategy, Investing in Innovation. [162244]

Ms Hewitt: DTI is responsible for the bulk of the public expenditure on science and technology research in UK universities, promotes the exploitation of science and engineering in business innovation and uses science to inform its own policies.

The Department will invest over £2.7 billion on university research and business innovation in 2004–2005. In the Budget, the Chancellor announced the Government's intention to establish a 10-year framework for science and innovation, which will be informed by a consultation document as part of the 2004 spending review. Our aim is to grow public investment in the science base faster than the trend rate of GDP growth over the next spending review period.

The Innovation Report, published in December 2003, sets out our strategy for refocusing DTI's support for business innovation by targeting our innovation investment into a limited number of fields of research, but ensuring that our intervention brings coherence to other support from the public and private sectors and makes a positive difference to outcomes in terms of business productivity and competitiveness.

TRANSPORT

Battersea Park Station

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what discussions he has had with Network Rail about improvements to Battersea Park Station. [168859]

Mr. McNulty: Network Rail and the Strategic Rail Authority continue to hold discussions on this issue and to update my officials on progress. I understand that Network Rail and Parkview International are currently in negotiations over a proposal that both parties hope will conclude in the near future, enabling the scheme to take place.

Departmental Events

Mr. Damian Green: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will list the conferences and seminars that his Department organised between 1 September 2003 and 28 February 2004, detailing the cost of each. [166463]

Mr. McNulty: The Department communicates where appropriate with organisations through conferences and holds internal conferences and seminars in the course of normal management. The following table lists conferences and seminars organised by the central Department during the period.

Conference purpose	*Cost (£)*
Social inclusion issues	
Funding issues for community transport	900
Transport needs of minority ethnic and faith communities	30,000
Research into transport needs of disabled people	3,200
Road safety	
'Kerbcraft' child road safety seminar	2,500
Urban safety management	12,600
Railways	
'Rail matters' rail industry conference	14,300
Modernising customer services for drivers and vehicle operators	
Four commercial operator workshops	30,000
Three one-stop service planning workshops	14,000
Financial management	
Internal audit seminar	12,000
Audit annual conference	9,500
Workshop on improving financial management	5,400
Regional transport	
Policy seminar	1,500
Communication	
Workshop on improving communication	12,500

Conference purpose	Cost (£)
Departmental management	
Two senior management group workshops	10,125
Information technology	
IT User Group seminar	5,230
Transport security	
Six roadshows on ship and port security	995
Science	
Two chief scientists' seminars	2,300
Hydrogen and biofuels seminar	1,230
Logistics and Maritime Transport	
Norduck Conference (Scandinavian and UK Transport Ministers and Trade Associations)	3,035
Ports and the Environment Conference	5,000

Railway Improvements (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the likely effects of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of Burnley. [167885]

Mr. McNulty: Residents of Burnley will benefit from the new TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February. The franchise secures investment of around £260 million which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region. A new northern franchise, which will include local and regional services through Burnley, is out for tender. Work continues on the West Coast Main Line upgrade, which will see a reduction in journey times on services to and from Manchester and Preston and an increase in service frequency.

Transport Infrastructure

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of Heywood and Middleton. [168550]

Mr. McNulty: A new northern franchise, which will include local and regional services directly serving Heywood and Middleton, is out for tender. Residents of Heywood and Middleton will benefit from the new TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February, serving the main towns and cities across the north. The franchise secures investment of around £260 million which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region. Work continues on the West Coast Main Line upgrade, which will see a reduction in journey times on services to and from Manchester and Preston and an increase in service frequency.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of Stalybridge and Hyde. [168732]

Mr. McNulty: Residents of Stalybridge and Hyde will benefit from the new TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February. The franchise secures investment of around £260 million which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region. A new northern franchise, which will include local and regional services through the constituency, is out for tender. Work continues on the West Coast Main Line upgrade, which will see a reduction in journey times on services to and from Manchester and Preston and an increase in service frequency.

TREASURY

Connexions

Charles Hendry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer, (1) what *(a)* discussions and *(b)* correspondence he has had with the Secretary of State for Education and Skills concerning the written encouragement issued by the Department for Education and Skills to Connexions partnerships to improve their tax efficiency; [169976]

(2) whether Connexions Service private contractors are able to reclaim VAT. [169980]

John Healey: HM Customs and Excise have clarified the VAT rules with DfES and Connexions. It is a matter for the DfES how funding for the Connexions programme is allocated, and a matter for individual connexions partnerships how they organise their VAT affairs.

Private contractors subcontracted to provide services to a Connexions partnership must charge VAT, and this means that under the normal rules they are also entitled to recover the VAT, they pay on the items they purchase.

Limited companies established by Connexions partnerships to deliver Connexions services are not carrying out any business activity and therefore do not charge VAT and are unable to recover any VAT they incur.

Local authorities tasked with delivering Connexions services will normally be able to recover any VAT they incur under section 33 of the VAT Act 1994, as they do for other services they deliver.

Council Tax (Pensioners)

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what mechanism will be used to deliver the £100 council tax payment to pensioners aged over 70 years announced in the 2004 Budget; and when it will be paid. [168992]

Malcolm Wicks: I have been asked to reply.

The intention is for the payments to be made automatically with the 2004–05 winter fuel payment, to those who are eligible and who do not need to claim it, before the end of the year. People who do not get a winter fuel payment will need to claim the one-off payment from the Department for Work and Pensions before 31 March 2005.

Gender Equality Directive

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the *(a)* financial and *(b)* regulatory impact to (i) consumers and (ii) business of the Gender Equality Directive with regard to risk-based pricing in relation to gender; and if he will make a statement on the Government's policy on this issue. [169808]

Ruth Kelly: The Government have welcomed the development of European sex discrimination legislation through an Equal Treatment Directive but are concerned about the impacts, both on consumers and on the insurance industry, of the measures aimed at actuarial pricing of insurance and related financial services. The UK will continue to negotiate constructively to achieve a final agreement that reflects UK priorities and concerns.

VAT (Learning and Skills Council)

Charles Hendry: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer on which transactions and activities relating to the provision of services the Learning and Skills Council is entitled to reclaim VAT costs. [169974]

John Healey: Under the normal VAT rules, VAT registered organisations can recover any tax they incur on purchases which relate to their taxable business activities.

HM Customs and Excise is debarred by statute from disclosing information about the affairs of individual taxpayers. Exemption 15 (Statutory and other restrictions) of the Open Government Code applies.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Age-Related Payments Bill

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions under what circumstances he expects to use the powers in the Age-Related Payments Bill to make payments to pensioners under the age of 70. [169241]

Malcolm Wicks: The affirmative regulation making power allows for ad-hoc payments to pensioners and the circumstances for the making of such payments will be determined at the time. If such regulations are made they will be debated in Parliament and subject to the approval of both Houses.

Council Tax

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people aged over 70 years are in receipt of council tax benefit in Scotland, broken down by *(a)* local authority area and *(b)* parliamentary constituency. [167821]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested.

The number of council tax benefit recipients aged over 70 in Scotland at May 2002 is 179,000.

Notes:

1. The data refers to benefit units, which may be a single person or couple.
2. The figure is rounded to the nearest thousand.
3. Council tax benefit data excludes second adult rebate cases.
4. The figure refers to cases where the claimant and/or partner are aged over 70.
5. The figure is based on a 1 per cent. sample and therefore subject to a degree of sampling variation.

Source:

Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Management Information System, Annual 1 per cent. sample, taken in May 2002.

External Consultants

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to his answer of 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 666W, on external consultants, what the cost of the external consultants for each of the projects listed was. [170105]

Jane Kennedy: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

National Insurance Rebates

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his latest estimate is of expenditure on national insurance rebates for those who are contracted out of the state second pension *(a)* in 2006–07 and *(b)* for each of the next 10 financial years. [167280]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is in the table:

Tax year	*Estimated rebate cost (£ billion)*
2006–07	12.7
2007–08	12.2
2008–09	12.5
2009–10	12.8
2010–11	13.1
2011–12	13.5
2012–13	13.5
2013–14	13.8
2014–15	14.2
2015–16	14.6
2016–17	15.0

Note:

Figures are based on the assumptions used to determine the current national insurance rebates and those for the long-term Public Expenditure Survey undertaken in February 2004.

Source:

Government Actuary's Department

Nursing Home Residents (Benefits)

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many claimants for winter fuel payments were disallowed because of late application in *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2002–03. [167298]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of winter fuel payment claims disallowed because of a late application is in the table.

Year	*Late claim disallowances made*
2001–02	10,308 in respect of winter 2000–01
2002–03	1,745 in respect of winter 2000–01
	4,564 in respect of winter 2001–02
2003–04	1,760 in respect of winter 2000–01
	2,204 in respect of winter 2001–02
	3,948 in respect of winter 2002–03

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions for what reasons Mr. G. Mack of Bradenstoke, Chippenham, Wiltshire had his winter fuel payment disallowed in *(a)* 2001–02 and *(b)* 2002–03. [167299]

Malcolm Wicks: I will write privately to the hon. Member clarifying matters in respect of Mr. Mack. This is in line with paragraph 12, part 2, of the code of practice on Access to Government Information.

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions by what mechanism a pensioner is informed of eligibility for winter fuel payment where, through clerical error, their details do not appear on the Electoral Register. [167300]

Malcolm Wicks: Most payments are made automatically without the need to claim. Every effort is made to try and contact those who are newly eligible, however there will be some where sufficient details are not held. For those people who do need to make a claim an extensive publicity campaign is carried out. This begins three months before the qualifying week in September and continues to the end of March. The campaign includes: advertisements in national and local press; a leaflet and poster made available in a variety of venues, a dedicated winter fuel payment helpline and information on the internet.

Where a person needs to claim it is up to them whether they do so. They have until 30 March to make a claim.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Manchester, Gorton have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [167343]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Manchester, Gorton constituency who have received a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	10,370
2000–01	11,000
2001–02	10,870
2002–03	10,820
2003–04	10,625

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run, i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claims had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in a residential or nursing home have been ineligible for the winter fuel payment in each year since its introduction. [168160]

Malcolm Wicks: We estimate in the year 2002–03 about 16,450 people in residential or nursing homes in Great Britain were ineligible for a Winter Fuel Payment because they were receiving Income Support or income based Jobseekers Allowance. The figures for winter 2003–04 are not yet available but we would expect the numbers to be similar. Figures are not available for earlier years.

Note:
Any residence where there are four or more residents aged 60 or over is assumed to be a Registered Care and Nursing Home.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners in a residential nursing home have been in receipt of the minimum income guarantee and pension credit in each year since 1997. [168161]

Malcolm Wicks: Information on the number of pensioners in a nursing home and residential care who were or are in receipt of minimum income guarantee (MIG) or pension credit from November 1997 to November 2003 is shown in tables 1, 2 and 3. The figures are affected by changes made to Residential Care/ Nursing Home funding arrangements in 2002 and 2003.

Table 1: Income support recipients aged 60 and over in nursing homes and residential care, November 1997 to November 2001

Thousand

		Preserved rights			
As at November	*All*	*Residential allowance*	*Residential care*	*Nursing home*	*Part III accommodation*
1997	239.5	152.7	44.8	35.3	6.7
1998	230.6	160.9	36.0	27.3	6.4
1999	225.9	169.5	30.1	20.3	6.1
2000	218.4	171.8	25.3	16.0	5.3
2001	214.8	175.2	21.7	12.8	5.1

Table 2: Income support recipients aged 60 and over in nursing homes and residential care, November 2002

Thousand

	All	*Residential allowance*	*Part III accommodation*	*Others in nursing homes and residential care*
November 2002	186.8	132.8	3.9	40.1

Table 3: Pension credit recipients in nursing homes and residential care, November 2003

Thousand

	Number of recipients
November 2003	157.4

Notes:

1. Figures have been rounded to the nearest hundred and expressed in thousands.
2. Figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample and are subject to a degree of sampling variation.
3. 'Recipients aged 60 and over' are defined as where the recipient and/or partner is aged 60 or over. Figures therefore include a number of recipients aged under 60 where there is a partner aged 60 or over.
4. 'Part III accommodation' was accommodation provided by the local authority under Part III of the National Assistance Act 1948.
5. There are no separate counts available for Residential Care and Nursing Homes after the abolition of preserved rights in April 2002.
6. Pension Credit was introduced on 6 October 2003 and replaced Minimum Income Guarantee for Income Support pensioners.
7. The number of Pension Credit recipients in November 2003 excludes a small number of cases still receiving Income Support.

Pension Credit

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what comparison has been made in take up rates for pension credit between rural and urban areas; and what causes he ascribes to the lower rate of increase in claims for pension credit in inner city areas in comparison to other areas. [166884]

Malcolm Wicks: It is not possible to provide detailed comparisons of levels of pension credit take-up between rural and urban areas, since estimates of numbers of households eligible for pension credit are not available at any level below that of Government office region. However, the information in the table shows the level of increase in numbers of households receiving pension credit as at 31 March 2004 over numbers receiving the minimum income guarantee (MIG) as at 3 October 2003, for local authorities classified as either 'rural' or 'not rural'. This suggests that overall rates of increase in 'not rural' areas are in general lower than in their rural counterparts. Overall, there has been an increase of 31 per cent. in the number of households receiving pension credit over those receiving MIG and an increase of 37 per cent. in the area including Newport, West.

More detailed analysis of pension credit take-up levels is being carried out.

Comparison of rate of increase between rural and not rural MIG and pension credit household levels as at 31 March 2004

Total	*Number local authorities*	*MIG households October*	*Pension credit households March*	*Household increase*	*Percentage increase*
National					
Not rural	240	1,352,355	1,769,397	417,042	31
Rural	168	443,485	632,453	188,968	43
Total	408	1,795,840	2,401,850	606,010	34
East of England					
Not rural	26	77,490	104,996	27,506	35
Rural	22	59,165	85,118	25,953	44
Total	48	136,655	190,114	53,459	39
East Midlands					
Not rural	20	79,345	106,000	26,655	34
Rural	20	43,905	62,859	18,954	43
Total	40	123,250	168,839	45,609	37
London					
Not rural	33	214,170	255,698	41,528	19
Rural	0	0	0	0	0
North East					
Not rural	17	97,175	131,812	34,637	36
Rural	6	8,895	12,761	3,866	43
Total	23	106,070	144,573	38,503	36
North West					
Not rural	30	214,545	278,010	63,465	30
Rural	13	33,190	46,895	13,705	41
Total	43	247,735	324,905	77,170	31
Scotland					
Not rural	18	139,025	179,752	40,727	29
Rural	14	50,030	68,852	18,822	38
Total	32	189,055	248,604	59,549	31
South East					
Not rural	36	91,560	127,830	36,270	40
Rural	31	80,685	117,001	36,316	45
Total	67	172,245	244,831	72,586	42
South West					
Not rural	14	66,165	93,827	27,662	42
Rural	31	74,255	109,087	34,832	47

Comparison of rate of increase between rural and not rural MIG and pension credit household levels as at 31 March 2004

Total	*Number local authorities*	*MIG households October*	*Pension credit households March*	*Household increase*	*Percentage increase*
Total	45	140,420	202,914	62,494	45
Wales					
Not rural	13	70,470	94,385	23,915	34
Rural	9	34,865	47,141	12,276	35
Total	22	105,335	141,526	36,191	34
West Midlands					
Not rural	21	159,345	207,150	47,805	30
Rural	14	29,920	42,182	12,262	41
Total	34	189,265	249,331	60,066	32
Yorks and Humber					
Not rural	12	143,065	189,938	46,873	33
Rural	9	28,575	40,556	11,981	42
Total	21	171,640	230,494	58,854	34

Pensions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will publish the results of the pilot exercise for combined pension forecasts carried out with certain employers and pension providers according to "A New Contract for Welfare: Partnership in Pensions", page 90; what steps his Department has taken towards a national roll out of these exercises; and if he will make a statement. [166249]

Malcolm Wicks: The Combined Pensions Forecasting service, an initiative jointly pursued by the Department for Work and Pensions and the pensions industry with the support of the Association of British Insurers and National Association of Pension Funds, was introduced following a series of pilot exercises with representatives from the private sector.

The pilot evaluation was carried out on a confidential basis with employers and pension providers. However, a summary of the results was included in "Simplicity, security and choice: Working and saving for retirement" (pages 43–45. Command 5677) published in December 2002.

We are currently conducting further research into the combined pension forecast service with results due to be published in the summer of this year.

Following the pilots, the combined pension forecasting service went live in October 2001. By the end of March 2004, a total of 1.12 million Combined Pension Forecasts had been issued. To date over 700 employers and pension providers have expressed an interest in participating in the service. By the end of 2005–06 we aim to have reached 6.3 million people.

Mr. Miller: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what progress he has made in identifying pension funds that have gone into wind-up with inadequate funds to meet their liabilities since Royal Assent to the Pensions Act 1996. [168862]

Malcolm Wicks: Information is not available on all the pension schemes which have gone into wind up with inadequate funds since Royal Assent to the Pensions Act 1995. We are currently exploring with pension scheme trustees and other industry representatives the basis on which we can establish firm estimates of the extent of the problem of defined benefit schemes winding-up under funded, the numbers affected and the potential scale of losses.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether local authorities will be liable for the pension protection fund levy. [168164]

Malcolm Wicks: Local authority defined benefit pension schemes will not be liable for the pension protection fund levy as they will never have recourse to PPF assistance. This is because the sponsoring employers of local government pension schemes can never become insolvent.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many full-time equivalent Pension Protection Fund staff he expects to employ; and if he will make a statement. [168987]

Malcolm Wicks: The way in which the PPF is organised and the staffing requirements which will flow from that organisational design will ultimately be a decision for the PPF Board. However we are having to make a number of planning assumptions in order to ensure that the PPF is operational by Spring next year. Our current working assumption is to have a core staff of between 100 and 150 full time equivalent people in place for spring 2005.

The PPF is a major new reform, and we will ensure that we continue to engage thoroughly with all our partners to get it right.

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what his policy is on the rights of individuals to continue to work *(a)* part-time and *(b)* full-time after retirement; and what rules apply to pension provision in such circumstances. [166885]

Malcolm Wicks: Giving people the choice to work up to and beyond State Pension age is critical to ensure the economic prosperity of our society in terms of both work and pensions. Individuals must have the choice and opportunity to work, either full or part time, and save longer towards a financially secure retirement. Flexible working and retirement options can be

especially important for individuals who have had interrupted working lives, or have on-going caring responsibilities to balance alongside their work.

In 'Simplicity, security and choice: Working and saving for retirement' (December 2002) we set out our proposals to help individuals continue in full time or part time work longer. These included extra back to work help for those over 50, more generous incentives for deferring state pensions, tax rule changes to allow people to draw their occupational pension while continuing to work for the same employer and encouraging occupational pensions to support flexible retirement.

The Finance Bill will introduce a simplified pension regime which increases choice and flexibility for both companies operating pension schemes and individuals saving in such schemes. The Finance Bill will mean that it will no longer be necessary for an individual to leave employment in order to access an employer's occupational pension. The tax rules will no longer dictate that an individual cannot receive their pension and continue to work for that same employer. This increased flexibility will enable people to move from full-time to part-time work and help to make the transition from work to retirement a more smooth and gradual process.

In this year's Budget we also announced a new high profile national guidance campaign to raise employers' awareness of, and ability to adopt, flexible employment and retirement opportunities in order to increase the recruitment, training and retention of older workers.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions pursuant to the answer of 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1030W, on pensions, if he will list the gross costs of the proposal referred to in footnote two and each of the offsets identified in footnotes three to six. [168170]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. Such information as is available is in the table:

£ billion

	Gross cost	*Income-related benefits saving*	*State second pension saving*	*Savings credit saving*
2004–05	17.1	2.9	0.0	0.4
2005–06	17.8	3.0	0.0	0.4
2006–07	18.8	3.1	0.1	0.5
2007–08	20.0	3.2	0.1	0.6
2008–09	21.3	3.4	0.2	0.6

Notes:

1. Figures are for Great Britain in 2003–04 price terms rounded to the nearest £100 million. It is assumed the change comes into effect from April 2004 and basic State Pension is uprated in line with earnings thereafter.
2. Gross costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002 based population projections. Gross costs refer to the additional costs after allowing for National Insurance Fund benefits and non-means tested vote benefits.
3. Income-related benefit offsets are calculated using the DWP policy simulation model and April 2004 benefit rates.
4. Additional income tax revenue is estimated by the Inland Revenue using 2004 tax rates. We are unable to publish any income tax forecast estimates for years beyond that which is published in the Financial Statement and Budget Report (currently 2006–07). The income tax estimates for 2004–05 to 2006–07 are based on the 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes and are projected in line with March 2004 Budget assumptions. The income tax revenue in 2004–05 is £4.6 billion, for 2005–06 is £4.9 billion and for 2006–07 is £5.2 billion, for illustrative purposes, it is assumed income tax revenue will be a fixed percentage of the gross cost for this option in 2007–08 and 2008–09 although estimates for later years would be subject to a greater degree of uncertainty.
5. The savings from abolishing the State Second Pension are calculated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with the long term Public Expenditure Survey forecasts. No allowance has been made for changes to contracting out rules.
6. The savings credit is assumed to be frozen, payments uprated by prices, with no new recipients after 2004. Figures for 2004 and 2005 are based on published medium term forecasts, while those for 2006–07 and beyond are based on the illustrative long-term projections of benefit expenditure underlying Annex A of the Budget report. This is a separate saving from the offsets in income related benefits outlined in note 3.
7. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many people under 30 have taken out a stakeholder pension. [167878]

Malcolm Wicks: Information for the 2001–02 tax year is shown in the table.

Information for the 2002–03 tax year will be available from autumn 2004.

Tax year	*Number of people aged under 30 with a stakeholder pension*
2001–02	230,000

Notes:

1. Information is derived from a sample of annual returns of information submitted to the Inland Revenue by stakeholder pension providers.
2. Figure rounded to the nearest 10,000.

Sure Start

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Stalybridge and Hyde have made use of the Sure Start maternity grant. [168739]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the tables.

Sure Start Maternity Grants

	Applications	*Awards*
Tameside Social Fund District		
2000–01	1,122	855
2001–02	1,306	1,063
2002[1] to December	1,069	867
Sure Start Maternity Grants in Stockport and Tameside Jobcentre Plus District		
2003[2]	674	502
2003–04	2,840	2,071

[1] To December.
[2] January to March.

Notes:

1. Data is not available by Parliamentary Constituency. Stalybridge and Hyde Parliamentary Constituency used to be part of Tameside Social Fund District. This District was involved in a very complex interlocking set of boundary changes affecting an area from North Cumbria to Norfolk, which took place from

September 2002 to June 2003. Tameside District was combined with part of Stockport interim District in January 2003 to form Stockport and Tameside Jobcentre Plus District. The two areas for which data is given above are thus different, so the data is not comparable

2. Sure Start Maternity Grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 has been excluded for data protection reasons.

3. Data is given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Burnley have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [167887]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Burnley constituency who have benefited from a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	14,985
2000–01	16,490
2001–02	16,620
2002–03	16,745
2003–04	16,800

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.

2. Totals may not sum due to rounding.

3. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run, i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Heywood and Middleton have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [168545]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Heywood and Middleton constituency who benefited from a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–2004) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	16,630
2000–01	18,255
2001–02	18,275
2002–03	18,375
2003–04	18,400

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.

2. Please note that the figures for 2003–2004 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many pensioners received the winter fuel allowance in Liverpool, Walton in each year between 1997 and 2003. [166974]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of pensioners in the Liverpool Walton constituency who received a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	14,420
2000–01	15,495
2001–02	15,300
2002–03	15,370
2003–04	15,160

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest five.

2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:

IAD Information Centre , 100 per cent. samples.

Written Answers to Questions

Tuesday 4 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outcome was of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 21 April; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [168714]

Mr. Bradshaw: My right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State and I represented the United Kingdom at a meeting of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council in Luxembourg on 21–22 April 2004.

The Council concluded its consideration of proposals to reform four CAP regimes: those for cotton, olive oil, tobacco and hops. Agreement on all four was eventually reached by qualified majority. This was a difficult negotiation but the outcome is highly satisfactory from a UK point of view. Overall, the agreement followed the main principles of last June's reforms with decoupling in hops from 2005 (with the option to delay this until 2006) and partial decoupling in the other three sectors from 2006. The rates vary but that for cotton is 65 per cent., a small increase over the 60 per cent. originally proposed; and in the case of tobacco, the rate will be 100 per cent. in 2010 and thereafter. Although the UK would have supported higher rates in all sectors and an earlier move to full decoupling, this agreement sends positive signals to our trading partners by marking a further step towards a more liberalised and market focused agriculture in the EU.

Animal Transport

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what position the Government is taking on the proposal by the Irish Government on new animal transport regulation. [169650]

Mr. Bradshaw: *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* At the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 26 April the UK sought shorter journey times, more space for animals during transport and better ventilation. Unfortunately, in this area which we see as vital to ensuring improved welfare, the gap between countries was too great to be bridged.

As a result the proposal, which would have improved animal welfare in many areas, has been effectively withdrawn from discussion for the foreseeable future.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to improve the welfare of animals exported from the UK; and if she will make a statement. [167237]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Government are committed to improving welfare across the EU and was disappointed and frustrated by EU Ministers' failure on 26 April to agree a new regulation on the welfare of animals during transport. The UK, consulting farming, horse and welfare interests, had worked hard to improve the draft proposals but unfortunately it is clear that there are no plans to return to them in the foreseeable future. We will continue to ensure that animals that leave the UK are transported in full accordance with the law. We shall also take every opportunity to press the European Commission and other member states to ensure that the current rules are strictly enforced throughout the expanded EU.

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on progress made towards the introduction of a vaccine for bovine TB. [169652]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* The timetable for producing an effective vaccine against bovine tuberculosis remains broadly in line with that set out in the Krebs Report 1997.

In January 2002, the Independent Scientific Group on Cattle TB set up a Vaccine Scoping Study Sub-Committee (VSSSC) to advise Defra Ministers on whether a TB vaccination strategy for either cattle or wildlife would be feasible. The VSSSC reported to Ministers in July 2003 (published December 2003). This advised on research requirements, but cautioned that a vaccine (for cattle or badgers) remains a long-term policy option. Many obstacles still have to be overcome.

An Inter-Departmental Vaccine Steering Group is working to identify administrative and legal procedures to allow a potential vaccine to be authorised for use. The work of VSSSC will be carried forward by a new Vaccine Programme Advisory Group which is chaired by the Defra TB Vaccine Programme Adviser, Professor Douglas Young.

Defra spent over £1 million on bovine TB vaccine research in the financial years 2002–03 and 2003–04, and expect to spend over £1 million this year.

Countryside Agency

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the change in her Department's grant-in-aid budget to the Countryside Agency. [168802]

Alun Michael: In 2004–05 the Countryside Agency has a grant-in-aid budget of £95 million. In addition to the baseline of £90.5 million, £2.5 million is available for work specifically on modernising rural delivery, following the recommendations of the Rural Delivery Review led by Lord Haskins. A further £2.0 million is available for work under a new access management scheme, which will help local authorities to implement measures to make the most of new rights of access to the countryside.

The total for 2004–05 compares with a growth from £49.0 million in 1999–2000, £52.6 million in 2000–01, £90.8 million in 2001–02, £98.7 million in 2002–03 and a planned £100.0 million in 2003–04.

In addition the Countryside Agency receives resources from the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund and funding from the National Lottery and others which amounts to some further £15 million.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the likely effect of the change in her Department's grant-in-aid budget to the Countryside Agency on the *(a)* Agency and *(b)* Vital Villages Campaign. [168803]

Alun Michael: The main part of the Countryside Agency's budget for 2004–05 will be directed towards its strategic priorities, which include demonstrating ways of boosting essential rural services, building thriving communities, managing the countryside in a sustainable way and improving recreation and access in the countryside. The grant-in-aid budget for 2004–05 compares with a growth from £49.0 million in 1999–2000, £52.6 million in 2000–01, £90.8 million in 2001–02, £98.7 million in 2002–03 and a planned £100.0 million in 2003–04. The Agency will be able to continue to make a substantial contribution towards Defra's work for sustainable development in rural areas and deliver on key objectives including:

supporting Rural Transport Partnership officers

funding the second and third years of existing Rural Transport projects

supporting Rural Housing Enablers to secure affordable homes

continuing the core funding for rural community councils and supporting the community development workers

helping all rural communities benefit from funds committed to communities through the Vital Villages grant schemes

maintaining total Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty funding at 2003–04 levels.

Some £14.2 million will be spent in 2004–05 in supporting the Vital Villages programme, although the Countryside Agency has announced the closure of the grant schemes to new applicants. The Agency is targeting its resources on meeting all existing grant commitments under the programme and helping communities benefit from the funds already committed to them. It will also work to share the lessons learnt with regional and local delivery bodies.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs who will now fund projects previously funded by the Vital Villages Campaign. [168804]

Alun Michael: Although the Countryside Agency has announced the closure of the grant schemes to new applicants, the Agency will meet all existing grant commitments under the Vital Villages programme which was established as a three-year pilot programme to test out new approaches to rural areas. Work is under way on how we can share the lessons learnt from the programme with regional and local delivery bodies to target support for rural communities that need help through mainstream programmes.

Environmental Protection

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when and where she announced the decision to abolish funding for the are you doing your bit campaign. [168806]

Mr. Morley: In 2001–02 following the creation of Defra, most of the campaign's planned funding had to be re-allocated to rural support during the foot and mouth disease outbreak, although some activities continued.

Defra's wider focus on sustainable development issues, and continued pressure on resources, led to the closure of the campaign in 2003, although no formal announcement was made at this time.

Detailed consideration is being given to the options for future communications activity in this area. Thinking will be informed by the current sustainable development consultation, 'Taking it on', launched 21 April 2004.

EU Accession

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what representations she has made to *(a)* the European Commission and *(b)* her counterparts in the EU accession countries on the ability of those countries to meet EU (i) animal slaughter and (ii) food hygiene regulations by 1 May. [167321]

Alun Michael: The Secretary of State and her ministerial team have used every opportunity to stress to the European Commission and to the Secretary of State's counterparts in the EU Accession Countries the importance of complying with the EU *acquis communautaire* (the rules and regulations laid down by the European Union), and in particular the veterinary and phytosanitary *acquis* which covers areas such as food hygiene and animal slaughter. Over the last year, ministerial teams have met with colleagues from the Czech Republic, Hungary, Malta, Poland and Slovakia. The UK has also been offering practical help, for example via the Commission's Food and Veterinary Office (FVO).

All New member states have undertaken to meet the EU *acquis communautaire* in these areas. Some Transition Periods have been granted—as has been the case for all previous Accessions—and will begin on the 1 May, on the basis that they are time-limited.

Andrew George: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what timetable has been set to ensure that EU accession countries fully comply with EU *(a)* slaughter, *(b)* food production, *(c)* processing, *(d)* labelling, *(e)* traceability, *(f)* hygiene and *(g)* food safety regulations and standards. [167323]

Alun Michael: All the new member states have agreed to comply with the *acquis communautaire* (the rules and regulations laid down by the European Union) by the

1 May 2004 and bring their national rules fully into line with the EU's food and veterinary laws (chapters 1 and 7 of the Accession negotiations), except where they have been granted Transition Periods. The new member states' Accession Treaty, signed in April 2003, granted Transition Periods of up to three years for animal by-product establishments and agri-food establishments. These have recently been refined with both some deletions and short-term additions (3–12 months).

Some Transition Periods are inevitable, and have been a feature of every Accession, including our own. They permit Accession to take place on a specific date and are exceptional, time-limited, and tightly controlled and monitored by both national authorities in the countries concerned and by the European Commission. Transition premises have to be named and listed; all must be 100 per cent. EU compliant by the end of 2007 at the latest. There are currently a total of 1006 Transition Periods for the 10 Accession countries. Crucially, products from transition establishments cannot enter the Single Market.

Farming

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on farm income levels for farmers in Heywood and Middleton in the past five years. [168435]

Alun Michael: Due to the small number of farms in Heywood and Middleton, there is no robust data available on farm incomes for farmers in that area over the last five years. Net farm income for farms in the EU North Region and for England over the last five years are show in the table.

Net farm income

	EU North Region	*England*
1998–99	8,272	10,359
1999–2000	8,659	7,981
2000–01	12,456	9,886
2000–02	16,457	13,558
2002–03	18,512	16,435

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average level of farm income for farmers in Burnley was in the past five years. [168303]

Alun Michael: Due to the small number of farms in Burnley, there is no robust data available on farm incomes for farmers in that area over the last five years. Net farm income for farms in the EU North Region and for England over the last five years are show in the following table.

Net farm income

	EU North Region	*England*
1998–99	8,272	10,359
1999–2000	8,659	7,981
2000–01	12,456	9,886
2001–02	16,457	13,558
2002–03	18,512	16,435

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business.

Harmful Chemicals

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research she has *(a)* commissioned and *(b)* evaluated on the effect on (i) wildlife and (ii) the environment of exposure to harmful chemicals. [168563]

Alun Michael: The Department has commissioned and evaluated significant research programmes on the effect of harmful chemicals on wildlife and the environment. Some of them have focused on specific chemicals such as pesticides; groups of chemicals with similar effects such as endocrine disrupters; or targeted environmental media such as air, water, soil etc. The Department also funds research into the possible impacts on the environment of using veterinary medicines on animals and fish. The results of Defra funded research are published in the peer-reviewed scientific press and most can be found on our website www.defra.gov.uk.

Illegal Food Imports

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will list, with the penalties imposed, the cases since 1994 of illegal food imports where prosecution succeeded. [169651]

Mr. Bradshaw: *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* Figures for prosecutions for illegal imports are not held centrally.

HM Customs and Excise have had responsibility for anti-smuggling controls on products of animal origin from 11 April 2003. Since then they have brought two prosecutions in 2004 under the Customs and Excise Management Act for illegal imports, both of which were successful. In each case the defendant was fined and costs were awarded against them.

There have been a number of other prosecutions related to illegal imports since 2000 but not all were tried as offences under illegal imports legislation.

Oysters

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make representations to the European Union to issue a protected geographical indication for the Colchester Native Oyster. [167290]

Alun Michael: Registering a food name under the EU Protected Food Name scheme is one way in which producers can add value to their produce. We are sympathetic to this proposal and the Government are keen to encourage more applications under the scheme.

An application to register the name, Colchester Native Oyster as a protected geographical indication was received on 7 April. Officials are currently assessing the application against the scheme criteria. If it meets those criteria, officials will work with the applicant group to prepare the application for submission to the European Commission.

Rights of Way

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the policy of the rights of way section of her Department is regarding answering the telephone to members of the public on *(a)* 01173–728–379, *(b)* 01173–728–957 and *(c)* other numbers. [169379]

Alun Michael: I assume that my hon. Friend is referring to the difficulties he experienced in getting through to officials in the rights of way branch at Temple Quay House in Bristol on 26 April. The building was experiencing intermittent problems with incoming calls on that day, which is why several attempts had to be made before he was successful.

In normal circumstances telephones are answered promptly. The rights of way branch has a "group pick-up" facility, which links all the telephones in the team, and enables them to take each other's calls when colleagues are absent or away from their desk. This is what happened when the successful call was responded to by a member of the team.

In addition these telephones have a voicemail facility so that callers can leave a message if they wish to, should there be no response.

Mr. Allen: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will set out the history of the request to close the footpath at Cuillan Close, Rise Park; when her Department expects to compete the paperwork necessary to allow Nottingham City Council to close the footpath; and if she will make a statement. [169380]

Alun Michael: Nottingham City Council applied on 20 October 2003 to have the area around the footpath designated under Schedule 6 of the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. Following an examination of the evidence provided in the second round of applications for designation, I announced my intention to designate 20 areas, including this one, on 9 February. Since the announcement, Officials at Defra have prepared the detailed digital maps necessary for the legal process and consulted the relevant local authorities about them.

I have laid the order that designates this area of Nottingham, along with areas in Brighton and Hove, Leeds, York, Middlesbrough, Oldham, Swale, Wirral and the London Borough of Hillingdon. It will come into effect on 25 May.

The local authorities concerned can now proceed to consider whether to make orders to divert or extinguish rights of way for the purpose of crime prevention.

The time taken to complete the process is as frustrating for ministers as it is for MPs and councillors, so I am looking at whether we can strengthen the process for the future, but this is a formal legal process which has to be done centrally.

Severely Disadvantaged Areas

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what criteria were used in designating severely disadvantaged areas. [168031]

Alun Michael: The severely disadvantaged areas in the uplands (then termed less favoured areas) were first designated following the physical, economic and demographic assessment laid down in Article 3(4) of Council Directive 75/268. In 1999, this Article was replaced by Article 19 of Council Regulation 1257/1999 (the so-called rural development Regulation). They are characterised by land of poor productivity which is difficult to cultivate and mainly suitable for extensive livestock farming; and by a risk of land abandonment, which could impair the conservation of the countryside and the viability of communities in the area.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on what support schemes farmers in severely disadvantaged areas will be able to apply for. [168033]

Alun Michael: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 271W.

TRANSPORT

A19

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many deaths and serious injuries have been sustained on the section of the A19 which runs through the Easington constituency in the last 10 years. [170119]

Mr. Jamieson: The available information relates to local authority areas. The number of deaths and serious injuries sustained in reported injury road accidents on the section of the A19 in the Easington local authority area for the years 1993 to 2002 are shown in the table below. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituencies will become available in the summer and I shall write to my hon. Friend with figures Easington and place a copy of my letter in the Libraries of the House.

Fatal and Serious Casualties on the A19 within Easington (LA area): 1993–2002

Year	*Killed*	*Serious*
1993	3	4
1994	3	8
1995	2	7
1996	1	10
1997	2	2
1998	1	1
1999	1	2
2000	2	5
2001	1	8
2002	2	4

Cycle Lanes (Battersea)

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Battersea since 1997. [169767]

Mr. McNulty: The promotion of cycling in London is a matter for the Mayor of London and Transport for London. This strategy is delivered, in part, by the individual Boroughs such as Wandsworth. The Mayor's policies on cycling can be found in his Transport Strategy at the following link:
http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/strategies/transport/index.jsp

Lane Rental

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he received the final report by Halcrow on the lane rental pilot in Camden and Middlesbrough; and on what date it will be made public. [170653]

Mr. Jamieson: I expect to receive the final report on the lane rental pilots around the end of June. Copies of the report would be placed in the Libraries of the House shortly afterwards.

Off-shore Wind Farms

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the risk of obstruction to the Port of London from the London array wind farm; and what representations he has received on the issue from the maritime industry. [168263]

Mr. Darling: The developer of the London Array wind farm in seeking consent for the project must make a thorough assessment of the potential impact of the proposed installation on navigation and ports. The developer must demonstrate to my satisfaction in the case of a Coast Protection Act 1949 consent or that of the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry in the case of an Order under the Transport and Works Act 1992 that their development, in combination with others that may be in the vicinity, does not present a danger or significant obstruction to navigation. In reaching that decision either Secretary of State will take advice from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and, in the case of the London Array, the Port of London Authority. Any person or organisation who has an interest in the matter may make representations to the relevant Minister and these will be taken into account in the decision making process.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what consultation he has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* planned with maritime groups about the impact of offshore wind farms on marine navigation. [168264]

Mr. Darling: My Department is consulting the shipping and ports industries on the potential cumulative impact on navigational safety of wind farms being developed on the sites for which The Crown Estate has offered leases. In the light of the outcome of this exercise, developers are able to apply to The Crown Estate, between 1 September to 31 December 2004, to adjust the location of their proposed wind farm. In addition, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency is consulting on a revised publication giving guidance on the navigational safety issues which developers shall need to take into account in seeking consent for their projects. This consultation is closing on 7 June 2004 with a view to publishing the revised guidance later this summer.

Officials from my Department together with officials from the Department of Trade and Industry met representatives of the shipping and ports industries on 28 January 2004. Also one of my officials was present when they met the Energy Minister on 16 March 2004 where they were given an assurance that offshore wind farms would not be sited where they present a danger to navigation.

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what representations he has made to the Department of Trade and Industry regarding obstruction to shipping lanes from wind farms. [168261]

Mr. Darling: There have been numerous discussions between Departments at ministerial and official level in regard to the obstruction of shipping. The safety of shipping is of paramount importance. Wind farms which would present a significant obstruction or danger to navigation will not receive the development consents from Government which are necessary before projects can be constructed. This Department and the Department of Trade and Industry consult the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and others on navigational safety matters in deciding whether to grant consent for offshore wind farm projects.

The proposed location of an offshore wind farm may require shipping which passes through those waters to re-route around the installation. Where such new patterns of ship traffic could be established without a detrimental effect on the safety of navigation, such a possibility would be considered on a case-by-case basis as part of the assessment of whether consent should be given to the project.

Rail Services (Portsmouth Harbour)

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 25 March 2004 to the hon. Member for Isle of Wight, *Official Report*, column 982W, on rail services *(a)* what information he collects and *(b)* if he will make a statement on the punctuality and reliability of trains destined for Portsmouth harbour. [171208]

Mr. McNulty: Performance statistics by Train Operating Company (TOC) are published in the Strategic Rail Authority's quarterly "National Rail Trend", copies of which are in the Library of the House. The SRA does not hold performance data below TOC level.

Road Accidents

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Heywood and Middleton is since 1997. [168546]

Mr. Jamieson: The available information relates to local authority areas. In the Rochdale local authority area (which includes the constituency of Heywood and Middleton) there were 16 fatal casualties in 1997 and 11 fatal casualties in 2002. The number of people seriously injured in road accidents increased from 83 in 1997 to 84 in 2002, a rise of 1 per cent. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituencies will become available in the summer and I shall write to my hon. Friend with figures for Heywood and Middleton and place a copy of my letter in the Libraries of the House.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Stalybridge and Hyde has been since 1997. [168731]

Mr. Jamieson: The available information relates to local authority areas. In the Tameside local authority area (which includes the Stalybridge and Hyde constituency) there were four fatal casualties in 1997 and four fatal casualties in 2002. The numbers of people seriously injured in road accidents reduced from 117 in 1997 to 85 in 2002, a fall of 27 per cent. Estimates on the basis of parliamentary constituencies will become available in the summer and I shall write to my hon. Friend with figures for Stalybridge and Hyde and place a copy of my letter in the Libraries of the House.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people died in road traffic accidents in Wigan in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [169341]

Mr. Jamieson: In the Wigan local authority area there were 10 fatal casualties in 1997 and nine fatal casualties in 2002, the latest year for which information is available.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many people were seriously injured in road traffic accidents in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [169342]

Mr. Jamieson: The number of people seriously injured in reported injury road accidents in Great Britain was 42,984 in 1997 and 35,976 in 2002, the last year for which information is available.

Road Upgrades

Mr. Flook: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport when he expects to make an announcement concerning the Government's decision on the upgrading of the A358 and the A303 following the decision to be made by the Regional Assembly on 30 April. [170110]

Mr. Jamieson: I will be considering the Regional Assembly's comments together with the views of the Statutory Environmental Bodies and others before I decide on the route option. I will announce a decision once I have fully considered all of the issues.

Road Works

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the average duration of utility works involving occupation of the highway was in *(a)* 2000, *(b)* 2001, *(c)* 2002 and *(d)* 2003. [170650]

Mr. Jamieson: Based on monitoring work carried out for my Department, the average duration of utility works for the period referred to was as follows:

	Days
2001 (April to December)	5.94
2002	5.70

Accurate figures are not available for the period before April 2001 and final figures for 2003 are not yet available.

Mr. Chope: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of congestion on local authority roads in each year since 2000 was caused by *(a)* street works carried out by utilities and *(b)* street works carried out by or on behalf of highway authorities. [170651]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department does not hold figures centrally for the proportion of congestion caused by utility and highway authority works respectively on local authority roads.

Speed Cameras

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many speed cameras are installed in Staffordshire, including Stoke-on-Trent. [169226]

Mr. Jamieson: The Staffordshire Safety Camera Partnership has 217 fixed site speed camera installations and no red light cameras. They currently operate no mobile camera units.

Train Services (Kent)

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many peak-time train services serving Petts Wood, Orpington and St. Mary Cray there are *(a)* at present and *(b)* proposed by the Strategic Rail Authority in the Integrated Kent Franchise consultation document. [169818]

Mr. McNulty: Services in the morning peak to London (trains arriving at a London terminus between 07:00 and 09:59):

Petts Wood

Current: 27 (8 Victoria, 4 Blackfriars, 15 Charing Cross or Cannon Street)

Proposed: 18 (6 Victoria, 12 Charing Cross).

Orpington

Current: 30 (8 Victoria, 4 Blackfriars, 18 Charing Cross or Cannon Street)

Proposed: 30 (6 Victoria, 12–13 Charing Cross or Cannon Street (fast) 12 Charing Cross (stopping)).

St. Mary Cray

Current: 16 (8 Victoria, 8 Blackfriars)

Proposed: 15 (7 Victoria, 8 Blackfriars).

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assumptions were made by the Strategic Rail Authority in the Integrated Kent Franchise document about *(a)* current and *(b)* future capacity in the peak-hour services between Petts Wood, Orpington, St. Mary Cray and London. [169819]

Mr. McNulty: Estimates of seats provided in the three-hour peak based on analysis of current scheduled South Eastern Trains service and estimates for the proposed service, based on the best current information about future train formations and vehicle types, are as follows:

	(a) Current	*(b) Future*
Petts Wood	16,400	9,200
Orpington	17,800	17,600
St. Mary Cray	8,600	9,300

Note:
Numbers are approximate and subject to possible change.

As now, the key factor is not overall train capacity, but how much spare capacity is available by the time services arrive at these stations.

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will publish the passenger usage data for *(a)* Petts Wood, *(b)* Orpington and *(c)* St. Mary Cray that the Strategic Rail Authority used in their consultation document on the Integrated Kent Franchise, broken down by (i) passengers buying season tickets and those not and (ii) passengers taking fast peak-hour trains to London and those taking slow, stopping trains in the peak period. [169820]

Mr. McNulty: This information is not available in the format requested. Ticket information suggests that the average number of passenger journeys to and from these stations per day is:

	Season	*Ordinary*	*Total*
Petts Wood	3,972	1,814	5,786
Orpington	6,914	4,697	11,611
St. Mary Cray	1,975	1,278	3,253

Transport Energy Best Practice Programme

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 62–63W, on the Transport Energy Best Practice Programme, what proportion of *(a)* freight vehicle kilometres and *(b)* freight tonne kilometres these companies account for, (i) in total and (ii) broken down by vehicle type. [169908]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department does not currently hold the detailed data necessary to answer this question. However the 5 per cent. of freight transport companies mentioned in the answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 62–63W, on the Transport Energy Best Practice Programme, referred to a representative cross-section of the industry.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what funding has been given to the Transport Energy Best Practice programme, broken down by year. [170017]

Mr. Jamieson: The following funding has been provided to the Transport Energy Best Practice programme:

	£ million
2002–03	1.57
2003–04	2.67
2004–05 (forecast)	2.48

Transport Services (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rural bus services in Preston are supported by rural bus grants. [169687]

Mr. McNulty: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is paid to local transport authorities. In the case of Preston, this is Lancashire County Council. It is for the authority to decide which services should be supported with the grant. We understand from the county council that, while Preston is mainly urban, there are 11 rural bus services commencing or terminating in Preston that are currently supported by RBSG.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Preston since 1997. [169688]

Mr. McNulty: Since 1997, three lengths of bus lane have been created in Preston, at Fishergate, Church Street and Ringway, with a total length of 900 metres.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of Preston. [169689]

Mr. McNulty: Residents of Preston will benefit from the new TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February. The franchise secures investment of around £260m, which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region. A new northern franchise, which will include local and regional services through Preston, is out for tender. Work continues on the West Coast Main Line upgrade, which will see reduction in journey times along the route and increases in service frequency.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Preston since 1997. [169690]

Mr. McNulty: A total of 3.8 km of on-road cycle lanes and 5.6 km of off-road cycle tracks has been provided in Preston since 1997. A further 6.6 km of off-road cycle path, including 3.8 km of improved canal towpath are due to open this summer.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what the percentage change in *(a)* deaths and *(b)* serious injuries on the roads of Preston has been since 1997. [169691]

Mr. Jamieson: In the Preston local authority area there were nine deaths in road accidents in 1997 and two deaths in 2002, the latest year for which information is

available. The number of serious injuries in road accidents fell by 2 per cent. from 156 in 1997 to 153 in 2002.

Tyres

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what proportion of tyres on vehicles he estimates are of energy efficient types, broken down by vehicle type. [169906]

Mr. Jamieson: There is no established definition or standard for energy efficient tyres. It is not possible, therefore, to estimate the proportion of energy efficient tyres currently being used on vehicles. We understand that tyres generally are becoming more energy efficient as manufacturers are incorporating energy efficient design features along with new technology. The major tyre manufacturers all sell a range of tyres, some of which are more energy efficient than others.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many tyres have been purchased in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* size and *(b)* type. [169907]

Mr. Jamieson: The most recent information the Department for Transport has on the numbers of new tyres purchased as replacements in the United Kingdom for the years indicated is shown in the table. The data is grouped by vehicle type or use rather than by tyre size and tyre type due to the large number of sizes available in the marketplace currently. Data for 2003 is not yet available. Further information may be available from the trade associations: The British Tyre and Rubber Manufacturers Association and the Imported Tyre Manufacturers Association.

Number of replacement tyres purchased in the United Kingdom

	Car tyres	*Utility vehicles and off road 4x4*	*Heavy vehicle tyres*	*Tyres for other vehicles*
1998	20,202,648	899,279	3,013,782	772,071
1999	19,593,786	1,026,430	2,712,016	820,698
2000	18,804,523	917,094	2,659,233	845,153
2001	20,663,690	946,271	3,260,337	187,174
2002	20,874,277	1,014,894	3,595,930	192,937

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much *(a)* energy efficient tyres and *(b)* normal tyres cost on average to purchase, broken down by size. [169909]

Mr. Jamieson: As stated in my earlier answer (ref 169906), there is no formal definition of an energy efficient tyre. However our information suggests that, for trucks, the more energy efficient tyres cost around 5 per cent. more than normal or low energy efficiency tyres. For passenger car tyres, we understand there is no significant difference in the costs between products from the same manufacturer.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 63W, on fuel efficient tyres, if he will estimate the reduction in emissions that would result from all freight vehicles switching to these tyres. [169910]

Mr. Jamieson: If all freight vehicles in the UK achieved a saving of 7 per cent. in fuel consumption, this would reduce emissions by around half a million tonnes of carbon. However, as I explained in my earlier answer (ref 169906), we do not know how many trucks are already fitted with the most energy efficient tyres so we cannot estimate the effect on emissions of all freight vehicles changing to use these types of tyres.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 63W, on fuel efficient tyres, what the average distance it is estimated these tyres will last; and what the figure for ordinary tyres is. [169911]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department is not aware of any independently verified figures quantifying the difference in tyre life between more and less energy efficient tyres. As I stated in my answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 63W, there is some evidence that the tread wear rate for current energy efficient tyres can be inferior to those of standard tyres. However, this is not quantified.

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what steps have been taken to publicise the use of energy efficient tyres. [170018]

Mr. Jamieson: As I stated in my answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 62–63W, through the TransportEnergy Best Practice programme, my Department has recently published a free leaflet describing trials of energy efficient tyres fitted to trucks. These trials have also been reported in the last two editions of the programme's free newsletter, "Freight Future", which is distributed to hauliers via trade journals.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Police Traffic Divisions (M25)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much was given to *(a)* Essex and *(b)* Kent police traffic divisions in respect of their work on the M25 in each of the last three years; how many (i) officers and (ii) units were deployed following the road traffic accident in the vicinity of junctions 29 and 31 on 17 March; for how long they were deployed; and if he will make a statement. [163255]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 23 March 2004]:* Forces do not receive funding specifically for road policing. The police funding formula, on which general grants for police authorities are based, does take into account traffic management needs. It is a matter for the Chief Constable and Police Authority to decide how to allocate the available resources within any given force area.

Road and traffic expenditure by Essex and Kent Constabularies is not directly comparable. The Chief Constable for Essex police informs me that their Road Policing Units respond to all Essex's roads, not just the motorway, and that total expenditure on road policing is estimated to be £14 million per annum in each of the last three years.

The Chief Constable of Kent police informs me that the expenditure on their traffic unit, as well as officers on areas classified as traffic, is estimated at approximately £5.5 million per annum in each of the last three years.

35 Essex police officers were deployed to the traffic accident on 17 March. A whole divisional traffic unit was dedicated to this incident, consisting of nine double-crewed vehicles. In addition, a further 10 single-crewed vehicles, two scenes of crime vehicles (one officer each) and a Traffic Investigation Unit (five officers) were involved. None of the officers were involved for the entire duration. In addition, three Metropolitan police vehicles were deployed at Junction 29 for 14 hours. Kent police had no involvement.

Dangerous Driving

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the number of people driving without requisite insurance cover. [169071]

Caroline Flint: On the basis of information from the insurance industry and other sources, we estimate that there are 1.25 million persons driving without compulsory insurance against third party risks.

Drugs

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the estimated total annual cost to the UK economy was of dealing with the drug problem in each of the last five years for which figures are available; and what factors the calculation includes. [168725]

Caroline Flint: Total direct annual Government expenditure on preventing and tackling drug misuse is as follows:

	Total direct annual Government expenditure
2000–01	695
2001–02	870
2002–03	1,026
2003–04	1,244
2004–05	1,344

These total figures reflect the cross Government spend on the four core strands of the Drug Strategy: protecting young people, reducing supply, safe guarding communities and treatment.

Identity Card Bill

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will publish his draft identity card bill. [167853]

Mr. Browne: My right hon. Friend the Home Secretary published the draft Identity Cards Bill on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 34WS, as part of a document explaining the need for legislation entitled 'Legislation on Identity Cards: A Consultation' (CM 6178).

Road Traffic Offences

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what his estimate is of the number of people who have five points or more on their driving licence. [169446]

Caroline Flint: This information is not collected centrally.

UK Border Controls

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the cost, per unit, of establishing manned UK customs points in countries other than the UK. [169966]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 23W.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Investment (Infrastructure)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what his Department's reasons are for the proportional increase in social infrastructure and services investment and the corresponding proportional decrease in economic infrastructure and services investment since 1997. [168879]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The goal of the Department for International Development (DFID) is to eliminate poverty. DFID seeks to do this by focusing on achieving the targets agreed at the Millennium Summit, the so-called Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). DFID works with developing country Governments and other donors to achieve these goals.

Around a third of DFID's total expenditure is allocated to specific sectors. In recent years, expenditure on social infrastructure and services (by which we usually mean education, health, population and reproductive health, water supply and sanitation, government and civil society, employment and housing) has been significantly higher than that on economic infrastructure and services (for example, transport and storage, communications, energy, banking and financial services, and business). In large part, this is because DFID believes that investment in these sectors will have a greater impact on achieving the MDGs. In 2002, the latest year for which these data are available, there was a large jump in expenditure for the first group, which was not matched for scale in the second one. This was mainly due to a number of large contributions to global health funds.

North Korea

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what aid has be offered to North Korea as a result of the Ryongchon incident; and whether this offer has been accepted. [169775]

Hilary Benn: Relief supplies that arrived shortly after the train crash were sent from a Red Cross disaster preparedness warehouse, funded by the Department for

International Development. Last year DFID provided £200,000 of support to the North Korean Red Cross's disaster preparedness activities, which included the provision of pre-positioned disaster relief supplies. A further £200,000 is committed for 2004–05.

DFID has also set aside £56,000 for support to affected households through the International Federation of the Red Cross, having judged this assistance to be the most effective way to meet the unmet needs. Initial appeals for support are well covered, and while the UK was ready to fund the replenishing of disaster relief supplies, the European Commission has pledged 200,000 Euros for this purpose. The UK's share of this pledge is approximately 38,000 Euros (£25,500).

DFID will consider further appeals as part of its continuing programme of humanitarian assistance to North Korea.

St. Helena

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what financial commitments are planned for St. Helena. [170216]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: DFID will continue to maintain substantial support for St. Helena. This will include budgetary assistance, to include a subsidy for the island's shipping service, plus funding for various development projects and the filling of key posts. A joint DFID/FCO team is currently visiting the island to negotiate proposals for our assistance over the three-year UK period 2004–05 to 2006–07. In addition, as I reported in a written statement to this House on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1WS, DFID is exploring options for maintaining future access arrangements.

Sudan

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what contribution the United Kingdom will make to the new United Nations appeal for the Darfur Region of Western Sudan. [169324]

Hilary Benn: The United Nations has appealed for around $115 million for the humanitarian response in Darfur, Sudan. I am considering our response and we are likely to contribute. I have set aside £10 million from our contingency reserve for our ongoing humanitarian response in Darfur, in recognition of the severity of the situation and the need to work avert a humanitarian catastrophe. This is in addition to the £9.5 million that DFID committed last financial year through the UN, Red Cross and international non-governmental organisations in response to this crisis.

World Education Forum

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what steps have been taken to meet the UK's obligations arising from the agreement at the World Education Forum in Dakar in April 2000 to achieve primary education for all children by 2015. [170218]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: Universal Primary Education by 2015 is the top priority of DFID's education programme and we are working closely with our international partners to achieve this. DFID is targeting countries with a high proportion of children out-of-school, such as Ethiopia, India and Bangladesh, and regions with a high number of countries with chronic levels of out-of-school children, such as Sub-Saharan Africa. Progress has been made in many countries with global enrolment in primary education increasing from 596 million in 1990 to 648 million children in 2000. However, with over 100 million children still not currently enrolled in primary education, much still remains to be done.

In recognition of this, DFID has invested over £820 million in education in developing countries since 1997. DFID is increasing this investment and are planning to spend £1 billion from 2004–2008. In addition, DFID is providing £12 million to the World Bank Fast-Track Initiative Catalytic Fund for education. This will go to help a specific group of developing countries that need a quick injection of money to get their education systems up and running.

DFID is collaborating with a variety of partners to accelerate progress on girls' education, as girls are much more likely to be out-of-school than boys (over 50 per cent). DFID is working with the UN Girls' Education Initiative to ensure stronger collaboration and coordination among donors at the global and the national level. At the country level, DFID continues to prioritise support to those governments that give priority to primary education. For example, we are supporting the Kenyan Government, who have recently abolished school fees at primary level, to provide enough school places to keep up with demand and ensure that quality is sustained.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Academic Fellowship Scheme

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry for what reason the new academic fellowship scheme says in section 3.9 of the scheme document that a guarantee of a permanent position is an absolute condition of the award, and also insists in section 3.5 that those who have been promised a permanent position are considered to have achieved the aims of the scheme already and are not eligible. [167130]

Ms Hewitt: The Academic Fellowships are a direct response to the Roberts Review on "The supply of people with science, technology, engineering and mathematics skills". This report pointed to a lack of a clear career path for researchers and one of the primary aims of the scheme is to provide a transition between postdoctoral positions and academic posts. Government believes that a goal of a permanent academic post is necessary to improve recruitment and retention by providing the individual with a clear career trajectory and allowing for development needs to be addressed.

The statements to which my hon. Friend refers are not intended to be contradictory. The guarantee of a permanent position to be provided at the end of the five-year fellowship award (section 3.9) is a requirement on

the host institution in order to provide a career path for the academic fellow. An award will not be made to an HEI without this guarantee being made.

The statement at section 3.5, however, refers to the eligibility of the individual candidate. We do not believe that it is appropriate that someone with a permanent position, or the promise of one, should undertake a further five years of training towards an academic position. A previous promise by an HEI to provide a permanent position to a researcher shows an existing commitment to the individual and therefore further support through the academic fellowships scheme is unnecessary.

Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what evaluation has been made of the ideal skills mix of the Board of the Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils (CCLRC); what the selection criteria are for members of the board how and by whom appointments are made; what contribution CCLRC has made to implementation of the recommendations of the North West Science and Daresbury development group; what input CCLRC has made to the North West Science Strategy; and what targets and milestones have been set by CCLRC to progress the strategy. [168584]

Ms Hewitt: A number of evaluations have been made of the template for Council membership in recent years, but, in terms of skills, the basic mix of academic user and industry representation has remained unchanged. Last year the number of members was increased to include a greater number of independent industry or user representatives. We intend to keep the template more generally under review. The Minister for Science makes all appointments to the Council on my behalf in accordance with the requirements of the Commissioner for Public Appointments. This is a competitive process overseen by a panel with independent members who recommend candidates who best fit the advertised role and person specification, drawn up in the light of CCLRC's assessment of its needs for expertise.

The CCLRC and the OST have invested £6 million and £8 million respectively, to progress the Energy Recovery LINAC project, providing the underpinning technology and design for a Fourth Generation Light Source (4GLS). This activity is based mainly at the CCLRC Daresbury Laboratory. CCLRC collaborated closely with the North West universities regarding the recently announced PPARC/CCLRC-supported Cockcroft Institute for Accelerator Science, also to be located at Daresbury. As a result, the CCLRC will co-locate its related accelerator science and technology research activity with the Cockcroft Institute. The results of a CCLRC/North West Development Agency joint-funded analysis of the opportunities for commercial exploitation of Daresbury Laboratory research, and the options for a proposed mixed-economy Daresbury Campus, have now been received. The latter activity will involve the North West Universities and industrial partners with the CCLRC, and the participants are seeking to establish a new "North West Science Partnership" by summer 2004.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what targets the Council for the Central Laboratory of the Research Councils (CCLRC) has set for the commercial exploitation of intellectual property to stimulate regional growth in the North West; what CCLRC's vision is for collaboration with the North West Science Council; and how the CCLRC intends to work with the North West Regional Development Agency to generate regional economic growth. [168630]

Ms Hewitt: CCLRC seeks actively to develop exploitation routes for its research via its totally owned commercial exploitation company, CLIK, which was established in April 2002. Five new CLIK-generated high technology companies are already in the final stages of formation, three of which are based on research and associated technologies developed at the CCLRC Daresbury Laboratory. The CLIK business plan is based on the formation of three new CCLRC spin-out companies per year for each of the next five years.

CCLRC has interacted closely with the activities of the North West Science Council (NWSC) since its inception. The Director of the Daresbury Laboratory has been a member throughout this period, and he and his staff also maintain close relations with the NWDA. This has led already to the construction of two new NWDA-supported high technology buildings immediately adjacent to the DL site, on land previously owned by CCLRC, in order to provide easily accessible space for new high technology, spin-out companies and associated business support advisers. The CCLRC/NWDA interaction has also already led to the successful implementation of a number of major new joint-funded projects, which are or will be based at the DL/NWDA Campus including SUPERSTEM, the Energy Recovery Linac project and the new Cockcroft Accelerator Science Centre. Opportunities for new nanotechnology/nanoscience activities and also a new Centre for Instrumentation are also currently being explored.

Electricity Generation

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the associated backup costs for wind penetration of *(a)* 10 per cent., *(b)* 15 per cent. and *(c)* 20 per cent.; and what the assumptions are underpinning these estimates. [169778]

Mr. Timms: Estimates of the back-up costs of renewables, including wind power, were made in the report "Quantifying the System Costs of Additional Renewables in 2020" commissioned from consultants ILEX as part of the analysis for the February 2003 Energy White Paper. The report is available on the DTI website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/developep/080scar_report_v2_0.pdf.

The report considered the additional costs associated with increasing the proportion of renewables generation to 20 per cent. and 30 per cent. by 2020.

Table 12 of the report indicates that the back-up costs of wind power, in terms of generating capacity and system balancing would be of the order of £6 to £7 per

MWh of wind generation. Details of the assumptions used and the analysis applied are contained in the report.

Estimates have not been made for lower penetrations of renewables. However, the report indicates that back-up costs associated with wind are less than £1 per MWh higher in scenarios where renewables reach 30 per cent. of generation, compared with scenarios where renewables reach 20 per cent. of generation.

Under the electricity trading arrangements, generators have strong financial incentives to deliver the power they have contracted to sell to electricity suppliers.

Mr. Stunell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what estimate she has made of the backup costs for electricity generated from *(a)* wind energy and *(b)* nuclear power. [169779]

Mr. Timms: Estimates of the back-up costs of renewables, including wind power, were made in the report "Quantifying the System Costs of Additional Renewables in 2020" commissioned from consultants ILEX as part of the analysis for the February 2003 Energy White Paper. The report is available on the DTI website at http://www.dti.gov.uk/energy/developep/080scar_report_v2_0.pdf.

Table 12 of the report indicates that the back-up costs of wind power, in terms of generating capacity and system balancing would be of the order of £6 to £7 per MWh of wind generation in 2020. Details of the assumptions used and the analysis applied are contained in the report.

Estimates of the back-up costs of nuclear power have not been made.

Energywatch

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what Energywatch's budget was in each year since it was created, how many calls it received from consumers in each year; and what assessment she has made of Energywatch's ability to help gas and electricity consumers. [168872]

Mr. Timms: The information is as follows:

	Expenditure (£ million)	*Complaints*	*Non-complaint inquiries*
2000–01	[1]7.62	[2]77,705	n/a
2001–02	[3]18.99	[4]72,362	106,015
2002–03	[5]11.97	109,230	70,856
2003–04	[6]12.39	72,079	90,000
2004–05	[7]13.29	—	—

[1] Transitional funding
[2] Complaints to OFGEM, Gas Consumers' Council and Energywatch
[3] Includes £8.1 million transitional funding
[4] Excludes February and March 2002, for which no data are available
[5] Includes £0.29 million transitional funding
[6] Includes £0.29 million transitional funding
[7] Budget. Includes £0.29 million transitional funding

Energywatch has significantly aided energy consumers by, among other things, assisting individuals in their dealings with energy companies; promoting the consumer interest as a whole, particularly in areas such as mis-selling, the transfer process and the billing and metering practices of energy companies; and representing the interests of disadvantaged consumers.

Fireworks

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people were *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured as a result of accidents and incidents involving fireworks in the last five years. [169795]

Mr. Timms: The firework injury statistics for 2003 are not yet available. The statistics for the previous four years are as follows:

	(a) Deaths	*(b) Injuries*
2002	0	1,017
2001	0	1,362
2000	2	972
1999	0	1,056

The figures in the table are based on the total number of people treated at hospital casualty departments in Great Britain during a 4 week period around bonfire night.

Ministerial Meetings/Visits

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list *(a)* the official meetings she has had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 and *(b)* the dates and subject of each meeting. [170571]

Ms Hewitt: I met the Mayor of London on 8 November 2001, the subject of the meeting was regeneration.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry when the Minister of State (Energy, e-Commerce and Postal Services) next plans to visit Japan. [170993]

Mr. Timms: I am due to visit Japan on 16–19 May.

Panel for Regulatory Accountability

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many members of the Panel for Regulatory Accountability have worked in the private sector; and in what capacity. [168447]

Mr. Alexander: I have been asked to reply.

Membership consists of myself as Chair, and my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (Ms Hewitt) and the Chief Secretary to the Treasury (Mr. Boateng). All current members of the Panel for Regulatory Accountability have worked in the private sector. Biographies are available at: http://www.parliament.uk/directories/hciolists/alms.cfm

In addition, the Chair of the Better Regulation Task Force (David Arculus) and the Chair of the Small Business Council (William Sargent) are invited to attend the panel. Their biographies can be found at:

http://www.brtf.gov.uk/taskforce/members/DavidArculus.htm and

http://www.sbs.gov.uk/default.php?page=/sbc/members.php

Copies of the biographies have also been placed in the Library.

Renewable Energy

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of recent trends in investment in renewable energy upon the residents of Wigan. [169365]

Mr. Timms: Recent trends in renewable energy investment have been very encouraging. More new capacity has been constructed in the last few years than in the previous decade, and a significant amount is currently in the pipeline. This covers a wide range of technologies including onshore and offshore wind, solar and biomass.

However, as far as I am aware this has not translated into new or proposed capacity in the Wigan area.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the recent trends in investment in renewable energy and the effect of those trends upon residents of Preston. [169686]

Mr. Timms: Recent trends in renewable energy investment have been very encouraging. More new capacity has been constructed in the last few years than in the previous decade, and a significant amount is currently in the pipeline. This covers a wide range of technologies including onshore and offshore wind, solar and biomass.

However, as far as I am aware this has not translated into new or proposed capacity in the Preston area.

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations she has received on renewable energy targets and their achievement; and if she will make a statement. [169753]

Mr. Timms: The Government's renewable energy target is that renewable energy sources will supply 10 per cent. of our electricity by 2010. The target is challenging as we are starting from a low base; provisional figures suggest that in 2003, 2 per cent. of electricity was generated from sources eligible for the Renewables Obligation. However, the target is achievable. As the SEPN annual report published earlier this week indicates, we have made an encouraging start.

We have received many representations from stakeholders regarding the targets, and we have listened to them. An example of this is our plan to increase the level of the Renewables Obligation (RO) in the period after 2010, so that it reaches 15.4 per cent. by 2015–16. By increasing the Obligation in these years, this will greatly assist investor confidence and in particular help with the financing of new projects needed to deliver output by 2010.

Ultra-wideband Wireless Networks

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to license ultra-wideband wireless networks. [169295]

Mr. Timms: The matter raised is the responsibility of the Office of Communications (Ofcom) as the independent regulator. Accordingly, my officials have asked the Chief Executive of Ofcom to respond directly to my hon. Friend. Copies of the Chief Executive's letter will be placed in the Libraries of the House.

Wind Turbines

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what recent representations she has received on the proposal for wind turbines in the Thames Estuary; and if she will make a statement. [169750]

Mr. Timms: On 16 March I met representatives from the Chamber of Shipping, Trinity House, the Port of London Authority and the British Marine Aggregate Producers Association for a general discussion on a number of navigation related issues in relation to the 15 proposed Round 2 offshore wind farms, 4 of which are planned in the Thames Estuary. To date my Department has not received any development consent applications for a Round 2 wind farm. Before developers can submit applications they must undertake a full environmental impact assessment including a navigational risk assessment in consultation with the Maritime and Coastguard Agency and other shipping interests. To ensure that all views on consent applications are taken into account, at the time developers submit applications for consent to my department they must advertise the project in both national and local press so that any person can make representations to my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State. All representations are then taken into consideration before a decision is made on whether to give consent.

Winkleigh Biomass Project

Mr. Burnett: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what studies have been conducted by *(a)* central Government and *(b)* the South West Regional Development Agency of potential (i) fossil fuel savings and (ii) additional fossil fuel use if the proposed Winkleigh Biomass Project is completed and running at full capacity; and with what results. [169460]

Mr. Timms *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* No such studies have been commissioned or undertaken by the DTI. The developer as part of the application process did undertake an initial assessment of the fossil fuel savings from such a plant. And as part of the assessment process the assessors took into account the estimates made by the proposers.

No such studies have been commissioned or undertaken by the South West Regional Development Agency either. Further detail will be found in the planned Environmental Impact Assessment, which will include an evaluation of potential road traffic.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Area Plans

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the target date is for the implementation of the Belfast Metropolitan Area Plan; and if he will make a statement. [168215]

Angela Smith: The publication date for the Plan has not yet been finalised. Work on the Draft Plan is now well advanced. If the Draft Plan passes through its final stages within the normal time scale, the target for publication is late autumn.

These final stages include:

Clearance by other Government Departments; and

Assessment by the Department of Regional Development for "conformity with the Regional Development Strategy".

Bangor Hospital

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to enhance the services available at Bangor hospital; and if he will make a statement. [169655]

Angela Smith: Bangor hospital currently offers GP in-patient services, a minor injuries service and a wide range of other secondary, intermediate and primary care services. Social care and voluntary sector services are also provided at the hospital. Work is ongoing to develop further the services provided, including the introduction of an advanced digital imaging system that, in addition to improving the quality of the x-ray service, will further enhance the hospital's minor injuries service.

British-Irish Joint Declaration

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in implementing those aspects of the British-Irish Joint Declaration that deal with security normalisation. [166228]

Mr. Pearson: The Joint Declaration, which was published by both Governments on 1 May last year, gave a commitment to the complete normalisation of security over a two-year period, in the context of an enabling environment.

The Prime Minister announced in a statement on 1 May 2003 that the Government would on some aspects of normalisation, push on and do what we can. Since then two towers at Cloghoge and Tievecrum were demolished in June and the Chief Constable announced on 11 February that Clooney Army base in Londonderry would be closed and sold and the Army would vacate the joint Police/Army base at Aughnacloy.

Any further steps will only be taken in light of the threat and the Chief Constable's advice.

Housing Executive Properties

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many individuals were awaiting placement in housing executive properties, broken down by area, in the last year; and if he will make a statement. [169658]

Mr. Spellar: The information is not readily available in the format requested.

The following table shows the numbers of households at 31 March 2004 requiring social housing (Housing Executive and Housing Association) broken down by the applicant's stated preference of Housing Executive District Office area.

The waiting list is not static as households move on and off the list during the course of the year. The trend in demand for social sector accommodation continues to rise steadily. The increases in demand are most pronounced in urban areas and in the east of the province.

Number of households on the waiting list at 31 March 2004

Housing executive district	*Number*
Belfast 1	926
Belfast 2	1,479
Belfast 3	839
Belfast 4	801
Belfast 5	647
Belfast 6	1,001
Belfast 7	1,746
Antrim	709
Ballycastle	225
Ballymena	1,032
Ballymoney	286
Carrickfergus	839
Coleraine	855
Larne	370
Newtownabbey 1	631
Newtownabbey 2	662
Armagh	559
Banbridge	410
Dungannon	517
Fermanagh	734
Lurgan	659
Newry	1,301
Portadown	413
Bangor	1,488
Castlereagh	984
Downpatrick	919
Lisburn Antrim Street	1,362
Lisburn Dairy Farm	514
Newtownards	1,174
Cookstown	230
Limavady	337
Londonderry 1	623
Londonderry 2	457
Londonderry 3	531
Magherafelt	356
Omagh	370
Strabane	529
Total	27,515

NHS Dentists

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to increase the numbers of dentists working for the NHS in Northern Ireland. [169931]

Angela Smith: The Department has put in place a comprehensive work force planning mechanism that reviews, on an annual basis, supply and demand issues across all HPSS professional groups. The first report on the dental staff group has been completed and its findings did not indicate any general recruitment

difficulties with this group. Nevertheless, the position will be kept under review through the Department's work force planning process.

Parliamentary Questions

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many Parliamentary Questions have been tabled to his Department since 1 January 2003, broken down by *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day; what percentage in respect of *(a)* were answered within 10 working days; and what percentage in respect of *(b)* were answered by the specified date. [157740]

Mr. Paul Murphy: The information is not available in the form requested.

However, from 1 January 2003 to 31 December 2003, 3134 Parliamentary Questions were tabled to the Northern Ireland Office.

From 1 May 2003 to 31 December 2003, the 11 Departments of the NI administration answered 986 Ordinary Written questions of which 79 per cent. were responded to within a working week of the question being tabled. Of the 65 Named Day questions tabled in the same period 80 per cent. were answered by the specified date. The corresponding information in respect of the Northern Ireland Office is not currently available on the same basis.

Prostate Cancer

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made in dealing with prostate cancer in Northern Ireland in the past two years. [169933]

Angela Smith: Patients with prostate cancer may be treated either by the regional urology service at the Belfast City hospital or by the Cancer Units at Antrim, Altnagelvin, Craigavon and Ulster hospitals. Strong linkages have been developed between these units in recent years.

Funding has recently been made available for the appointment of an additional urology consultant, with a special interest in uro-oncology, to be recruited jointly between BCH and the Ulster hospitals, and for the appointment of an additional consultant urologist at Craigavon Area hospital. A number of specialist nurses have also been appointed at BCH, the Ulster hospital and elsewhere. Altnagelvin, the Ulster and BCH have developed nurse-led fast track assessment clinics with direct access to urology consultants. Craigavon also plans to introduce this service to help ensure prompt access to investigations and treatment.

Radioactive Contamination (Chernobyl Accident)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many farms in Northern Ireland, comprising what land areas and in what locations, have restrictions applied to them in respect of land use as a result of the residual radioactivity from the Chernobyl nuclear accident. [169876]

Mr. Pearson: It is estimated that 153 farms in Northern Ireland located in three small hill areas at Glenwherry in Co. Antrim and Belraugh and Glenshane in Co. Londonderry had controls applied to the movement and slaughter of sheep as a result of the residual radioactivity from the Chernobyl nuclear accident. The three areas extended to some 21,612 acres (8,752 hectares).

Register of Interests

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the requirements are on officials in his Department to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for his departmental officials. [164704]

Mr. Pearson: The requirements placed upon officials employed in NI Departments and the Northern Ireland Office are set out in the Conduct Sections of the Northern Ireland Civil Service Pay and Conditions of Service Code and the Civil Service Management Code (Home Civil Service). These requirements place responsibility on officials to declare to senior management, as appropriate and when necessary, their current interests. The declaration must include the likelihood of possible conflicts of interest and, where appropriate, seek approval before proceeding with a particular course of action. The contents of the respective Codes are drawn to the attention of officials as part of induction programmes.

While there is no register of interests maintained centrally in respect of officials working in the NI departments or in the Northern Ireland Office, three NI departments, because of the specialised nature of their business and the interaction with the private sector and non-departmental public bodies, have established departmental registers.

Secondary School Entry (Craigavon)

David Burnside: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what effect the ending of academic selection for entry to secondary schools as recommended by the Costello Report would have on the Two Tier Dickson system in use in Craigavon; and if he will make a statement. [170458]

Mr. Gardiner: Schools and school managing authorities, working together in local areas, will develop new post-primary arrangements that best provide for the needs of all pupils and take account of local wishes, needs and circumstances. A two-tier system could continue to operate provided all pupils have access to the Entitlement Framework.

Waiting Lists

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment has been made of using independent hospitals outside Northern Ireland to reduce local waiting lists. [169699]

Angela Smith: Health and Social Services Boards purchase services from independent hospitals as an appropriate short-term measure to allow patients to receive their treatment more quickly. During 2002–03 and 2003–04, 628 patients were transferred to various

independent hospitals outside Northern Ireland as part of a range of initiatives to reduce waiting lists and waiting times.

Water Conservation

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will support pilot schemes to promote water conservation among low income households and vulnerable people in order to reduce the impact of water charging. [168642]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has written to the hon. Lady in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katherine Bryan to Lady Hermon, dated 30 April 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question (No. 168642) concerning his support for pilot schemes to promote water conservation amongst low-income households and vulnerable people in order to reduce the impact of water charging.

In recognising that there is a relationship between water conservation and water consumption it is equally important to recognise that they are not synonymous. Water Service's second Water Efficiency Plan, which I launched in January 2004, sets out a wide range of measures aimed at reducing demand from water. In addition to Water Service's leakage reduction strategy, it involves a proactive approach to water conservation by all customers, including raising awareness and the further promotion of water saving devices such as Hippo Bags. The combination of conservation measures taken by Water Service and reduced consumption by customers should help to reduce projected water demand. This will ultimately reduce the charge to customers.

Changes to water consumption patterns could have a more direct impact on individual's water bills under a metered water regime. In some circumstances, lower consumption could result in a reduced bill. However, no decision has yet been taken on the form of water charging to be introduced. Research and analysis into the consequences of different approaches is currently being undertaken and the impact of charges on low-income households and vulnerable groups is one of the issues being considered.

The Government is fully committed to measures that encourage water conservation. I am advised that in June 2002 and November 2003, Water Service officials met with Eaga-partnership Ltd., which is promoting a water conservation programme known as Watersmart and is interested in undertaking a pilot study in Northern Ireland. Unfortunately, the results of pilot study undertaken by Eaga-Partnership Ltd. in the Essex and Suffolk Water Company indicated that the costs of the programme are considerably in excess of the cost of comparable leakage reduction measures currently being undertaken by Water Service and would not therefore represent good value for money. The company was informed of the position and agreed to provide additional information on the economic benefits of the programme. To date, Water Service has received no further communication from the company.

Water Service continually keeps its activities and procedures under review in order to improve effectiveness and deliver improved value for money to customers and taxpayers. It will continue to consider any proposals, including other pilot schemes, which would contribute to improved water conservation.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to improve water efficiency in *(a)* low income households, *(b)* domestic premises, *(c)* small businesses and *(d)* public sector offices; and if he will make a statement. [168930]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has written to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Mrs. Katharine Bryan to Mr. Eddie McGrady dated 29 April 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question (No. 168930) about what plans he has to improve water efficiency in low income households, domestic premises, small businesses and public sector offices. I have been asked to reply as Chief Executive of the Water Service.

Water Service's second Water Efficiency Plan was formally launched in January 2004. The Plan sets out how Water Service proposes to extend its information and awareness campaign and to provide advice to all of the community including low income households, domestic premises, small businesses and public sector offices. Water Service will continue to extend its programme of exhibitions at major events, presentations to local groups as well as displays at local shopping centres across Northern Ireland. In addition the successful Water Bus mobile exhibition will continue to deliver the water conservation message to schools, with all children who attend being provided with a home copy of water efficiency information to give to their parent or guardian. All public sector offices have received a full water conservation pack containing Hippo bags, posters, etc and Water Service will continue to work with the public sector to promote water efficiency. Water Service has also sent small businesses and Government offices further information on how to improve water efficiency when it issued metered water accounts in 2003.

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what further research has been undertaken following the Northern Ireland Audit Office report into water efficiency in 2001; and if he will make a statement on water efficiency targets in Northern Ireland. [168931]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Water Service (Mrs. Katharine Bryan) has written to the hon. Gentleman in response to this question.

Letter from Katharine Bryan to Mr. Eddie McGrady, dated 29 April 2002:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question (No 168931) about what further research has been undertaken following the Northern Ireland Audit Office report into water efficiency in 2001, and water efficiency targets in Northern Ireland. I have been asked to reply as Chief Executive of the Water Service.

Water Service is committed to addressing the issues raised by the Northern Ireland Audit Office and has carried out a comprehensive review of its Water Efficiency Plan. A revised Water Efficiency Plan was formally launched in January 2004 which aims to reduce the demand for water through effective leakage management and other water conservation measures. The Plan promotes a more proactive approach to leakage reduction, water conservation including raising awareness, and the further promotion of water saving devices such as Hippo Bags. It also includes a new Leakline number for customers to report leakage incidents.

A major element of the Water Efficiency Plan is to reduce leakage from the water distribution system and Water Service has an annual water efficiency target which aims towards achieving a reduction in leakage to an economic level of 172 million litres per day in March 2007. Provisional outturn for 2003/2004 indicates that Water Service has achieved its leakage reduction targets for the past two years, resulting in total leakage being reduced by almost 60 million litres per day. The water efficiency target for 2004/2005 is to reduce leakage from the water distribution system by a further 28 million litres per day, to a level of 205 million litres per day by 31 March 2005. Water Service is committed to meeting this leakage target through upgrading the water infrastructure and by targeting resources to detect and repair leaks.

WALES

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will list for each Civil Service grade within his Department, the total number of staff employed and set out the number employed by *(a)* gender, *(b)* ethnic group *(c)* registered disabled and *(d)* age group. [166401]

Mr. Touhig: Data on staffing levels in the Civil Service is collected by the Cabinet Office and published in the Civil Service Statistics. A copy of the Civil Service Statistics, 2002 is available in the Library, and at www.civil-service.gsi.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

The Wales Office Departmental Report 2003 (Cm 5928) provides data on staff numbers for the Wales Office for year 2002–03. Tables 5.7 and 5.8 of this publication show staff numbers with disabilities. A copy of the Wales Office Departmental Report 2003 can be obtained from the Library of the House.

Information on numbers of staff employed by age group is not available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Departmental Computers

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what plans he has to update computer *(a)* hardware and *(b)* software standard packages used in his Department. [166374]

Mr. Touhig: The Wales Office IT is provided as part of the DCA's corporate network. There are no plans to update the existing hardware. Our PFI supplier will, as part of their contractual commitment, update software, including operating systems, office automation and applications, within the next 12 months.

North Wales Police

Gareth Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the National Assembly for Wales Secretaries about the use of Private Finance Initiative by North Wales Police in respect of *(a)* refurbishment and replacement of police stations and *(b)* generally. [170321]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I regularly meet with Assembly Secretaries to discuss matters affecting Wales.

The allocation of Private Finance Initiative credit approvals rests with the Home Office. Police projects in Wales also need approval from the National Assembly who fund annual service charges through their revenue grant. Decisions on which projects to support are entirely for the Assembly.

Register of Interests

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what the requirements are on his officials to declare current interests; and what register of interests is kept for his departmental officials. [164697]

Mr. Touhig: The Civil Service Management Code sets out the requirement for civil servants declaring any conflict of interest.

Any such declarations are retained on file.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Tourism (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Manchester, Gorton. [167346]

Tessa Jowell: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with Marketing Manchester, the nominated Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Manchester. The new DMOs are, in effect, smaller versions of tourist boards. They aim to ensure a strong visitor and market focus to all that is done within the region and strengthen the connection between businesses and other organisations in the tourism sector.

During 2003–04 Marketing Manchester received £695,000 from the NWDA's marketing image budget for tourism and investment campaigns to promote Manchester. £203,000 was also provided from the agency's tourism budget for a variety of tourism development projects.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adult Community Learning Budget

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the Adult Community Learning Budget is for each English local authority area, expressed *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* per head of population. [169645]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 29 April 2004]*: I have set out in the following table the total budget as set by central Government for adult and community learning run through local education authorities in England.

The information requested concerning the adult and community budget for each English local authority area expressed *(a)* in cash terms and *(b)* per head of population is not to hand. However, it is being collated and I will write to the hon. Member shortly, and place a copy of my reply in the Libraries of both Houses.

Adult and community learning

	Funding (£ million)[1]
2000–01	145
2001–02	153
2002–03	183
2003–04	206

[1] Total budget, by financial year, on adult and community learning run through local education authorities (recurrent figures). The figures for 2002–03 and 2003–04 include the budgets for neighbourhood learning and family learning, starting from a nil base in 2001–02.

African Educational Institutions

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what support *(a)* his Department and *(b)* UK educational institutions have given to developing courses for African educational institutions in respect of (i) teacher training courses, (ii) training of health professionals, (iii) distance learning courses and (iv) other courses; and if he will make a statement. [165705]

Alan Johnson: UK Government support for courses for African education institutions in respect of teacher training, training for health professionals, distance learning courses and other courses, is provided by the Department for International Development and I would refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1444–45W.

There is no central record of the support UK higher education institutions provide for developing courses for education institutions.

British National Party

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to protect young school children from the campaigning conducted by the British National Party in schools to promote racist propaganda and racist activities. [168285]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: There are safeguards in Sections 406 and 407 of the Education Act 1996 against the promotion and pursuit of partisan political views or activities. Governing Bodies, teachers and LEAs must take reasonable steps to offer pupils a balanced presentation of opposing views where political or controversial issues are brought to their attention. With the introduction of Citizenship education as a statutory subject, pupils have an opportunity to develop their political awareness, critical thinking and the nature of prejudice including racism. All schools have been sent guidance on citizenship education which covers teaching of sensitive and controversial issues.

Class Sizes

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Burnley were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [167923]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools [1]: number of pupils in classes of 31 or more pupils taught by one teacher—January 2003

Burnley parliamentary constituency	*Total pupils all classes*	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Number of pupils*	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Percentage of pupils [2]*
Maintained Primary	7,651	1,395	18.2
Maintained Secondary	6,272	995	15.9

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Percentage of pupils in those classes expressed as a percentage of pupils in all classes taught by one teacher.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Manchester, Gorton were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [167444]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools [1]: Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more pupils taught by one teacher—January 2003

Manchester, Gorton parliamentary constituency	*Total pupils in all classes*	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Number of pupils*	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Percentage of pupils [2]*
Maintained Primary	6,750	808	12.0
Maintained Secondary	5,662	535	9.4

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Percentage of pupils in those classes expressed as a percentage of pupils in all classes taught by one teacher.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Heywood and Middleton were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [168498]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools [1]: number of pupils in classes of 31 or more pupils taught by one teacher—January 2003

Heywood and Middleton parliamentary constituency	*Total pupils all classes*	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Number of pupils*	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Percentage of pupils [2]*
Maintained Primary	8,744	2,142	24.5
Maintained Secondary	5,954	711	11.9

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Percentage of pupils in those classes expressed as a percentage of pupils in all classes taught by one teacher.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Stalybridge and Hyde were taught in classes of more than 30 on the latest date for which figures are available. [168756]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information requested is shown in the table.

Maintained primary and secondary schools [1]: number of pupils in classes of 31 or more pupils taught by one teacher—January 2003

Stalybridge and Hyde parliamentary constituency	*Total pupils in all classes*	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Number of pupils*	*Number of pupils in classes of 31 or more: Percentage of pupils [2]*
Maintained Primary	7,930	1,274	16.1
Maintained Secondary	5,685	854	15.0

[1] Includes middle schools as deemed.
[2] Percentage of pupils in those classes expressed as a percentage of pupils in all classes taught by one teacher.
Source:
Annual Schools' Census

Computers for Schools

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been

spent on computers for schools in each of the last seven years in *(a)* Liverpool, *(b)* Manchester, *(c)* Leeds and *(d)* Sheffield. [166962]

Mr. Miliband: Schools in Liverpool, Manchester, Leeds and Sheffield local education authorities have benefited from the funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA) as follows:

£

	Allocation to:			
	Liverpool LEA	*Manchester LEA*	*Leeds LEA*	*Sheffield LEA*
1998–99	978,576	983,605	1,700,000	1,200,000
1999–2000	1,050,000	1,410,000	1,350,000	900,000
2000–01	2,096,082	1,861,602	2,986,463	1,899,247
2001–02	2,306,630	2,012,866	3,356,591	2,242,424
2002–03	3,247,326	2,932,949	4,687,707	3,997,782
2003–04	3,229,701	2,880,827	4,762,382	3,078,495
2004–05	4,120,244	3,682,324	6,139,762	3,969,335

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Wigan in each of the last seven years. [169289]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However, in the last seven years schools in Wigan LEA have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA).

	Allocation to Wigan LEA (£)
1998–99	685,947
1999–2000	675,000
2000–01	1,328,513
2001–02	1,483,483
2002–03	2,141,147
2003–04	2,557,655
2004–05	2,775,768

Computers within Reach Programme

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* families in Burnley have benefited from the Computers within Reach programme. [167933]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers within Reach (CWR) scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a State Pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Burnley was not one of the pilot areas for the CWR scheme.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* families in Preston have benefited from the Computers within Reach programme. [168120]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers within Reach (CWR) scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a State Pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Preston was not one of the pilot areas for the CWR scheme.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* teachers and *(b)* families in Heywood and Middleton have benefited from the Computers within Reach programme. [168508]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The Computers within Reach scheme closed on 31 October 2001 having delivered over 24,000 recycled computers to people in 22 pilot areas, at a cost of £7.1 million over two years. Those eligible were in receipt of certain working age benefits or a state pension with minimum income guarantee.

At the same time as funding was made available for the Computers within Reach scheme, funding was also provided for the Computers for Teachers programme. For teachers who met certain criteria, this programme subsidised the cost of a computer. It was subsequently replaced by the current Laptops for Teachers scheme which dispensed with subsidies, and through which sufficient funding will be provided to enable two thirds of teachers to receive a laptop by March 2006.

Of the 24,000 computers delivered through the Computers within Reach scheme, approximately 2,200 were for people in the Manchester area including those in and around Heywood and Middleton.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [168996]

Mr. Charles Clarke: All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in Government Accounting. The following table sets out such spending in £000s for DfES and its predecessor Department in the relevant years.

£000

	Department for Education and Employment	Department for Education and Skills
1996–97	24	—
1997–98	21	—
1998–99	31	—
1999–2000	21	—
2000–01	20	—
2001–02	—	11
2002–03	—	16
2003–04[1]	—	18
2004–05	—	Not available

[1] Estimated outturn.

Departmental Grants

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many bodies receive some or all of their funding from his Department; what amount of funding was received by each body in each year since 1997; and who the chief executive is of each body.

[167570]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information on funding of executive non-departmental public bodies is published annually in the Departmental Report. Information on the chief executives is contained in the individual annual reports issued by each of the executive non-departmental public bodies. Information on other bodies is not available, except at disproportionate cost.

Earn As You Learn

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of children he expects will be persuaded to remain at school beyond their GCSEs through the earn as you learn scheme.

[169482]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Extensive independent evaluation of the Education Maintenance Allowance pilots shows that EMA increased participation by eligible 16-year-olds in education by 5.9 percentage points. Judged against historic trends, this represents a major increase. Based on evidence from the pilots, the evaluators predict that in the first year of the national scheme, some 35,000 additional young people will participate in post-16 education in colleges and schools as a result of EMA, and that this will rise to over 70,000 per year when EMA is fully in place.

Education Psychologists

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many education psychologists were working *(a)* in each local education authority and *(b)* in total in each year since 1997.

[168634]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of education psychologists employed in each local education authority in England in each year from 1997 to 2003, the latest information available.

Educational psychologists

Full-time equivalent

	In Service (January of each year)						
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
LEA							
City of London	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Camden	8	8	8	11	12	11	13
Greenwich	16	17	16	13	15	16	21
Hackney	11	10	11	12	13	12	11
Hammersmith and Fulham	7	8	9	8	6	8	10
Islington	10	13	12	14	12	10	9
Kensington and Chelsea	9	10	8	8	6	7	7
Lambeth	13	8	11	13	15	15	14
Lewisham	14	14	13	13	14	14	12
Southwark	14	11	12	12	12	13	12
Tower Hamlets	14	30	16	15	14	13	13
Wandsworth	11	12	11	11	11	12	12
City of Westminster	10	7	7	7	9	9	9
Barking and Dagenham	13	11	12	14	12	13	13
Barnet	16	16	16	14	16	12	16
Bexley	11	10	11	11	10	9	9
Brent	12	10	9	10	11	12	11
Bromley	12	12	12	11	12	10	10
Croydon	10	15	14	13	12	14	12
Ealing	13	14	24	15	14	16	12
Enfield	15	13	18	21	19	21	17
Haringey	15	13	15	14	12	10	10
Harrow	11	5	9	10	11	10	9
Havering	8	10	10	10	10	10	11
Hillingdon	12	14	15	14	16	14	16
Hounslow	10	11	10	11	11	10	8
Kingston upon Thames	5	7	6	7	5	8	8
Merton	7	7	7	7	10	10	7
Newham	12	13	16	19	18	16	13
Redbridge	8	8	10	10	7	10	10
Richmond upon Thames	7	8	8	7	6	—	6
Sutton	6	5	7	9	11	9	8
Waltham Forest	13	13	13	13	8	12	18
Birmingham	39	40	46	23	46	46	53
Coventry	13	13	14	15	16	16	16
Dudley	11	11	12	8	12	11	10
Sandwell	14	15	14	16	15	16	13
Solihull	9	10	10	11	10	9	11
Walsall	11	13	12	12	11	9	8
Wolverhampton	12	13	10	13	15	18	17
Knowsley	9	8	9	9	9	—	6
Liverpool	16	16	15	15	14	21	17
St. Helens	6	8	7	6	8	8	9
Sefton	10	11	11	10	14	14	16
Wirral	14	13	14	13	12	11	11
Bolton	8	8	8	9	9	10	10
Bury	8	7	6	8	9	5	6
Manchester	18	21	22	18	21	20	21
Oldham	7	8	8	9	9	9	6
Rochdale	8	9	9	8	9	8	7
Salford	10	8	8	11	9	8	6
Stockport	12	11	11	11	10	12	13
Tameside	8	10	10	10	10	10	9
Trafford	5	5	5	4	7	5	6
Wigan	12	12	12	12	10	11	13
Barnsley	4	7	7	7	8	6	6
Doncaster	11	12	11	11	10	11	12
Rotherham	12	11	8	7	9	10	12
Sheffield	19	21	22	23	26	22	21
Bradford	19	19	21	22	22	20	18
Calderdale	8	7	7	8	9	5	8
Kirklees	22	23	20	23	25	22	23
Leeds	15	17	19	22	20	22	24
Wakefield	10	10	11	9	9	11	13
Gateshead	9	10	10	10	7	11	11
Newcastle upon Tyne	14	10	15	11	9	10	10
North Tyneside	7	8	6	8	9	9	9
South Tyneside	6	8	5	7	7	7	5
Sunderland	12	12	14	16	11	19	15
Isles of Scilly	—	—	1	—	—	—	—
Bath and North East Somerset	5	5	5	9	7	10	9
City of Bristol	17	14	16	19	20	24	14
North Somerset	8	8	9	12	11	10	9
South Gloucestershire	7	7	9	10	11	11	10
Hartlepool	3	4	4	3	2	4	3
Middlesbrough	5	7	7	7	6	6	6
Redcar and Cleveland	5	5	6	6	6	6	7
Stockton on Tees	9	5	7	6	8	9	10
City of Kingston Upon Hull	8	8	10	10	11	12	12
East Riding of Yorkshire	8	8	8	7	9	9	7

Educational psychologists

Full-time equivalent

	In Service (January of each year)						
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
North East Lincolnshire	4	5	5	6	6	5	6
North Lincolnshire	5	5	5	5	5	4	4
North Yorkshire	13	14	16	15	15	17	16
York	7	7	7	8	8	9	7
Bedfordshire	16	6	10	10	12	12	12
Luton	—	5	5	6	7	6	6
Total former Bedfordshire area	16	11	16	16	19	18	18
Buckinghamshire	25	18	20	20	19	24	24
Milton Keynes	—	10	7	10	12	10	11
Total former Buckinghamshire area	25	28	27	30	30	34	35
Derbyshire	32	22	21	23	21	28	30
Derby	—	9	9	11	11	12	11
Total former Derbyshire area	32	31	29	34	32	40	42
Dorset	25	14	13	13	13	15	16
Poole	—	6	6	5	5	6	6
Bournemouth	—	4	5	6	6	6	8
Total former Dorset area	25	24	24	23	24	27	30
Durham	23	16	21	21	23	23	25
Darlington	—	4	3	4	4	4	4
Total former Durham area	23	20	24	25	27	27	29
East Sussex	18	12	14	13	17	18	20
Brighton and Hove	—	7	7	8	8	12	13
Total former East Sussex area	18	19	21	20	25	30	33
Hampshire	61	49	48	50	43	45	46
Portsmouth	—	11	9	14	11	10	11
Southampton	—	10	12	13	13	12	12
Total former Hampshire area	61	70	69	77	67	66	69
Leicestershire	26	21	23	25	21	28	26
Leicester	—	13	13	13	21	23	20
Rutland	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Total former Leicestershire area	26	34	36	38	42	51	46
Staffordshire	28	21	20	22	19	23	24
Stoke on Trent	—	6	8	6	6	8	12
Total former Staffordshire area	28	27	28	29	25	31	36
Wiltshire	13	14	21	16	14	17	14
Swindon	—	6	5	7	7	6	7
Total former Wiltshire area	13	20	26	22	21	23	21
Former Berkshire	21	20	—	—	—	—	—
Bracknell Forest	—	—	3	3	3	2	4
Windsor and Maidenhead	—	—	7	6	5	5	7
West Berkshire	—	—	5	6	8	9	9
Reading	—	—	4	5	5	6	8
Slough	—	—	5	8	10	6	8
Wokingham	—	—	5	5	5	6	8
Total former Berkshire area	21	20	29	33	36	34	44
Former Cambridgeshire	20	20	—	—	—	—	—
Cambridgeshire	—	—	19	18	17	17	17
Peterborough	—	—	7	7	7	8	8
Total former Cambridgeshire area	20	20	26	25	23	24	25
Former Cheshire	30	28	—	—	—	—	—
Cheshire	—	—	19	24	18	21	18
Halton	—	—	4	5	5	5	5
Warrington	—	—	6	10	6	8	6
Total former Cheshire area	30	28	29	39	29	35	28
Former Devon	35	33	—	—	—	—	—
Devon	—	—	21	19	22	27	26
Plymouth	—	—	10	9	10	12	12
Torbay	—	—	4	4	4	4	5
Total former Devon area	35	33	34	32	35	43	42

Educational psychologists

Full-time equivalent

	In Service (January of each year)						
	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Former Essex	63	61	54	60	64	69	68
Essex	—	—	46	48	52	58	57
Southend on Sea	—	—	4	5	6	5	6
Thurrock	—	—	5	8	6	6	5
Total former Essex area	63	61	54	60	64	69	68
Former Hereford and Worcestershire	22	20	—	—	—	—	—
Herefordshire	—	—	5	6	6	6	8
Worcestershire	—	—	20	19	23	24	25
Total former Hereford and Worcester area	22	20	25	24	28	30	33
Former Kent	56	50	—	—	—	—	—
Kent	—	—	38	44	42	44	46
Medway	—	—	10	10	10	8	10
Total former Kent area	56	50	47	54	52	52	56
Former Lancashire	55	52	—	—	—	—	—
Lancashire	—	—	41	43	42	38	40
Blackburn with Darwen	—		8	9	8	6	7
Blackpool	—	—	5	6	7	6	4
Total former Lancashire area	55	52	54	58	57	50	51
Former Nottinghamshire	33	31	—	—	—	—	—
Nottinghamshire	—	—	23	25	26	21	23
Nottingham	—	—	9	9	15	15	16
Total former Nottinghamshire area	33	31	32	35	41	36	39
Former Shropshire	13	13	—	—	—	—	—
Shropshire	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Telford and Wrekin	—	—	14	15	17	14	12
Total former Shropshire area	13	13	14	15	17	14	12
Cornwall	13	13	13	13	13	13	17
Cumbria	17	17	17	20	24	18	17
Gloucestershire	9	9	18	18	19	22	23
Hertfordshire	35	35	36	35	32	34	31
Isle of Wight	4	4	4	4	4	4	5
Lincolnshire	19	15	17	17	19	24	21
Norfolk	24	22	24	21	21	20	18
Northamptonshire	23	29	28	28	26	29	25
Northumberland	9	9	9	15	9	17	11
Oxfordshire	18	20	19	21	22	26	29
Somerset	16	17	21	24	24	21	22
Suffolk	16	20	20	19	19	20	20
Surrey	34	31	31	34	37	39	38
Warwickshire	15	15	18	20	16	16	16
West Sussex	22	23	22	24	26	26	28
Total England	1,768	1,788	1,867	1,929	1,956	2,020	2,026

Source:

Annual survey of teachers in service and teacher vacancies (618g)

Education Statistics (Havering)

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total education budget awarded to Havering was in *(a)* 1997, *(b)* 1999, *(c)* 2001, *(d)* 2003 and *(e)* 2004. [169946]

Mr. Miliband: The following table provides the total education funding for 1997–98 to 2004–05. There have been changes to the structure of Standard Spending Assessments and their successor from 2003–04, Education Formula Spending, which make them incomparable over time: for example, several large transfers from SSA/EFS to grant funding. Only total funding per pupil (including SSA/EFS and grants) is comparable between years. Also, for 2003–04 and 2004–05, pension transfers to EFS and the Learning and Skills Council are excluded from EFS and total funding figures to enable comparison between years.

£ million (real terms at 2002–03 prices)

	SSA/EFS	Grants[1]	Grants
1997–98	98.5	3.5	101.9
1998–99	104.2	1.6	105.7
1999–2000	106.4	2.6	109
2000–01	110.7	8.1	118.8
2001–02	115.1	12.9	128
2002–03	113.1	17.6	130.7
2003–04	116.6	[2]18.4	[2]135
2004–05	121.2	[3]18.9	[3]140.1

[1] Grants are all revenue grants in DfES Departmental Expenditure Limits relevant to EPS pupils aged three to 19. Education Maintenance Allowance's (EMAs) and grants not allocated at LEA level are excluded.

[2] Provisional.

[3] Estimated.

Note:

Real terms figures based on GDP deflators as at 26 March 2004 (2002–03 prices).

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new computers the Department plans to put in schools in the next five years; and how many of those will be put in schools in Havering. [169949]

Mr. Charles Clarke: Our targets for 2004 were to achieve computer: pupil ratios of 1:8 in primary schools and 1:5 in secondary schools. We have already reached the primary school target and confidently expect to reach the secondary target this year. Funding for ICT in schools is currently available through the Standards Fund and the Devolved Capital Grant and it is for schools to decide how to spend their allocations to best meet their local need and circumstances.

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the forecast budget for the Borough of Havering for education is for 2005–06. [169985]

Mr. Miliband: The Government do not produce forecast budgets by local education authority. The settlement for 2005–06 will be announced in the autumn of 2004.

Electronic On-screen Assessment

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions his Department has had with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority regarding electronic on-screen assessment. [168968]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The effective use of electronic on-screen assessment will have an important role to play in supporting learners in schools and colleges in the future. Both Ministers and officials in this Department have discussed with the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority ways in which electronic assessment can be introduced, while maintaining standards; ensuring access for all learners; and guaranteeing high security levels. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is developing more detailed plans for electronic on-screen assessment, and we look forward to further discussions with it as we seek to promote greater use of such techniques in the learning process.

Examination Boards

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the readiness of the examination boards for this summer's examinations. [169952]

Mr. Miliband: In 2003, the summer examinations ran smoothly, and students received their results on time. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, as regulator, is in close contact with the examination awarding bodies to achieve the same outcomes in summer 2004.

Last November the Secretary of State announced that £100 million would be available over the next two years to help modernise the examination system and ensure its safe delivery. I am glad to say that investment is already delivering improvements. More examiners are being recruited, and training is being provided for examination officers in schools and colleges. Further investment is planned to improve the system for transfer of examination information between schools; colleges and awarding bodies, and streamlining and making more secure the movement of examination papers and scripts. We look forward to close co-operation between the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and examination awarding bodies to ensure our investment creates an examinations system which fully meets the needs of students, both this year and in the future.

Examination Results

Mr. Wills: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* black Caribbean, *(b)* Pakistani, *(c)* black African, *(d)* Bangladeshi, *(e)* white, *(f)* Indian and *(g)* Chinese (i) males and (ii) females achieved five A*-C grades at GCSE in each year since 1994; [170121]

(2) how many *(a)* Pakistani, *(b)* black African, *(c)* Bangladeshi, *(d)* white, *(e)* Indian, *(f)* Chinese and *(g)* black Caribbean (i) males and (ii) females achieved level 2 or above at Key Stage 1 in (A) English, (B) mathematics and (C) science in each year since 1994; [170122]

(3) how many *(a)* black Caribbean, *(b)* Pakistani, *(c)* black African, *(d)* Bangladeshi, *(e)* Indian, *(f)* Chinese and *(g)* white (i) males and (ii) females achieved level 5 or above at Key Stage 3 in (A) English, (B) mathematics and (C) science in each year since 1994; [170123]

(4) how many *(a)* Pakistani, *(b)* black African, *(c)* Bangladeshi, *(d)* white, *(e)* Indian, *(f)* Chinese and *(g)* black Caribbean (i) males and (ii) females achieved level 4 or above at Key Stage 2 in (A) English, (B) mathematics and (C) science in each year since 1994. [170124]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested has been placed in the Libraries.

Information and Communications Technology (School Funding)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been allocated to schools in Manchester, Gorton for information and communications technologies since 2001. [167435]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I refer my right hon. Friend to my answer to his question on the funding spent on computers for schools in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last seven years on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 985W.

School Funding (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding each school in the Wigan constituency has received from the New Deal for Schools; [169284]

(2) how much public money has been spent on repairing schools in Wigan in each year since 1997; [169282]

(3) how much money has been invested in Wigan to build sustainable school sports. [169276]

Mr. Miliband: Table A shows the schools in the Wigan constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Since 2001, the majority of capital support has been allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level; this should be held at local authority level.

Table B sets out the capital support made by the Department to Wigan local education authority and its schools since 1997–98, in total and by programme (including all allocations through NDS mentioned in table A).

The Government are investing significant funding to enhance school sports facilities across England. The New Opportunities for PE and Sport Programme is providing £581.25 million in England (£25 million of which has gone towards the Space for Sport and the Arts Programme) and schools from all local education authority areas are benefiting. The Space for Sport and the Arts Programme is providing £130 million to support projects at primary schools in 65 target areas; £4,310,000 will be invested in Wigan to build sustainable school sports facilities. All funds from these programmes have now been allocated to local authorities and schools.

Table A: NDS allocations to schools in the Wigan constituency

Year/School	*Project*	*Package*	*Funding (£)*
1997/98			
Wigan St. Andrew's CofE Junior and Infant School	To renew a backlog of defective roof coverings	LEA wide grant	720,000
Mab's Cross Primary School	To renew a backlog of defective roof coverings	LEA wide grant	720,000
Pemberton Primary and Nursery School	Major repair and replacement of decrepit WC blocks	LEA wide grant	720,000
Beech Hill Community Primary School	Major repair and replacement of decrepit WC blocks	LEA wide grant	720,000
Mere Oaks School	Major repair and replacement of decrepit WC blocks	LEA wide grant	720,000
1998/99			
Beech Hill Community Primary School	Replacement of dining hall/kitchen	—	439,600
2000/01			
The Deanery CofE High School	Replacement of dilapidated accommodation	—	150,000
Scot Lane Community Primary School	Toilet Refurbishment (Group 1)	Project including 13 schools	362,840
Mab's Cross Primary School	Toilet Refurbishment (Group 1)	Project including 13 schools	362,840

Table B: Capital allocations: Wigan local education authority

£000

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Additional NDS Grant (615)	—	—	—	—	—	200	—	—
Assistance with AMPs	—	—	—	42	—	—	—	—
Basic L C Vap	—	—	—	—	—	130	743	958
Basic Need	2,784	1,685	1,529	4,210	4,318	1,640	4,382	5,927
Class Size initiative	—	—	670	1,124	237	—	—	—
Condition	—	—	—	—	—	1,620	3,291	4,464
Devolved Formula	—	—	—	—	2,279	2,200	2,874	4,478
Energy	—	—	99	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation	—	—	—	—	—	—	1,338	2,745
NDS 1	—	720	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 2	—	—	2,618	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 3	—	—	—	3,797	—	—	—	—
NDS 4	—	—	—	—	4,055	—	—	—
Nursery Provision	—	—	—	—	69	—	—	—
School Labs	—	—	—	—	202	202	—	—
School Security	—	84	105	106	105	74	64	—
Schools Access Initiative	90	30	71	150	210	324	455	661
Schools Renewal Challenge Fund	264	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Secondary Learning Support Units	—	—	—	—	79	85	108	—
Seed Challenge	—	—	—	—	206	232	394	393
Specialist Schools	—	—	—	100	100	—	200	—
Staff Workspace	—	—	—	—	—	—	79	164

Table B: Capital allocations: Wigan local education authority

£000

	1996–97	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Successful Speculative Bids	—	—	—	—	—	—	437	—
Supplementary Credit Approvals	581	1,586	1,279	228	—	—	—	—
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools	—	—	—	—	126	18	—	—
Targeted Capital Funding	—	—	—	—	—	468	—	—
Voluntary Aided School Grant	757	2,367	2,907	1,036	829	1,111	1,457	—

To date we have allocated £20.5 million capital funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Positive Activities for Young People

Diana Organ: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills why the money for the Positive Activities for Young People Initiative is not paid directly to youth and community services. [169880]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Positive Activities for Young People is a targeted programme that aims to provide diversionary and developmental activities for young people aged eight to 19 years who are at risk of social exclusion or committing crime. There was no one organisation at the local level which covered the whole age group or range of activities. In order to meet the above objectives and to ensure that regional needs and priorities were met, Government Offices were chosen to administer the programme. It is also the role of Government Offices to work with local partners such as Youth Offending Teams and Behaviour Improvement Programme schools to ensure that the target group of young people is reached.

52 Lead Delivery Agents (LDAs) have been appointed across England to manage the delivery of the programme and the performance of the providers delivering the activities. In eight of the 52 areas the LDA role is performed by the Local Authority Youth Service.

SATs

Stephen Hesford: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the Key Stage One pilots; and if he will make a statement. [169790]

Mr. Miliband: The trial started in September 2003 and will cover the 2004 Key Stage 1 assessments, which are not due to be completed until the second half of the summer term. It is therefore too early to have made an assessment of the trial at this stage.

QCA has commissioned an independent evaluation from Leeds university which will focus on a representative sample of 150 of the 5,000 schools taking part in the trial. The evaluation will look at workload and whether the new arrangements ensure really robust and comparable results that can be used as a basis for calculating value-added. We expect a full report to be ready at the beginning of September.

School Sports

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the level of investment in school sports in Wigan since 1997. [169275]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The information is not held in the format requested. Within the context of the statutory National Curriculum, where Physical Education (PE) is compulsory for pupils aged 5–16, it is for individual schools to use their budgets as they judge appropriate.

The Government are investing more than £1 billion in England to transform PE, school sport and club links. The funding will help deliver an ambitious Public Service Agreement target, shared with the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, to increase the percentage of 5–16 year olds who spend a minimum of two hours each week on high quality PE and school sport within and beyond the curriculum to 75 per cent. by 2006.

The Department is providing just over £830,000.00 to support the delivery of a School Sport Partnership in the Wigan LEA area. The partnership includes 14 secondary and 40 primary schools and provides enhanced sports opportunities for all young people to ensure that their pupils spend a minimum of two hours a week on high quality PE and School Sport. A key objective for all School Sport Partnerships is to ensure that the improvements and enhanced opportunities that they deliver are sustainable and embedded within schools to ensure a lasting legacy. The New Opportunities Fund has provided schools in the Wigan LEA area with over £4.3 million specifically to enhance PE and school sport facilities.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been invested in Heywood and Middleton since 1997 to build long-term sustainable facilities for school sports. [169439]

Mr. Miliband: We do not hold information at constituency level. The majority of capital funding is now allocated to schools and authorities by needs-related formulae. This enables them to decide how to target the rapidly increasing resources to address their highest priority needs in line with local asset management plans. I would direct my hon. Friend to the answer I gave to his question 168497, which lists capital allocations made to Rochdale local education authority since 1997. Rochdale also received £2,873,000 in November 2001 under the New Opportunities PE and Sports Programme, which is administered by the New Opportunities Fund.

School Tests

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the merits of performance testing in schools. [169953]

Mr. Miliband: Assessment is an integral part of teaching and learning. National Curriculum testing provides an objective means of testing all children in the country on a consistent basis. It is an important part of

the overall drive to raise standards in the core subjects at the primary and secondary stages and lays firm foundations for future learning.

The information from testing helps teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses, which can then be used to inform teaching and learning. It allows us to compare the progress of children in different schools and provides parents with clear feedback against national standards.

Mr. Cummings: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what percentage of 11-year-old pupils in the Easington constituency, broken down by school, have reached level four in mathematics and English in the last four years; and if he will make a statement. [168070]

Mr. Miliband: The results from the 2003 National Curriculum tests showed that 75 per cent. of 11-year-olds in England reached Level 4 in English and 73 per cent. in mathematics. These results represent a significant improvement in standards—of 12 percentage points in English and 11 percentage points in mathematics—since 1997, reflecting the impact of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies on primary schools. We remain absolutely committed, through our new Primary Strategy, to supporting schools to achieve the ambitious targets we have set for standards of literacy and numeracy.

The results for Easington constituency as a whole, are slightly below the national average in English and above the national average for mathematics and show only a small improvement in mathematics since 2000.

The results for Easington constituency broken down by school are as follows:

	Percentage of pupils achieving level 4							
	2003		*2002*		*2001*		*2000*	
School Name	*English*	*Maths*	*English*	*Maths*	*English*	*Maths*	*English*	*Maths*
Acre Rigg Junior School	68	61	73	62	57	66	73	60
Blackball Colliery Primary School	51	60	64	71	71	63	80	75
Cotsford Junior School	68	77	71	82	78	85	78	70
Dene House Primary School	64	68	63	63	69	75	82	76
Deneside Junior School	51	59	78	77	73	67	38	53
Easington CofE Primary School	100	75	83	83	73	67	71	82
Easington Colliery Primary School	70	67	58	65	76	55	60	51
Eden Community Primary School	60	42	—	—	—	—	—	—
Eden Hall Junior School	—	—	56	53	50	66	56	62
Haswell Primary School	54	54	20	27	50	29	58	47
Hesleden Primary School	85	92	86	86	63	74	87	67
Howletch Lane Primary School	89	91	68	88	86	90	84	87
Murton Jubilee Primary School	75	88	93	85	64	89	74	84
Murton Primary School	70	91	90	97	71	75	63	73
New Seaham Primary School	84	93	86	95	83	90	90	100
North Blunts Primary School	74	83	70	76	66	59	50	43
Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary	90	85	85	69	88	88	89	89
Our Lady of the Rosary Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary	84	91	73	75	79	86	81	75
Our Lady Star of the Sea Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary	62	81	68	75	84	68	81	81
Princess Road Junior School	66	56	68	50	67	73	65	76
Ropery Walk Primary School	63	56	81	81	77	77	76	79
Shotton Hall Junior School	85	81	70	79	75	76	82	75
Shotton Primary School	59	65	57	59	63	57	65	64
South Hetton Primary School	76	76	94	97	100	96	88	88
St Cuthbert's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School	72	72	84	94	88	96	79	86
St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School	88	88	100	100	91	100	100	83
St. Mary Magdalen's Roman Catholic Voluntary Aided Primary School	79	86	76	79	96	87	91	91
Westlea Primary School	80	89	73	89	84	87	71	63
Yohden Primary School	65	74	63	67	57	71	55	72
Easington Constituency (all schools)	71	73	71	74	73	74	71	
England (all schools)	75	73	75	73	75	71	75	72

Note:
The results for St Joseph's Catholic Primary School, Murton and Glendene School have been suppressed as there are less than 11 pupils at Key Stage 2

Schools (External Controls)

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list *(a)* each of the external controls over schools referred to in the document, "Devolved Decision Making: Delivering Better Public Services: Refining Targets and Performance Management", and *(b)* the purpose of each. [165293]

Mr. Stephen Twigg: The definition of external control used in the document is a very broad one. The list identified includes very few direct requirements of schools, but rather a wide range of school performance measures, the majority of which are attributable to Ofsted and their arrangements for conducting section 10 inspections. These place no performance management requirements on schools as nearly all of them are graded judgments made by inspectors when they visit a school on, currently, a six-year cycle.

Ofsted have recently consulted on and are reviewing their current arrangements for school inspection to ensure that parents, teachers, Government and the public continue to receive full, frank, relevant and more frequent information about the performance of schools whilst reducing the burden of inspection. The Department is also currently consulting on an approach to a school profile through which the schools' performance would be recorded.

Secondary School Places

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many vacant secondary school places there were in Northamptonshire, broken down by *(a)* school year group, *(b)* borough or district area and *(c)* individual establishment, at the start of the spring term of the school year 2003–04. [169941]

Mr. Miliband: The following table shows the number of surplus secondary school places in Northamptonshire broken down by individual establishment. The figures state the position at the beginning of the calendar year beginning 2003 rather than the school year.

We do not collect surplus place data by school year group, or borough or district area.

Number of surplus places in secondary schools in Northamptonshire at January 2003

Secondary school name	*Surplus places*
Sponne School	0
Montsaye Community College	1
Huxlow School	86
Ise Community College	92
Moulton School	0
Roade School Sports College	0
Daventry William Parker School	18
Wollaston School	0
Kingsbrook School	0
Guilsborough School	0
Campion School	0
Prince William School	108
Danetre School	148
Latimer Community Arts College	35
Trinity School	313
Delapre Middle School	143
Cherry Orchard Middle School	10
Kingsthorpe Middle Community School	0
Cliftonville Middle School	212
Duston Upper School	117
Weston Favell Upper School	41
Abington Vale Middle School	3
Mereway Upper School	257
Lings Upper School	302
Kingsthorpe Community College	153
Goldings Middle School	118
Ryelands Middle School	11
Parklands Middle School	1
The Northampton School for Girls	0
Boothville Middle School	4
Blackthorn Middle School	194
Millway Middle School	0
Chenderit School	0
Spencer Middle School	142
Oundle and King's Cliffe Middle School	107
The Ferrers School	13
Ecton Brook Middle School	0
The Rushden School	288
Mereway Middle School	0
Corby Community College	240
Magdalen College School	92
Bishop Stopford School	0
All Saints Church of England Middle School	0
St. David's Catholic Middle School	14
Our Lady and Pope John Catholic Secondary School	177
St. Mary's Catholic Middle School; Northampton	87
Thomas Becket Catholic Upper School	91
Emmanuel CofE Voluntary Aided Middle School	131
Southfield School for Girls	29
Kingsley Park Middle School	83
The Kingswood School	0
The King John School	112
Northampton School for Boys	175
Lodge Park Technology College	29
Manor School	0
Montagu School	0
Weavers School	230
Sir Christopher Hatton School	74
Wrenn School	117
Total	4,598

Student Statistics

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the staying-on rate at 16 years is for *(a)* Canvey Island, *(b)* Castle Point, *(c)* Essex and *(d)* England. [169796]

Mr. Miliband: Data on the percentage of students staying on in full-time education and education and training is not calculated for areas smaller than local education authorities (LEAs) as reliable estimates cannot be made.

Canvey Island and Castle Point are part of Essex LEA. The percentage of 16-year-olds participating in full-time education, and in education and training in Essex LEA and in England for the latest academic year, as at end 2001, are shown in the table.

Participation in education and training by 16-year-olds in Essex LEA and in England for end 2001

	Essex LEA	*England*
Full-time education	70	71
Education and training[1]	79	82

[1] Includes participation in full-time education, part-time education and government supported training.

Source:

DfES Statistical Bulletin 01/2004, published 26 February 2004.

Participation rates by LEA for 16-year-olds are published in an annual statistical bulletin, 'Participation in Education and Training by 16 and 17-year-olds in Each Local Area in England'.

Teachers' Visas

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether at any future Ofsted inspection of schools account will be taken of the consequences of the moratorium on issuing visas to teachers appointed to meet the teaching skills and recruitment shortage in schools in Essex and Thurrock, pending the result of the inquiry and visits to Sofia of Mr. Ken Sutton; and if he will make a statement. [170029]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* This is a matter for Ofsted. HM Chief Inspector, David Bell, will write to my hon. Friend and place a copy of his letter in the Library.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Leaseholders (Buildings Insurance)

Sue Doughty: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he will implement the parts of the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002 that will allow leaseholders to choose their own buildings insurance; and if he will make a statement. [169923]

Keith Hill: Our original intention was to make an Order by May 2004 bringing into force the remaining provisions of the Commonhold and Leasehold Reform Act 2002. These provisions include those relating to property insurance for leasehold houses, accounting and forfeiture. However, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister needs to consult on the accounting provisions that form part of this Order, allowing a three-month consultation period. We now anticipate the Order being made in November 2004.

Civil Servants

Bob Spink: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list for each civil service grade within his *(a)* Department and *(b)* Department's executive agencies, the total number of staff employed, broken down by (i) gender, (ii) ethnic group and (iii) age group; and how many are registered disabled. [166387]

Yvette Cooper: Data on staffing levels in the civil service is collected by the Cabinet Office and published in Civil Service Statistics. A copy of Civil Service Statistics, 2002 is available in the Library of the House, and at; www.civil-service.gov.uk/statistics. The 2003 edition will be published in summer 2004.

In addition, our Departmental Annual Report also contains staffing information. A copy of the 2004 report is available in the Library of the House.

Departmental Buildings

Mr. Llwyd: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what *(a)* renovation and *(b)* maintenance projects on buildings (i) owned and (ii) rented by his Department were undertaken in each of the last five years; and what the associated costs were of each. [163957]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was established in May 2002. Since that date the following renovation and maintenance projects have been undertaken at the properties (i) owned and (ii) rented by the office. All figures are exclusive of VAT.

£

	2002–03		2003–04	
	Renovation	*Maintenance*	*Renovation*	*Maintenance*
(i) Owned				
Burlington House	0	98,000	25,000	55,000
QEII Conference Centre	0	139,418	400,000	3,127,511
Fire Service College	230,257	108,097	956,008	182,151
Government Office Network	0	0	0	0
(ii) Rented				
ODPM—HQ buildings	2,088,941	0	298,263	649,394
PINS—Temple Quay Bristol	0	0	0	109,316
Fire Service Improvement—Marchington	0	42,416	0	52,766
Valuation Tribunal Office Network	42,822	255,204	115,166	193,059
Government Office Network	102,351	143,000	608,989	191,740

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister records an item of work as a project if it exceeds £15,000. Work of lower value is funded from bulk maintenance. The number of projects has prevented detailing each, as this could have been provided only at disproportionate cost.

The figures provided are gross expenditure and do not reflect receipts from other building occupants. Although the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has overall responsibility for the buildings occupied by Government offices, they carry out functions on behalf of 10 Departments.

Housing Developments (Milton Keynes/South Midlands)

Mr. Lidington: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will place in the Library a copy of the submissions made by the Government Office for the South East to the Examination in Public of plans for housing developments in the Milton Keynes and South Midlands area to 2031. [170356]

Keith Hill: The submission of GOSE to the Milton Keynes and South Midlands sub regional strategy public examination is contained in the joint submission by GOEE, GOEM and GOSE.

Copies of the joint submission have been made available in the Library of the House.

Hunting (Tied Properties)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what plans he has to protect the tenancy rights of those employed by a hunt living in a tied property in the event of a ban on hunting being introduced. [170133]

Keith Hill: The Rent (Agriculture) Act 1976, which provides housing security for qualifying agricultural workers living in tied accommodation, takes its definition of agriculture from the Agriculture Wages Act 1948. The definition does not extend to workers employed solely in activities not related to agriculture such as gamekeeping and hunting. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has no plans to extend the definition to cover such activities.

Retained Distribution Centre

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the publications and other products distributed from his retained distribution centre. [169367]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's publications distribution centre holds over 1,300 items for distribution. A list of publications and other products has been made available in the Library of the House.

Roadside Advertising

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice his Department offers local authorities regarding positioning of roadside and roundabout advertising. [170451]

Keith Hill: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given on 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1332W.

Town Centres

Mr. Stringer: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) when he intends to publish the final version of PPS6; [169866]

(2) how many responses have been received to the consultation paper Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 6: Planning for Town Centres; and if he will list them; [169867]

(3) how many organisations and individuals were invited to respond to Planning Policy Statement (PPS) 6: Planning for Town Centres; and if he will list them. [169868]

Keith Hill: Draft PPS6: Planning for Town Centres was published on 15 December 2003, was launched by my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister, was widely publicised, put on the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's website and some 500 copies were sent to a standard list of consultees, including all local authorities, relevant professional and trade bodies, plus investors, developers, retailers, leisure operators and environmental groups—in line with the guidelines on consultation at that time. The consultation closed on 15 March 2004.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has received 384 responses to date, which officials are currently analysing. All responses, except those where the respondent did not agree to their response being made public, will be made available in the library of the House, consistent with normal practice, when the final version of PPS6 is published in the autumn.

Traffic and Community Wardens

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the responsibilities of *(a)* traffic wardens and *(b)* community wardens are. [168255]

Yvette Cooper: Traffic wardens are civilian employees of police authorities, but act under the direction of chief officers of police. Section 95 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 makes provision for them to discharge duties, including law enforcement, normally undertaken by the police in connection with the control and regulation of traffic and stationary vehicles. These functions relate to the control and regulation of, and enforcement of the law relating to, traffic, including pedestrians and stationery vehicles. Traffic wardens can also require vehicles to stop for specific purposes. The powers conferred on traffic wardens and the duties they may undertake are prescribed very precisely by the Home Secretary in the Functions of Traffic Wardens Order 1970, as amended.

Part 1 of the Traffic Management Bill empowers the Secretary of State for Transport as the traffic authority for trunk roads in England, and the National Assembly for Wales as the traffic authority for trunk roads in Wales, to establish a uniformed on-road traffic officer service to manage the traffic consequences of random incidents such as breakdowns, obstructions, debris and accidents.

The Bill enables traffic officers to carry out certain traffic management functions currently carried out on trunk roads by the police in order to deal with incidents and keep traffic moving. Specifically the Bill would provide traffic officers with powers to stop and direct traffic and to place and operate traffic signs. These powers are similar to those of the police and may only be exercised in order to:

assist the movement of traffic;

prevent or reduce congestion;

avoid danger to persons or traffic; or

prevent damage to anything on or near the road.

The traffic officer service will comprise uniformed officials patrolling motorways and trunk roads in England around the clock. They will be appointed by the Highways Agency directly, although the Bill allows flexibility for the service to be contracted out should it ever be decided that this is in the public interest.

Responsibilities for community wardens vary according to local priorities. Wardens and warden schemes do however need to fulfil the four broad categories of environmental improvements, community safety and crime prevention, community development and housing regeneration. They provide a link between local residents and key agencies such as local authorities and the police. And they encourage neighbourhoods to develop innovative ways to tackle their environmental problems and the behaviours that create an atmosphere of neglect and encourage crime.

Unoccupied Property

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister (1) how many unoccupied non-domestic properties paid empty property business rates in England in each year since 1997; [169485]

(2) how many unoccupied industrial properties were exempt from property business rates in England in each year since 1997. [169492]

Mr. Raynsford: Local authorities have reported that 240,830 non-domestic properties in England received empty premises relief in 2002–03. The latest available figure for 2003–04 is 237,035, as estimated by local authorities in early 2003. Figures were not collected centrally for earlier years, and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Information on the number of unoccupied industrial properties in England that are not required to pay business rates is not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many empty residential dwellings there were in England in each year since 1997. [169486]

Keith Hill: The available information on empty residential dwellings in England is tabled as follows. This data has been provided from a combination of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's Housing Investment Programme return and Housing Corporation's Regulatory Statistical Return.

Vacant dwelling stock, England 1997–2003

	HIP and RSR[2]
1997	767,000
1998	753,000
1999	767,000
2000	761,000
2001	751,000
2002	732,000
2003	720,000

Note:
Figures presented to the nearest thousand.
Sources:
ODPM's Housing Investment Programme return and Housing Corporation's Regulatory Statistical Return.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Indonesia

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the recent violence in Aceh. [169154]

Mr. Straw: The British Government regularly raise their concerns about the situation in Aceh with the Indonesian Government, most recently on 20 April 2004 when the British ambassador to Jakarta called on the Indonesian Head of the armed forces, General Sutarto. My hon. Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Mike O'Brien) also raised Aceh with the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr. Wirayuda, when he met him at the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kildare on 18 April.

There continue to be reports of human rights abuses perpetrated by the Free Aceh Movement (the GAM) and the Indonesian armed forces. We are monitoring the situation closely. The Indonesian military has said that it will continue to court-martial soldiers arrested on suspicion of human rights abuses.

We, with our EU partners, continue to urge the Indonesian Government to return to the negotiating table as soon as possible, as only negotiation will offer a long-term solution to this ongoing conflict.

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on end use monitoring of UK arms exports used in Aceh by Indonesian forces. [169155]

Mr. Straw: Our embassy in Jakarta receives information from a wide a range of sources including international agencies, NGOs, other observers, the media and the Indonesian Government as part of their efforts to monitor the use of British-built military equipment. We have had no confirmed reports that British-built military equipment has been used other than for protection and evacuation purposes. We will follow up all credible allegations on the misuse of British-military equipment.

On 18 April 2004 at the Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM) Foreign Ministers' Meeting in Kildare, my hon. Friend the Minister of State at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (Mr. Mike O'Brien) raised with the Indonesian Foreign Minister, Dr Wirayuda, the use of British-built military equipment in Aceh.

On 20 April 2004 the British ambassador to Jakarta met the Indonesian Head of the armed forces, General Sutarto. General Sutarto told our ambassador that he had ordered the withdrawal of all remaining British equipment from Aceh. The only British-built equipment in Aceh are armoured vehicles and they have only been used for supply convoy protection and casualty evacuation.

Conflict Prevention Pool

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the progress of the independent evaluations of the Global Conflict Prevention Pool and the African Conflict Prevention Pool. [170087]

Mr. Rammell: The joint external evaluation of the Africa Conflict Prevention Pool and the Global Conflict Prevention Pool began in June 2003. The fact-finding phase was completed in December 2003 and a final draft report including a synthesis of the main findings and recommendations has now been produced.

The evaluators concluded that the Conflict Prevention Pools are funding worthwhile activities, which make positive contributions to effective conflict prevention, and that the progress achieved through the Pools mechanisms is significant enough to justify their continuation. They also considered that the Pools were demonstrating increasingly good joined-up working between the three Departments.

The interim conclusions of the evaluation helped inform recent work on the Spending Review 2004 process.

Final editing of the Evaluation report is now being done. In summer 2004, the Evaluation, and the Government's response to it, will be published and made available to the House.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how often the joint steering team responsible for the Global Conflict Prevention Pool has met in each year since 2001–02. [170088]

Mr. Rammell: The Steering Team of the Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) comprises officials from FCO, MOD and DfID as well as representatives of HM Treasury and Cabinet Office.

They have met, usually fortnightly, throughout each year since the GCPP's inception in April 2001, although at busier times they meet every week.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what funds were allocated to the *(a)* Global Conflict Prevention Pool and *(b)* African Conflict Prevention Pool in each year since 2001–02; and how much was spent in each year. [170090]

Mr. Rammell: The budget and spend information requested for *(a)* The Global Conflict Prevention Pool (GCPP) is as follows:

To nearest £ million

Financial year	*Funds allocated*	*Spend*
2001–02	60	50
2002–03	68	66
2003–04	74	[1]86

[1] Current forecast—departmental accounts to be finalised in summer 2004.
Note:
Does not include Peacekeeping figures.

The budget and spend information requested for *(b)* The Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) is as follows:

To nearest £ million

Financial year	*Funds allocated*	*Spend*
2001–02	50	43
2002–03	50	45
2003–04	50	[1]40+

[1] Current forecast—departmental accounts to be finalised in summer 2004.
Note:
Does not include Peacekeeping figures.

Hong Kong

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will make a statement on the decision of the National People's Congress Standing Committee on 26 April to refuse to introduce universal suffrage for the election of the Hong Kong Chief Executive in 2007. [169852]

Mr. Rammell: On 26 April, I issued a press release about the Chinese National People's Congress decision on constitutional development in Hong Kong.

The record of the statement can be found on the British Consulate General in Hong Kong's website at www.britishconsulate.org.hk/english/press/pr040426.htm.

Iraq

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department had on how the UN Oil For Food programme in Iraq was audited. [169700]

Mr. Rammell: The management and administration of the Oil For Food (OFF) programme was carried out by the UN's Office of the Iraq Programme under a mandate from UN Security Council resolutions. Regular reports were made to and discussed by the UN Security Council. In light of on-going allegations of corruption during the lifetime of the OFF programme, the UK fully supports the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1538 (21 April 2004) endorsing a high-level independent inquiry into the management and administration of the programme, and will co-operate fully with that inquiry.

Tony Baldry: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions he has had with other UN Security Council members on the fee levied by the UN for operating the Oil For Food programme in Iraq. [169701]

Mr. Rammell: The Government had regular discussions with the UK's Security Council partners on all aspects of the operation of the Oil For Food (OFF) programme until it ended on 21 November 2003. In light of ongoing allegations of corruption during the lifetime of the OFF programme, the UK fully supports the adoption of UN Security Council Resolution 1538 (21 April 2004) endorsing a high-level independent inquiry into the management and administration of the programme, and will co-operate fully with that inquiry.

Ministerial Visits

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the overseas visits made by each Minister in his Department in financial year 2003–04. [169754]

Mr. Straw: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. The details for the financial year 2003–04 will be published as soon as possible. During the financial year 2003–04 other Foreign and Commonwealth Office Ministers made the following overseas visits:

Dr. Denis MacShane MP, Minister of State

Date	*Destination*	*Purpose of trip*
3 April 2003	Riga	Joint bilateral visit to Latvia with French Europe Minister
6–8 April 2003	Belgrade, Pristina, Skopje	Bilateral visits to the Balkans
14 April 2003	Luxembourg	General Affairs and External Relations Council
16–17 April 2003	Athens	Informal European Council, Signature of the Accession Treaty and European Conference
29 April 2003	The Hague	Attend Conference on Chemical Weapons Convention
5 May 2003	Brussels	Bilateral
10–12 May 2003	Valletta	Bilateral
15–16 May 2003	Berlin	Konigswinter Conference
19 May 2003	Brussels	General Affairs and External Relations Council
29–31 May 2003	Warsaw	Bilateral
6 June 2003	Madrid	Bilateral
19–21 June 2003	Porto Caras	European Council and EU/Western Balkans Summit
26 June 2003	Rome	Bilateral
30 June 2003	Amsterdam	Apeldoorn Conference
3–4 July 2003	Gibraltar	Bilateral
3–5 September 2003	Oslo and Helsinki	Bilaterals
14–15 September 2003	Kiev	Bilateral

Dr. Denis MacShane MP, Minister of State

Date	Destination	Purpose of trip
19–21 September 2003	Pontignano	Pontignano Conference
21–22 September 2003	Paris and Strasbourg	Bilaterals
29 September 2003	Brussels	General Affairs and External Relations Council
7–11 October 2003	Bucharest, Sofia and Hydra	Bucharest and Sofia: Bilaterals Hydra: Hydra Conference
16–17 October 2003	Brussels	European Council
13–15 November 2003	Madrid and Berlin	Madrid: Bilateral Berlin: BMW European Forum
17–18 November 2003	Brussels	General Affairs and External Relations Council
1–4 December 2003	Maastricht and Naples	OSCE Ministerial Council in The Netherlands and Euromed Conference in Italy
8 December 2003	Brussels	General Affairs and External Relations Council
11–13 December 2003	Brussels	European Council
12–14 January 2004	Ankara, Istanbul and Izmir	Bilateral
20 January 2004	Paris	Bilateral
26 January 2004	Brussels	General Affairs and External Relations Council
30 January 2004	Berlin	Bilateral
6–8 February 2004	Madrid	Bilateral
10 February 2004	Vienna	Bilateral
17–19 February 2004	Amsterdam	Bilateral
23–24 February 2004	Berne	Bilateral
27–28 February 2004	Venice	Aspen European Dialogue Conference
3–4 March 2004	Stockholm	Bilateral
5 March 2004	Skopje	Funeral of Macedonian President
25–26 March 2004	Brussels	Bilateral visit and to attend the European Council

Mike O'Brien MP, Minister of State

Date	Destination	Purpose of trip
1 April 2003	NATO SHAPE, Belgium	Meetings with UK Military Representation and SACEUR
12–14 April 2003	Tehran, Damascus	Bilaterals
26–29 April 2003	Baghdad	Central Iraq Conference
19–21 May 2003	Algiers	Bilateral
22 May 2003	Paris	Conference on Drug Routes
2–5 June 2003	Jakarta	Bilateral
6 July 2003	Palermo	Informal EU Trade Ministers Conference
19–21 July 2003	Beijing	Accompanying the Prime Minister and Trade Delegation on bilateral visit to China
22–25 July 2003	Bali	ASEM Foreign Ministers' Meeting
8–16 September 2003	Cancun	WTO Ministerial Conference
16 October 2003	Berlin	Bilateral
21–24 October 2003	Kabul	Bilateral
2–4 November 2003	Washington	Bilateral
8–12 December 2003	Islamabad and Karachi	Bilaterals
4–8 January 2004	New Delhi and Hyderabad	Bilaterals
26 January 2004	Cannes	Attend MIDEM (Music Industry event)
10–12 February 2004	Casablanca and Rabat	Bilaterals
15–18 March 2004	Ho Chi Minh City and Hanoi	Bilaterals
22–23 March 2004	Warsaw	Bilateral

Baroness Symons of Vernham Dean, Minister of State

Date	Destination	Purpose of trip
30 April 2003	Paris	OECD Trade Ministerial
16 May 03	Washington	Bilateral
15–15 July 2003	Jordan	Bilateral
3 September 2003	Vienna	Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Conference
15–18 September 2003	Morocco and Tunisia	Bilateral
23–25 September 2003	New York	United Nations General Assembly
29 September to 1 October 2003	Israel	Bilateral
8–9 October 2003	Iraq	Bilateral
22–24 October 2003	Madrid	Iraq Donors' Conference
18–20 November 2003	Lebanon	Bilateral
1–2 December 2003	Istanbul	Response to the terrorist attacks against the British Consulate General and HSBC Bank
4 December 2003	Brussels	NATO Foreign Ministerial
8–9 December 2003	Syria	Bilateral
21–23 January 2004	Occupied Territories	Bilateral
23–26 February 2004	Bahrain and Qatar	Bilateral
9–11 March 2004	Jordan	Bilateral
19–19 March 2004	Iraq	Bilateral

Baroness Amos of Asthal, the then Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

Date	Destination	Purpose of trip
1–6 April 2003	Botswana and South Africa	Bilaterals
14–17 April 2003	Mali	G8 Meeting
5–8 May 2003	Dominican Republic	Bilateral

Chris Mullin MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

Date	Destination	Purpose of trip
21–25 July 2003	Ghana, Nigeria and Sierra Leone	Bilaterals
28 October to 5 November 2003	Kenya and South Africa	Bilaterals
2–8 December 03	Abuja	Commonwealth Heads of Government meeting
12–20 January 2004	Ethiopia, Djibouti and Eritrea	Bilaterals
3–6 February 2004	Washington and New York	Liberia Donors' Conference
23–24 February 2004	Paris	Bilateral to discuss Africa

Bill Rammell MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

Date	Destination	Purpose of trip
31 March to 1 April 2003	Washington	Bilateral
11–15 May 2003	Brazil and Colombia	Fundacion Euroamerica Conference
21 May 2003	Stockholm	G8 Global Partnership on WMD—Signing MNEPR Treaty
26–27 May 2003	Crete	Euromed Conference
12–13 June 2003	New York	Conflict Prevention Conference, International Peace Academy
18 June 2003	Madrid	Bilateral
22–27 July 2003	Kabul	Bilateral
6–21 August 2003	Papua New Guinea, Australia, New Zealand and Solomon Islands	Bilateral and attendance at the Pacific Islands Forum (New Zealand)

Bill Rammell MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State

Date	*Destination*	*Purpose of trip*
20–24 September 2003	New York	United Nations General Assembly bilateral meetings
9–10 October 2003	Dublin	Address to Trinity College
16 October 2003	Rome	EU Ministerial meeting
26–31 October 2003	Mexico and Majorca	Mexico: Bilaterals Majorca: Launch of the Travel Foundation for Sustainable Tourism
14 November 2003	Washington	Bilaterals on Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea, Counter-Narcotics and UN Reform
29 November to 3 December 2003	Falkland Islands and Chile	Falkland Islands: meetings Chile: Bilateral
16–19 December 2003	Beijing and Hong Kong	Beijing: Bilaterals and a speech at the Central Party School Hong Kong: Bilaterals
13–18 January 2004	Guatemala and Belize	Joint trip with Spanish Minister Cortes to Guatemala to attend the swearing-in ceremony of President Berger. Bilaterals in Guatemala and Belize.
25–26 January 2004	Stockholm	Stockholm International Forum preventing Genocide: Threats and Responsibilities
1–3 February 2004	Washington and New York	Washington: Bilaterals New York: Bilaterals and a speech on the UN
15–20 February 2004	Argentina and Uruguay	Bilaterals
2–5 March 2004	Jamaica, Barbados and Trinidad	Jamaica: Round table with CARICOM and Bilaterals Barbados and Trinidad: Bilaterals
18 March 2004	Geneva	UNCHR

President of Poland (Official Visit)

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many hon. Members other than Privy Councillors have been sent invitations to banquets, receptions and other official events organised or hosted by the *(a)* Royal Family and *(b)* Government for the forthcoming visit of the President of Poland; and if he will make a statement. [170355]

Mr. MacShane: President Kwasniewski of Poland's State Visit will take place from 5 to 7 May. 106 Members of Parliament have been invited to hear President Kwasniewski's keynote speech at University College London on 5 May, 72 of whom are not Privy Councillors. 10 MPs have been invited to the State Banquet at Buckingham Palace, four of whom are not Privy Councillors and one MP who is not a Privy Councillor, has been invited to a reception for the Polish community at St. James's Palace the same night.

Four MPs have been invited to a seminar on economic reform to be held at Lancaster House on 6 May, two of whom are not Privy Councillors. 10 MPs have received invitations to the dinner given by President Kwasniewski at the Dorchester Hotel that night, of whom three are not Privy Councillors. 48 MPs have received invitations to a lunch at the Guildhall in honour of President Kwasniewski on 7 May, 35 of whom are not Privy Councillors.

CABINET OFFICE

Panel for Regulatory Accountability

Brian Cotter: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office under what criteria a draft regulation will be referred to the Panel for Regulatory Accountability. [167508]

Mr. Alexander: As set out in the Budget documentation, any regulatory proposal likely to impose a major new burden on business will require clearance from the Panel for Regulatory Accountability, chaired by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, based on a thorough impact assessment of the proposal agreed by the Cabinet Office Regulatory Impact Unit.

The criteria for defining major proposals will be based on that set out in the Regulatory Impact Assessment guidance available at www.cabinet-office.gov.uk/regulation and copies are available in the Library.

Brian Cotter: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will make a statement on the *(a)* role, *(b)* function and *(c)* membership of the Panel for Regulatory Accountability. [167509]

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will set out the reformed functions of the Panel for Regulatory Accountability. [169017]

Mr. Alexander: The role of the Panel for Regulatory Accountability is to clear any regulatory proposal likely to impose a major new burden on business. The panel will consider all such proposals in the context of Departments' previous regulatory performance and the overall burden of regulation across key business sectors.

Apart from chairmanship by my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister, the membership of the panel remains unchanged, and information on the existing Panel can be found on the Cabinet Office website at www.cabinet-office.gov.uk and in the Library.

Public Bodies

Mr. Edward Davey: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office when he expects the next version of Public Bodies to be published. [169115]

Mr. Alexander: For 2004, the Cabinet Office are replacing the existing publication with a searchable database, accessible via the internet. Development and testing are continuing, but it is hoped the results will be available before the end of 2004.

Emergency Planning

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what the civil contingencies grant for emergency planning to *(a)* North Yorkshire, *(b)* the City of York, *(c)* Hambleton district council and *(d)* Harrogate borough council was in each year since 2000. [165088]

Mr. Alexander: The Civil Defence Grant is paid as a contribution to the cost of civil protection at the local level. The level of funding available for counter terrorism and civil protection has substantially increased in recent years, including £330 million for counter terrorism work in the 2003 Budget.

179 local authorities are eligible for the Civil Defence Grant. These are the authorities with a statutory duty for civil defence, namely county councils, metropolitan districts and London boroughs, unitary authorities, and Fire and Civil Defence Authorities. Shire districts, such as Hambleton and Harrogate, have no statutory duty for civil defence and therefore receive no direct funding from central Government. Shire counties carry out emergency planning on behalf of their districts and for this work they receive an additional amount included in their grant allocation, currently set at £12,000 per district.

The allocations of Civil Defence Grant to the authorities of North Yorkshire county council and the City of York council since the financial year 2000–01 are set out in the table. The increase in 2001–02 was due to the suspension of the process of allocating funding by use of a formula. Following negotiations with the local Government Association, the Civil Defence (Grant) Act 2002 re-established a formula, which led to the stabilisation of grant levels in 2002–03.

£

Financial year	*North Yorkshire Civil Defence Grant*	*City of York Civil Defence Grant*
2000–01	161,369	50,525
2001–02	268,150	79,815
2002–03	244,137	71,834
2003–04	244,523	72,220
2004–05	244,523	72,220

Mr. Howell James

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office (1) if he will make a statement on the process which led to the appointment of Mr. Howell James as Permanent Secretary in charge of Government Communications, with particular reference to political involvement; [167779]

(2) by what means the post of Permanent Secretary, Government Communications, was advertised to *(a)* Civil Service candidates and *(b)* the general public; [167780]

(3) how many persons applied for the post of Permanent Secretary, Government Communications; how many were shortlisted; and how many were interviewed; [167781]

(4) if he will list the members of the panel who selected the Permanent Secretary, Government Communications. [167782]

Mr. Alexander: This post was openly advertised in early December, and the usual selection process for appointing Permanent Secretaries was followed and overseen by the First Civil Service Commissioner, Baroness Usha Prashar. The decision to advertise was taken with my agreement.

The post was advertised on the Civil Service Recruitment Gateway website and circulated to members of the Senior Civil Service. An advertisement also appeared in the national press in December. Headhunters were also engaged to complement this process.

Of the 86 people who applied, five were interviewed by the Panel.

The Panel to select the Permanent Secretary, Government Communications was chaired by the First Civil Service Commissioner, Baroness Usha Prashar. Also on the panel were Sir Andrew Turnbull, Head of the Home Civil Service and Secretary to the Cabinet, Sir Richard Mottram, Permanent Secretary of DWP, Bob Phillis, CE Guardian Media Group, and Sally Davis BT Global Products.

As is normal practice, the appointment of Mr. Howell James was approved by the Prime Minister on the recommendation of the Head of the Home Civil Service.

Recycled Paper

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports, in each case stating (i) the name of each paper used and (ii) the (A) recycled and (B) post-consumer recycled content of each paper. [167737]

Mr. Alexander: Information on the Cabinet Office's main suppliers of copier paper, envelopes, stationery and paper for reports are shown in the table.

Percentage

	Supplier	*Name ofpaper used*	*Recycled content*	*Post consumer recycled content*
Copier paper	Banner	A4 Copier	100	100
		A4 Sterling	No, but ECF wood free pulp[1]	
		A4 Office	No, but ECF wood free pulp[1]	
		A4 Value	No, but ECF wood free pulp[1]	
		Various	No	No
	Evolve	A4 Office	100	100
		A3 Office	100	100
	Xerox	Premier	No	No
		Business	No	No
	Alpha	A4 Copier	No	No
	Southern Paper	Duo Office/Duo Copy	No	No
Stationery	Redlin Print	100 gm bond	100	60–100
	Evolve	100 gsm	100	100
	Finesse	Conquera White Wove	No	No

Percentage

	Supplier	*Name ofpaper used*	*Recycled content*	*Post consumer recycled content*
Envelopes	Banner	Cartridge White	No	No
		OHMS 381x254	80–100	60–85
		OHMS 324x229	80–100	60–85
		OHMS 229x162	80–100	60–85
		OHMS 406x305	80–100	60–85
		OHMS 110x220	80–100	60–85
		Plain 324x229	80–100	60–85
		Plain 330x279	80–100	60–85
		Plain 110x220	80–100	60–85
		Plain 324x229	60	40
		Other various	80–100	60–85
	Keepsafe	280x385	No	No
		330x462	No	No
		460x377	No	No
	Survivor	Peel/Seal 324x229x3	No	No
		Peal/Seal 394x305	No	No
	Banner	White Wove	100	80
		Jiffy Padded Bags	No	No
	Finesse	Conquera White Wove	No	No
Reports	Howard Smith	Various	100	75
	Premier	Various	100	75
	Robert Home	Various	100	75
	Macnaughtons	Various	100	75
	Banner	Evolve 80gsm	100	80
		Revive Filk	75	40

[1] Elemental Chlorine Free pulp (ECF) is the process of bleaching the pulp without using harmful chlorine compounds.

Sustainable Development

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office what steps he is taking to promote the delivery of sustainable development within Government. [167741]

Mr. Alexander: Promoting the delivery of sustainable development within Government is the responsibility of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), but one for which all Departments have a role to play.

The Cabinet Office is working closely with DEFRA to ensure that sustainable development is embedded into all of the Departments operations. For example, the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) template has recently been amended to incorporate DEFRA's Integrated Policy Assessment (IPA) tool. Departments must now identify not only economic costs and benefits but also any social and environmental costs and benefits for all major proposals.

DEFENCE

Cluster Bombs

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many cluster bombs are stockpiled by the Ministry of Defence, broken down by type. [169956]

Mr. Ingram: Stockholdings of cluster bombs are held at an authorised War Reserve stock figure. Details of the precise numbers of weapons could provide a potential adversary with information that could undermine our defence capabilities. This information is therefore withheld in accordance with Exemption 1 (Defence, Security and International Relations) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when current stockpiles of *(a)* BL-755 cluster bombs and *(b)* RBL-755 cluster bombs will become obsolete; what plans his Department has (i) to replace them and (ii) to destroy them; and if he will make a statement. [169957]

Mr. Ingram: On current plans all stockpiles of the BL755 and the RBL755 cluster bomb will be withdrawn from RAF service before the end of the decade. The IBL755 will be withdrawn from service by the end of this year. Existing stocks of all three variants will be disposed of through recognised de-militarisation procedures.

Based on current predictions these weapons will not be replaced. However, it is intended that the Brimstone advanced air-launched anti-armour weapon will replace the capability of the RBL755 in the anti-armour role.

Defence Personnel (Vale of York)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* role and *(b)* specialisation is of the Royal Naval personnel serving in the Vale of York. [170003]

Mr. Caplin: Royal Naval Personnel are employed at the Defence High Frequency Communications Service facility at Forest Moor. Their role is to provide specialist military oversight and guidance to the contractor who operates the site. Personnel are drawn from the Weapons Engineering and Operator Mechanic (Communications) specialisations.

The RN also has a small number of personnel based at Linton-on-Ouse who are Qualified Flying Instructors, and a number of RN student pilots undertake training here on an annual basis.

Defence Science and Technology Laboratory

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what proportion of the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory's revenue has been derived from QinetiQ; and what proportion of its outgoings have been paid to QinetiQ since the creation of QinetiQ. [169388]

Mr. Ingram: In 2001, the Defence Research and Evaluation Agency was split to form the PPP QinetiQ, and the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl).

Since vesting the income derived by Dstl from QinetiQ by financial year is as follows:

Financial year	*Income (£ million)*
2001–02	17.75
2002–03	18.50
2003–04	12.55
Total	48.80

Dstl expenditure with QinetiQ since vesting by financial year is as follows:

Financial year	*Expenditure (£ million)*
2001–02	53.57
2002–03	67.40
2003–04	57.74
Total	178.71

Departmental IT Infrastructure

Mr. Nigel Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will make a statement on the advantages and disadvantages of privatising IT infrastructure in his Department; [168386]

(2) what assessment he has made of the effect of privatisation of IT infrastructure in his Department on national security. [168385]

Mr. Ingram: These questions have been answered with respect to the Defence Information Infrastructure (DII) programme. The Ministry of Defence is currently in negotiations with two potential commercial Delivery Partners (DP) for the provision of information systems services for Ministry of Defence.

It should be noted that the DII programme is not a privatisation of IT infrastructure. Under the terms of the Public-Private Partnership arrangement, the MOD will continue to own the infrastructure but the delivery of the service will be the responsibility of the commercial Delivery Partner.

The DII programme is crucial to the delivery of the Defence Change Programme and has the potential to support delivery of significant benefits across Defence. The DII programme will enable Defence to realise a greatly increased capability at reduced cost. The three main benefits of DII are:

the reduced cost of providing computing facilities due to the economy of scale;

the ability to put in place pan defence corporate processes that improve the way Defence conducts its business on a day-to-day basis; and

the ability to integrate more closely our battlefield systems with our support systems, leading to improved decision making and intelligence collection and analysis.

No disadvantages to the implementation of the DII programme have been identified.

The DII programme will not increase threats to national security. Deployed operations will continue to be supported by Service personnel. Increment One of the programme currently consists of 72,000 workstations. Only 10,000 of these are currently supported by in-house staff. The remainder are already supported by commercial service providers.

As a key part of providing a Network Enabled Capability, DII will improve national security both on deployed operations and in the United Kingdom. As a pan-defence service, it will greatly improve the ability to exchange operational information within the MOD, between the three Services, and between fixed locations and deployed elements of the Services.

RAF Bases

Mr. Beith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will place in the Library a copy of the investment appraisal of the proposed move of most of the activities of RAF Boulmer to RAF Scampton. [169163]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 28 April 2004]:* A list of the principal options considered during the study into the future basing of the RAF's Air Combat Service Support Units and other minor units, including RAF Boulmer, has been made widely available during the course of the study. Defence officials have also given the right hon. Gentleman and other hon. Members a personal briefing. In addition, my right hon. Friend the Prime Minister and I have written to the right hon. Gentleman with information on the relative costs in investment appraisal terms, of maintaining Boulmer as now and moving units to RAF Scampton. Copies of these letters have been placed in the Library of the House.

In my written ministerial statement of 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 30WS, I indicated the option I am inclined to accept. I will not make a decision on the outcome of the study until formal consultation with the Ministry of Defence Trade Unions is complete. While this process is continuing, I am withholding details of the Investment Appraisal in accordance with Exemption 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information, which relates to internal discussion and advice. In the meantime, I am placing a list of the principal options considered in the Library of the House.

Parliamentary Questions

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he expects to be able to write to the hon. Member for North Down with the information requested in her question ref.151328. [170094]

Mr. Ingram: Further to my answer of 2 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 746W, the information requested is still not available due to serious computer failure. As it is proving impossible to retrieve

information by this means within a reasonable timeframe, we are looking at other ways of providing the information requested. I would hope to be in a position to write to the hon. Member in the next few weeks.

Procurement

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which procurement decisions in each of the last five years have not been made solely on the basis of best value for money. [169703]

Mr. Ingram: As I said in my reply of 3 November 2003, *Official Report*, column 427W, value for money is a fundamental factor in all our procurement decisions. In assessing value for money we take account of the long-term implications of decisions, including their industrial and wider economic impact. As set out in the Government's Defence Industrial Policy, we seek to maximise the economic benefit to the United Kingdom from our defence expenditure, a healthy and globally competitive defence industry and the development of a high value technologically-skilled industrial base, consistent with the Government's wider manufacturing strategy.

Information on all procurement decisions taken throughout the Department is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Quick Reaction Alert Aircraft

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the role of Quick Reaction Alert aircraft is. [169991]

Mr. Ingram: Quick Reaction Alert (QRA) comprises armed Tornado F3 aircraft held at ground readiness for immediate take-off, the Air Surveillance and Control System to provide warning and command and control of the fighter aircraft, and tanker aircraft also held at high ground readiness. QRA fulfils two concurrent functions. Firstly, it meets the United Kingdom's responsibility within NATO to provide air policing of agreed member airspace. Secondly, under UK national control, QRA provides an airborne contribution to countering threats against the UK by terrorist organisations or individuals.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many aircraft are on Quick Reaction Alert status at *(a)* RAF Leeming, *(b)* RAF Leuchars and *(c)* RAF Coningsby. [169992]

Mr. Ingram: To provide geographic coverage, there are two aircraft continuously on Quick Reaction Alert at RAF Leuchars and a further two at RAF Coningsby. Aircraft and personnel for the latter are provided from Tornado F3 squadrons deployed from RAF Leeming.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

Court Closures (Luton)

Andrew Selous: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what assessment he has made of the effect on delays to court hearings of the current closure of courts in Luton. [169405]

Mr. Leslie: The Department for Constitutional Affairs has allocated £1.85 million of capital funding in order to carry out essential building maintenance and improvement work at Luton magistrates court. While work is being carried out to this courthouse it will be closed for six months starting from July 2004. No other courts will close. Neighbouring court accommodation will be used during this period at Luton Crown and county courts and Bedford county and magistrates court. Additionally, temporary accommodation is being provided at Dunstable courthouse.

My Department's officials have worked with the Justice Chief Executive for Bedfordshire Magistrates' Courts Committee and no delays to court hearings are expected.

Emergency Protection Orders

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to the answer of 2 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 852–53W, on emergency protection orders, how many applications were heard for emergency protection orders in each county in England in each year from 1997 to 2001, and what proportion was granted. [170973]

Mr. Leslie: Figures showing the number of applications for an emergency protection order and the number of orders made, by each county in England for the years 1997 to 2001, are provided in a table, which has been placed in the Library.

Operation Payback

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what initial assessment he has made of the effectiveness of Operation Payback on the Wirral. [167965]

Mr. Leslie: Operation Payback was conducted in the Wirral on 23 March and was considered a success. Enforcement Officers, working closely with the Police, executed 194 outstanding warrants and collected £13,600 during the day. In the Merseyside area as a whole approximately £36,000 was collected during the three days that the Magistrates Courts Committee (MCC) ran the operation. The MCC also reported an increase in compliance in the payment of fines following the operation, although separate figures for cases directly involved in Operation Payback are not available.

Special Immigration Appeals Commission

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will place in the Library the transcripts of the judgments of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission in cases relating to *(a)* detention under the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 and *(b)* removal of nationality under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002; and if he will make a statement. [167993]

Mr. Lammy: A copy of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission's open judgments in cases relating to detention under the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 will be placed in the House of

Commons Library in the forthcoming weeks. The Commission have yet to hear a substantive Deprivation of Citizenship appeal under the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 provisions.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what the costs have been of *(a)* administration and *(b)* the salaries and expenses of members of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (i) to date and (ii) on average in relation to (A) appeals against removal of nationality and (B) consideration of cases of detainees under the Anti-terrorism Crime and Security Act 2001; and if he will make a statement. [168225]

Mr. Lammy: As the Special Immigration Appeals Commission is administered jointly with other jurisdictions, separate records in respect of operational costs of its administration, and the salaries and expenses of its members, are not collated. To provide this information would incur-disproportionate costs.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs pursuant to his answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 896–97W, on Special Immigration Appeals Commission Hearings, if he will place in the Library transcripts from open sessions of the Commission *(a)* with sensitive appellants' details excised and *(b)* in cases where the appellant has either identified himself or agreed to his identity being revealed; and if he will make a statement. [170169]

Mr. Lammy: The transcripts from the sessions of the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC) are not divisible between the open and closed sessions and it would therefore be inappropriate to release them into the public domain due to the sensitivity of the material. The administrative processes of SIAC are reviewed on an ongoing basis and consideration is being given to the publication of material from the open sessions of SIAC.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many appeals to the Special Immigration Appeals Commission against detention under anti-terrorism and removal of nationality legislation are outstanding; what dates have been set for each of those appeals; what the expected timetable is for each of those appeals *(a)* for open session hearings and *(b)* in total for each case; and if he will make a statement. [170170]

Mr. Lammy: There are currently four appeals outstanding before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC); three of the appeals are against certification pursuant to Part 4 of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001, with the remaining appeal brought against an order of the Secretary of the State for the Home Department pursuant to s40A of the British Nationality Act 1981. A provisional timetable for the serving of evidence by both parties in each of the outstanding appeals has been issued by SIAC. For the three appeals pursuant to Part 4 of the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001 the provisional timetables are as follows:

Timetable of Appeal for I, Issued 9 January 2004, Date for Submission

Rule 38 hearing to commence

12 April 2004

Provisional substantive hearing date

8 June 2004

Timetable of Appeal for S, Issued 9 January 2004, Date for Submission

Rule 38 hearing to commence

21 June 2004

Provisional substantive hearing date

12 July 2004

Timetable of Appeal for K, Issued 9 January 2004, Date for Submission

Rule 38 hearing to commence

2 June 204

Provisional substantive hearing date

22 June 2004

The timetable for the outstanding appeal brought against an order of the Secretary of the State for the Home Department pursuant to s40A of the British Nationality Act 1981 is as follows:

Timetable of Appeal for Mostafa Kamel Mostafa aka Abu Hamza, Issued 26 April 2004, Date for Submission

Amendments to the Appellant's Grounds of Appeal, whether by addition or deletion, to be notified to the respondent and the Commission

30 July 2004

Provisional substantive hearing date

10 January 2005

Agreement as to the mixture of open and closed sessions of the appeals will be decided on the first day of each relevant substantive appeal.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many appeals have been heard by the Special Immigration Appeals Commission; and for how many *(a)* days and *(b)* hours in total the Commission has sat in open session in relation to appeals against detention under anti-terrorism legislation and removal of nationality. [170171]

Mr. Lammy: To date there has been a combined total of fifteen substantive appeals heard before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission (SIAC). Of the 15 substantive appeals, two were brought before SIAC pursuant to the Special Immigration Appeals Commission Act 1997, with the remainder brought before SIAC pursuant to the Anti-terrorism, Crime and Security Act 2001. Information relating to the amount of *(a)* days, and *(b)* hours SIAC has sat in open session is not available without incurring disproportionate costs.

PRIME MINISTER

Climate Change

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what account he took of Sir David King's views on the need to tackle climate change in deciding what time to set aside for his speech at the launch of the Climate Group on 27 April. [169862]

The Prime Minister: Sir David King and I are in full agreement that climate change is one of the most serious environmental threats we face and that we need to address it now. I fully support the Climate Group's aim of promoting the acceleration of reductions in global emissions of greenhouse gases.

Norman Baker: To ask the Prime Minister what the cost to public funds was of the launch of the Climate Group on 27 April. [169896]

The Prime Minister: The Climate Group is not a Government-funded entity. Funding for the event is a matter for the Climate Group.

Departmental Procurement (Sea Bass)

Mr. Sanders: To ask the Prime Minister if he will make it his policy to ensure that sea bass served at functions at which he is the host is sourced from hand-line fishermen rather than pair trawlers. [167546]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend the Minister for Fisheries, (Mr. Bradshaw) gave to him on 30 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1344W.

EU Constitution

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Prime Minister if it remains the intention of the Government in the forthcoming Inter-Governmental Conference on the proposed EU constitution not to accept qualified majority voting on all matters of social security. [169765]

The Prime Minister: Yes. Unanimity for social security for migrant workers is a Government red line.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list those policy areas where the Government have agreed that qualified majority voting should replace unanimity under the proposed EU Constitution. [169766]

The Prime Minister: The Constitutional Treaty has not been agreed, but our approach to the extension of QMV will, as always, be to agree where it is in Britain's interests, but not to do so in areas where our national interests dictate otherwise. We welcome the use of QMV as the general rule for legislative proposals.

Those areas for which we will insist that unanimity remains are set out in the White Paper—The British Approach to the European Union Intergovernmental Conference 2003.

Mr. Austin Mitchell: To ask the Prime Minister if, consequent to his decision to hold a referendum on the proposed constitution of the European Union, he will publish a white paper in which in respect of each of the proposed articles he will state the part of any treaty already in force which contains the same or amended, content; and, for those articles which do not, if he will set out an explanation of the case for the new provisions and their likely effect on the United Kingdom and its judicial procedures. [169893]

The Prime Minister: The Government will publish a range of material to accompany the Constitutional Treaty, including a laypersons' guide and a comprehensive analysis and comparison of the existing Treaties and the new Constitutional Treaty.

Mr. Howard: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his Statement on Europe, of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 155–57, whether it is his policy to describe the draft Constitution for Europe as a tidying-up exercise. [170572]

The Prime Minister: The Government made clear their view of the draft constitutional treaty in their White Paper of September 2003—paragraphs 41 to 43. The draft treaty consolidates the existing treaties into a single logically ordered text; sets out a more transparent and accountable structure for the EU; makes it clear that the national Governments of the member states remain in control; and it provides for a more efficient European Union after enlargement.

There are a number of changes that the Government wish to see to the draft text. If a treaty is successfully negotiated it will not alter the constitutional relationship between the Union and the member states, and would be less far reaching than changes brought into effect by either the Single European Act or the Maastricht treaty.

Mr. Howard: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his statement on Europe, of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 155–57, what factors he took into account in reaching his decision on whether to hold a referendum. [170573]

The Prime Minister: The factors leading to the Government's decision to hold a referendum were set out in my statement of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 155–57.

Mr. Howard: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his answer, of 21 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 287, what discussions he held with ministerial colleagues prior to his decision to hold a referendum on the European constitution. [170574]

The Prime Minister: I have nothing to add to my previous answer.

European Evidence Warrant

Mr. Cash: To ask the Prime Minister (1) if he will veto the legislative instrument proposing the European Evidence Warrant; [170781]

(2) if he will refuse to accept the European Constitution if at the next Summit on the European Constitution the European Evidence Warrant forms part of the corpus of the draft Constitution and laws of the EU. [170783]

The Prime Minister: No. We shall seek to negotiate effective arrangements in the UK's interests.

Mr. Cash: To ask the Prime Minister what assessment he has made of whether the European Evidence Warrant complies with the Human Rights Act 1998. [170782]

The Prime Minister: Under Article 6 of the Treaty on European Union, all legislative instruments must respect fundamental rights, as guaranteed by the European Convention on Human Rights. The Government would of course ensure that implementing legislation was compatible with the Human Rights Act.

House of Lords

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Prime Minister if he will bring forward proposals to ensure that political representation in the House of Lords from Northern Ireland reflects the community there. [170488]

The Prime Minister: As I have made clear before, membership of the House of Lords is kept under ongoing review.

Kyoto Protocol

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister on what date he last raised the Kyoto Protocol on Climate Change with President Bush. [170998]

The Prime Minister: I regularly have discussions on a wide range of issues with President Bush including on climate change. As with previous Administrations, it is not the practice of this Government to make public details of discussions with foreign Governments under exemption l(b) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Libya

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Prime Minister if he will secure from Libya an inventory of the arms that it supplied to the IRA. [170342]

The Prime Minister: I refer the hon. Member to the answer my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Northern Ireland Office (Mr. Pearson) gave to the hon. Member for South Antrim (David Burnside) on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 822W.

Middle East

Mr. Howard: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his statement on Iraq and the Middle East Peace Process, of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 21–23, (1) whether he urged President Bush that the Quartet should be involved in further decisions affecting the peace process rather than for such decisions to be decided bilaterally between the United States and Israel; [170575]

(2) what representations he made to President Bush before the President announced his endorsement of Prime Minister Sharon's plans. [170576]

The Prime Minister: I regularly have discussions with President Bush on a wide range of issues, including the Middle East Peace Process. As with previous Administrations it is not the practice of this Government to make public all details of discussions with foreign Governments under exemption l(b) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

I have made clear my view that the Quartet—which is meeting at Principals level in New York today—must lead the international community's efforts to take forward the Middle East Peace Process through the Roadmap. I hope that today's meeting will see the Quartet playing that role fully.

Morganatic Marriages

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Prime Minister whether he has recently held discussions on introducing legislation permitting members of the Royal Family to enter into morganatic marriages; and if he will make a statement. [170550]

The Prime Minister: I have had no such discussions.

Official Visits

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Prime Minister if he will list the overseas *(a)* cities and *(b)* countries which he has visited on official business in the first four months of 2004, broken down by date of visit. [170972]

The Prime Minister: Since 1999 the Government have published an annual list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers costing £500 or more during each financial year. A list of all visits overseas undertaken by Cabinet Ministers from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 is currently being collated and will be published in the normal way before the summer recess.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Disability Living Allowance

Hywel Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the average period was between a disability living allowance application form being received and it being considered by a decision maker in respect of applications *(a)* from Wales, *(b)* from England, *(c)* in Welsh and *(d)* in English in each of the last three years; [170221]

(2) what percentage of disability living allowance decision makers are able to work through the medium of Welsh; [170222]

(3) what the target period is for the time between the receipt of a disability living allowance application form and its consideration by a decision maker; [170223]

(4) what percentage of disability living allowance claims submitted in Welsh are considered using *(a)* the original Welsh versions and *(b)* a translation into English; and what criteria are employed in decisions as to whether claims submitted in Welsh are translated for consideration in English; [170224]

(5) what arrangements are in place for the translation into English of disability living allowance application forms completed in Welsh. [170225]

Maria Eagle: Information on the time taken for a disability living allowance claim to reach the decision maker following receipt in the Disability and Carers Service is not routinely collected.

There are three Welsh speaking Decision Makers (DMs) and one Administrative Officer all based in Cardiff Disability Benefits Centre (DBC). The total number of Decision Makers in the Disability and Carers Service nationally is approximately 1,170.

The clearance targets set by the Secretary of State, against which performance is judged, reflect overall clearance times, from claim registration to decision notification and no distinction is made between those claims received in the Welsh language and those in English. In the year ended March 2004 the national target performance on new claims cleared was an average of 39.7 days against a target of 42 days. On renewal claims the national performance achieved was an average of 28.2 days against a target of 32 days.

Any disability living allowance claim completed in Welsh received in the Disability and Carers Service whether in Cardiff Disability Benefits Centre, which administers new claims for the whole of Wales, or elsewhere is initially translated into English by the Welsh speaking staff based in the Cardiff Disability Benefits Centre. It is then processed in exactly the same way as a claim completed in English. Cardiff translated 28 disability living allowance and 78 attendance allowance claim forms from Welsh into English in the year to March 2004.

Incapacity Benefit

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many complaints have been received in the West Midlands about the tests for work applied to those on incapacity benefit. [168974]

Maria Eagle: The administration of incapacity benefit claims is carried out by Jobcentre Plus; the medical examinations are carried out by Atos Origin, which provides medical services on behalf of Jobcentre Plus.

Information on the number of complaints made to Jobcentre Plus about incapacity benefit tests is not collected centrally and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

For the period March 2003 to February 2004, Birmingham Medical Services, which covers the West Midlands, carried out 43,162 incapacity benefit related medical examinations; for the same period it received 114 complaints about these examinations. These complaints covered a range of issues including clinical findings, accommodation, and travelling expenses.

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what guidance is issued to those *(a)* in receipt of incapacity benefit and *(b)* who have carer's responsibilities in respect of jobseeker's allowance; and if he will make a statement. [168975]

Maria Eagle: General advice regarding all benefits is available to customers from Jobcentre Plus staff before a claim is made; advice regarding a customer's specific needs is given at new claim stage by the contact centre and by the customers personal and financial advisers.

Leaflet SD4 "Caring for someone" and Leaflet SD1 "Sick or disabled" are available from Jobcentre Plus offices and give detailed information for customers wishing to claim incapacity benefit or who have caring responsibilities. Copies are available in the Library.

No advice is given to people in receipt of incapacity benefit with regard to jobseeker's allowance specifically; however customers who are no longer eligible for incapacity benefit due to the results of a personal capability assessment, or because they are no longer ill may be advised to claim jobseeker's allowance if they are available for work.

People who claim jobseeker's allowance and have caring responsibilities are allowed to restrict the hours they are available for work to less than 40 hours, providing they are available for as many hours as their caring responsibility allows, and that this is at least 16 hours a week.

Maternity Benefits

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) whether women who have been in paid employment throughout pregnancy who changed employer during this period will be eligible via *(a)* statutory maternity pay and *(b)* maternity allowance for 90 per cent. of average weekly earnings for the first six weeks of paid leave where they have not been employed by their current employer for 26 weeks; [167332]

(2) whether the benefits available through maternity allowance are equal to those made through statutory maternity pay for women who have been in paid employment during pregnancy; and if he will make a statement; [167333]

(3) if he will make statutory maternity pay available to women who change employer during pregnancy without taking a break; and if he will make a statement; [167334]

Maria Eagle: Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) and Maternity Allowance (MA) are an integral part of the measures the Government has taken to help parents balance their work and family life.

Both SMP and MA can be paid for up to 26 weeks. SMP is paid by the employer at 90 per cent. of the woman's average weekly earnings for the first six weeks followed by the lesser of £100 a week or the 90 per cent. rate; MA is paid by the Department for Work and Pensions at the lesser of £100 a week or 90 per cent. of the woman's average weekly earnings.

To get SMP, a woman must earn at least £79 a week on average and have been continuously employed by her employer for at least 26 weeks into the 15th week before the week her baby is due. She must therefore have been working for the employer who would be liable to pay SMP to her before she became pregnant and would have worked for the employer for a reasonable period before that employer is asked to administer and meet some of the costs of paying SMP to her.

To get MA, a woman must have been employed and/or self-employed for at least 26 weeks out of the 66 week period ending with the week prior to the week in which

her baby is due. The weeks do not have to be continuous and a part week counts as a full week. She must also earn at least £30 a week on average.

The standard rate of both SMP and MA was increased in 2003 to £100 a week. This substantial increase, the biggest since maternity pay was introduced in 1948, coupled with extending the payment period from 18 to 26 weeks mean that most pregnant working women getting SMP or MA are more than £1,200 better off than in 2001.

We currently have no plans to make any further changes to these schemes.

Pensions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost in each of the next 10 financial years from 2006–07, net of savings in means-tested benefits and additional income tax revenues, of paying from April 2006 a basic state pension to all single people aged 75 or above at the rate of the guarantee credit for single people regardless of contribution record, and a basic state pension to all couples where one or both partners is aged 75 or above at the rate of the guarantee credit for couples, with that pension being indexed to earnings in subsequent years, and assuming that the savings credit is abolished for those aged 75 or above. [170649]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. However such information as is available is in the table.

£ billion

	[1]*Net cost*
2006–07	3.9
2007–08	4.2
2008–09	4.5
2009–10	4.8
2010–11	5.2
2011–12	5.6
2012–13	6.0
2013–14	6.4
2014–15	6.9
2015–16	7.4

[1] Before tax

Notes:

1. The net cost includes all savings except for additional Income tax revenue, (see note 3). Figures are for Great Britain in 2004–05 price terms, using the GDP deflator index, rounded to the nearest £100 million.
2. Basic State Pension costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002 based population projections. Basic State Pension costs refer to the additional costs after allowing for consequential changes to National Insurance Fund benefits and non-means tested vote benefits.
3. Additional income tax revenue is estimated by the Inland Revenue using current tax rates. The Income tax estimate for 2006–07 is based on the 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes and is projected in line with March 2004 Budget assumptions. The cost net of income tax revenue in 2006–07 is £2.6 billion. For illustrative purposes, we have assumed income tax revenue to be a fixed percentage of the gross cost for this option in 2007–08 and 2008–09. Therefore, the illustrative total net cost in 2007–08 is £2.6 billion and in 2008–09 is £3.1 billion. Estimates for later years would be subject to a greater degree of uncertainty.
4. The State Second Pension is assumed to be unchanged.
5. The savings credit is abolished for those aged 75 from April 2006 with no payments to existing pensioners and no new recipients after 2006.
6. The savings from savings credit and other income related benefits (guarantee credit, housing benefit and council tax benefit) are calculated using the Department's policy simulation model for 2006–07. It is assumed that the proportion of savings calculated for the first year is constant for subsequent years.

Winter Fuel Allowance

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Stalybridge and Hyde have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [168738]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Stalybridge and Hyde constituency who have benefited from a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	13,760
2000–01	15,230
2001–02	15,395
2002–03	15,535
2003–04	15,580

Notes:

1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest five.
2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.

Source:

IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

HEALTH

Norfolk and Norwich Hospital

15. **Norman Lamb:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make a statement on the PFI contract in respect of the Norfolk and Norwich hospital. [169837]

Dr. Ladyman: The Norfolk and Norwich University Hospital PFI scheme was the fourth major PFI scheme to reach financial close and sign contracts. The Norfolk and Norwich is a high quality hospital and was recently named among the top 40 hospitals in the UK by an international company involved in measuring healthcare performance.

Hospital-acquired Infection

16. **Tom Brake:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, if he will make a statement on MRSA in hospitals. [169838]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We already have standards to ensure there is a managed environment which minimises the risk of infection to patients, staff and visitors. We are confident that implementation of our action plan

"Winning Ways" will reduce infection rates for all healthcare associated infections including methicillin resistant staphylococcus aureus.

NHS Dentistry

17. **Mr. Best:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what plans he has to increase the number of NHS dentists in Leeds. [169839]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Currently 145 dentists are treating NHS patients in the Leeds area. The overall number of dentists treating NHS patients in Leeds has remained similar for the 12 months to December 2003, the latest data that we have available. The primary care trusts in Leeds are currently preparing action plans to submit to West Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority, which include plans to increase the numbers of dentists accepting NHS patients locally.

19. **Richard Younger-Ross:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS dental provision in south Devon. [169842]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The whole of the South West Peninsula strategic health authority area has been identified as an "Options for Change" field site, and dentists are increasingly opting for the new ways of working that Personal Dental Services allows. Teignbridge PCX, along with others in the Peninsula, is currently working on a Dental Action Plan which is expected to be agreed later this month.

Health Inequality

18. **Harry Cohen:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the public health reports from primary care trusts in areas suffering from health inequality. [169841]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Strategic health authorities are responsible for agreeing local national health service plans informed by public health reports. SHAs are leading work on monitoring the performance of primary care trusts, and take a particular interest in areas experiencing health inequalities. We are in discussion with SHAs about ways of assessing the impact of these reports.

Elderly People (Abuse)

20. **Sandra Gidley:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on his Department's policy on the abuse of elderly people. [169843]

Dr. Ladyman: Since 1997 the Government have been active in promoting better and more consistent standards of care for older people through the publication and implementation of the National Service Framework for Older People and National Minimum Standards of care for a range of services. Raising standards of care is the best way to minimise abuse and neglect. In addition the statutory guidance "No Secrets" provides a national framework for local councils and partner agencies to use in developing local multi-agency codes of practice to prevent and tackle abuse. Local codes of practice had to be in place by October 2001. Shortly, the Government will also implement the Protection of Vulnerable Adults scheme, which will act as a work force ban on those that have harmed vulnerable adults in their care.

Diabetes

21. **Mr. Jack:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, what steps he is taking to assist the work of local diabetes self-help groups. [169844]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department is funding Diabetes UK—the major charity for people with diabetes—to undertake a user involvement project to help people with diabetes become fully involved in local decision making about their diabetes services.

Health Services (West Yorkshire)

22. **Mr. Truswell:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what representations he has received regarding improvements to children's and maternity health services in *(a)* Leeds and *(b)* West Yorkshire. [169845]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department has received a number of representations in support of a dedicated children's and maternity hospital for West Yorkshire to be based in Leeds. I have agreed to meet my hon. Friend the Member for Batley and Spen (Mr. Wood) to discuss this issue.

Mental Health Bill

23. **Angela Watkinson:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health, when he proposes to start the pre-legislative scrutiny stages of the draft Mental Health Bill. [169846]

Ms Rosie Winterton: A revised and completed Mental Health Bill will be brought forward for pre-legislative scrutiny in this session.

Hepatitis C

24. **Mr. Connarty:** To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress has been made in making payments available through the ex-gratia payments scheme for patients infected with hepatitis C. [169847]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Work is proceeding to finalise the arrangements necessary to begin making payments. The Skipton Fund was incorporated on 25 March. Officials are continuing to consult with patient groups and medical experts on the implementation of the scheme. The four UK health departments expect the Skipton Fund to be operational shortly.

Anti-depressants

Dr. Naysmith: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy that SSRI anti-depressants carry a warning that they may make patients suicidal. [168841]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The safety of the selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) has been closely monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and the Government's independent expert advisory committee, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) since first authorisation.

The CSM has considered the question of suicidal behaviour in association with adult use of SSRIs on a number of occasions and has advised that it is general clinical experience that patients taking any anti-depressant may develop an increase in suicidal behaviour in the first few weeks of treatment. Prescribers were informed of this advice in an article in the drug safety bulletin, "Current Problems in Pharmacovigilance", in 2000 and advised that patients thought to be at risk should be monitored carefully, especially in the early stages of treatment.

Product information for patients for all SSRIs contains warnings that suicidal behaviour may increase in the early stages of treatment with any anti-depressant and that any patient who has suicidal thoughts should seek urgent medical attention.

In December 2003, CSM advised that four SSRIs (paroxetine, sertraline, citalopram, escitalopram) and the related anti-depressant, venlafaxine, should not be used in treating children and adolescents under 18 years with depressive illness because clinical trials had not demonstrated efficacy in this population and there was evidence of an increased risk of adverse effects, including suicidal behaviour and self-harm compared to placebo. The product information (summary of product characteristics and patient information leaflets) for these SSRIs contains appropriate warnings.

A Europe-wide review of the safety of paroxetine led by the United Kingdom and the Netherlands was completed on 22 April 2004. The European scientific advisory committee, the Committee for Proprietary Medicinal products (CPMP) recommended that paroxetine should not be used in children and adolescents and that there should be careful monitoring during paroxetine treatment of patients at risk of suicidal behaviour, including those with a history of suicidal behaviour and young adults. The CPMP recommendations are now subject to consideration by the European Commission.

The CSM's expert working group on the safety of SSRIs is continuing to review the available evidence relating to the safety of all SSRIs, with particular reference to behavioural disorders, including, suicidality to ensure that the advice in the product information is optimal for safe use of these medicines.

Care Standards

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether the future arrangements for the monitoring of care standards will include the use of lay visitors. [168691]

Dr. Ladyman: I understand from the Chair of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the CSCI is considering a range of options to include service users and others in the range of its work. The use of lay assessors is one of these options.

Cataract Surgery

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were waiting for cataract surgery in each Greater London NHS Trust for more than *(a)* three, *(b)* six and *(c)* nine months in each year since 1997; and what the percentage change was in each year. [168937]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not held centrally.

CFS/ME

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what funding has been allocated to Professor Simon Wesley's team at the Institute of Psychiatry for research into CFS/ME; [166707]

(2) what funding has been allocated to *(a)* the Merge Group in Perth, Scotland and *(b)* other biomedical researchers for work regarding CFS/ME. [166708]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The main agency through which the Government support medical and clinical research is the Medical Research Council (MRC). The MRC is an independent body that receives its grant-in-aid from the Office of Science and Technology.

The MRC does not normally allocate in advance for particular areas of research. Funds are awarded on the basis of specific research proposals judged in competition.

The MRC has not provided funding for Professor Wessely's team or the Merge Group for research into chronic fatigue syndrome/myalgic encephalomyelitis (CFS/ME). We do not hold records centrally for other funding bodies' allocations.

The MRC announced funding in May 2003 for two trials: PACE—Pacing, Activity and Cognitive Behaviour Therapy: a Randomised Evaluation, and FINE—Fatigue Intervention by Nurses Evaluation to look at the effectiveness of various treatments for CFS/ME. The MRC is also funding a £400,000 clinical trial: training general practitioners to manage patients with persistent medically unexplained symptoms.

Correspondence

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he intends to reply to the letter to him from the right hon. Member for Manchester, Gorton dated 19 February with regard to Mrs. S. Wild. [164934]

Dr. John Reid: A reply was sent to my right hon. Friend on 5 April 2004.

Drugs (Self-Administration)

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients are attending NHS hospitals and clinics whose condition is a direct result of the self-administering of drugs, broken down by region. [168853]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Data on the number of admissions to hospital which are drug related are shown in the table. The information is broken down by strategic health authority areas.

Count of finished in-year admission episodes by strategic health authority (SHA) of treatment—NHS hospitals, England 2002–03

SHA of treatment	Finished in-year admission episodes
Q01 Norfolk, Suffolk and Cambridgeshire HA	3,198
Q02 Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire HA	915
Q03 Essex HA	941
Q04 North West London HA	821
Q05 North Central London HA	947
Q06 North East London HA	1,532
Q07 South East London HA	1,153
Q08 South West London HA	645
Q09 Northumberland, Tyne and Wear HA	3,642
Q10 County Durham and Tees Valley HA	3,259
Q11 North and East Yorkshire and Northern Lincolnshire HA	3,130
Q12 West Yorkshire HA	4,927
Q13 Cumbria and Lancashire HA	3,765
Q14 Greater Manchester HA	3,211
Q15 Cheshire and Merseyside HA	3,987
016 Thames Valley HA	2,331
Q17 Hampshire and Isle of Wight HA	3,063
Q18 Kent and Medway HA	1,288
Q13 Surrey and Sussex HA	2,473
Q20 Avon, Gloucestershire and Wiltshire HA	2,388
Q21 South West Peninsula HA	2,446
Q22 Dorset and Somerset HA	1,220
Q23 South Yorkshire HA	2,029
Q24 Trent HA	4,104
Q25 Leicestershire, Northamptonshire and Rutland HA	969
Q26 Shropshire and Staffordshire HA	1,847
Q27 Birmingham and the Black Country HA	4,642
Q28 Coventry, Warwickshire, Herefordshire and Worcestershire HA	1,561
England	66,434

The Department does not collect information on the number of patients who attend (but are not admitted to) national health service hospitals and clinics as a result of the self-administering of drugs.

Mr. Meale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what current or past research conducted or funded on behalf of the NHS has examined the relationships between self administered drug use and patients' attendance at NHS hospitals and clinics. [168854]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department has not commissioned research specifically on the relationships between self administered drug use and patients' attendance at national health service hospitals and clinics.

Elective Admissions (Crosby)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Crosby in the past five years. [160433]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected on a constituency basis, but at national health service trust level. Data for NHS trusts is shown in the table.

In year elective admission episodes for selected NHS Trusts, 1998–99 to 2002–03

NHS Trust	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	30,363	31,063	32,959	32,437	33,401
Royal Liverpool Children's NHS Trust	13,569	14,106	13,838	14,730	15,165
The Cardiothoracic Centre—Liverpool NHS Trust	7,846	8,301	8,539	9,091	10,223
Walton Centre for Neurology and Neurosurgery NHS Trust	3,841	4,184	3,893	3,710	4,123
Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust [1]	n/a	22,992	23,053	20,035	18,181
Southport and Formby Hospitals NHS Trust [1]	13,867	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
West Lancashire NHS Trust [1]	8,564	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	78,050	80,646	82,282	80,003	81,093

[1] Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust was created on 1 April 1999 from Southport and Formby Hospitals NHS Trust and part of West Lancashire NHS Trust. The figure for West Lancashire NHS Trust in1998–99 is for the whole trust. It is not possible to identify the proportion of the figure attributable to Southport and Ormskirk NHS Trust.
[2] Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
[3] An in-year admission is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one health care provider, excluding admissions beginning before 1 April at the start of the data year. Periods of care on-going at the end of the data year (unfinished admission episodes) are included. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health

Eye Tests

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Heywood and Middleton have access to free eye tests; [168482]

(2) how many residents in Heywood and Middleton aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests; [168483]

Jim Dobbin: how many residents in Stalybridge and Hyde over 60 have benefited from the aboliton of charges for eye tests. [168773]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

The total number of national health service sight tests paid for by the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in 2002–03 for patients aged 60 and over was 189,900. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 493,100. Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

General Practitioners

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* headcount and *(b)* whole-time equivalent general practitioners there were in each year between 1979 and 1997 inclusive. [168985]

Mr. Hutton: The number of headcount and whole time equivalent general practitioners in each year between 1979 and 1997 is shown in the table.

General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[1] in England, 1979–1997England

	Headcount	*Estimated whole-time equivalents[2]*
1979	23,062	n/a
1980	23,674	n/a
1981	24,359	n/a
1982	24,835	n/a
1983	25,341	n/a
1984	25,788	n/a
1985	26,190	n/a
1986	26,529	n/a
1987	27,023	n/a
1988	27,420	n/a
1988	27,420	n/a
1989	27,749	n/a
1990	27,523	26,982
1991	27,888	27,135
1992	28,185	27,299
1993	28,460	27,387
1994	28,735	27,495
1995	28,869	27,489
1996	29,116	27,549
1997	29,389	27,660

n/a = Not available

Notes:

[1] All Practitioners (excluding GP Retainers) includes GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs, PMS Salaried GPs, Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para 52 SFA) and PMS Other.

[2] Prior to 1990 all GPs were considered to be full-time

WTE data has been estimated using the results from the 1992–93 G ⩾ MP Workload Survey;

Full time = 1.00 wte; three quarter time = 0.69 wte; job share = 0.65 wte; half time = 0.60 wte.

All data as at 1 October

Source:

Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics

GP Waiting Times (Battersea)

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of patients in the Battersea constituency were offered an appointment with a general practitioner within 48 hours in each year since September 2001. [168856]

Mr. Hutton: Information on the percentage of patients in the Battersea constituency offered an appointment to see a general practitioner within 48 hours is not collected. Information is provided by Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth Health Authority (September 2001 and March 2002) and Wandsworth Primary Care Trust, which was established on 1 April 2002, and includes patients from the Battersea area.

Percentage

Organisation	*September 2001*	*March 2002*	*March 2003*	*February 2004*
Wandsworth PCT			85.0	100.0
Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth HA	[1]82.5	[1]78.4		
England	[1]80.1	[1]74.6	88.2	97.0

[1] Data collected between September 2001 and March 2002 are based on percentage practices not patients and are not strictly comparable but are included here for completeness.

Health Ombudsman

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 703W, on the Health Ombudsman's Report (Long-term Care), how many cases have been reviewed so far; how many wrong assessments have been discovered; and what action *(a)* has been and *(b)* is to be taken to rectify the wrong assessment cases. [169229]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department expects information on the number of reviews completed and the number of cases granted recompense to be available in due course. Restitution payments are offered when the review suggests that national health service care was inappropriately denied.

Health Services (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Birkenhead in the past five years. [166223]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Provider of treatment—Wirral Hospitals NHS Trust—count of finished elective (waiting list, planned and booked) admission episodes NHS hospitals, 1998–99 to 2002–03

	Finished admission episodes
1998–99	36,667
1999–2000	29,759
2000–01	32,018
2001–02	33,351
2002–03	29,664

Notes:

1. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (ie the data are ungrossed).

Source:

Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Heart Disease (Batley and Spen)

Mr. Wood: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the impact of the Government's campaign to reduce heart disease in Batley and Spen. [167057]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The coronary heart disease (CHD) national service framework (NSF) was published in March 2000 and sets national standards for the prevention and treatment of CHD. In the West Yorkshire Strategic Health Authority area, which includes Batley and Spen, around 25,900 people have quit smoking for at least four weeks with the help of local smoking cessation services since the publication of the NSF. In December 2002, 16 people were waiting over nine months for heart surgery. Today no-one is waiting over nine months. The Mid Yorkshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust will benefit from two new catheterisation laboratories at Pinderfields General Hospital and Dewsbury and District General Hospital.

Hospital Episode Statistics

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS finished consultant episodes were recorded by hospital episode statistics in England in each year since 1979. [168907]

Mr. Hutton: The Department holds finished consultant episode statistics recorded by hospital episode statistics for financial years back to 1989–90. For years prior to 1989–90, there is no comparable data collected centrally. The information available is shown in the table.

Hospital Episode Statistics, finished consultant episodes (FCEs)[1]
NHS hospitals in England, 1989–90 to 2002–03

Financial year	*Finished consultant episodes*
1989–90	10,321,556
1990–91	10,228,485
1991–92	9,919,020
1992–93	10,364,186
1993–94	10,597,979
1994–95	11,373,067
1995–96	11,041,554
1996–97	11,098,998
1997–98	11,601,203
1998–99	12,108,141
1999–2000	12,290,278
2000–01	12,476,470
2001–02	12,338,590
2002–03	12,756,260

[1] A FCE is defined as a period of admitted patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that the figures do not represent the number of patients, as a person may have more than one episode of care within the year. The figures in the table include both in-patient and day cases.

Note:
Figures are grossed for coverage, except for 2001–02 and 2002–03, which are not yet adjusted for shortfalls.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES), Department of Health.

Infection Control Nurses Review

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will place in the Library a copy of the review of community infection control nurses announced in 2002. [167411]

Mr. Hutton: Copies of "Informing the Future—A Review of the Role and Responsibilities of Community Infection Control Nurses and Communicable Disease Control Nurses in England", produced by Thames Valley University, have been placed in the Library.

Integrated Falls Strategy

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to facilitate greater use of pacemakers as part of an integrated falls strategy. [169272]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is currently consulting on the second draft of its clinical practice guideline for the assessment and prevention of falls in older people. The consultation runs to 18 May 2004 and final guidance is due to be published in September 2004. More information can be found on the NICE website at http://www.nice.org.uk/cat.asp?c = 20116. The guideline will include recommendations on the use of pacemakers, where they are relevant to the assessment and prevention of falls in older people.

Intensive Care Beds

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many intensive care beds there were in each Greater London NHS Trust in each year since 1997. [168942]

Mr. Hutton: Available adult intensive care and high dependency provision data has been published since March 1999 and the most recent data available is for January 2004. Copies of the publications are available in the Library. Data from July 2001 to the most recent available is also on the Department's website at http://www.performance.doh.gov.uk/hospitalactivity/index.htm.

Mental Health Provision

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* consultant psychiatrists, *(b)* mental health nurses and *(c)* primary care mental health workers (i) were recruited by and (ii) left the NHS in each of the previous five years in each Greater London NHS Trust. [168938]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested is not held centrally.

Musculoskeletal Disease

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people are suffering from musculoskeletal disease; and if he will make a statement; [166206]

(2) how much money was spent by the NHS on the management and treatment of musculoskeletal disease in the last year for which figures are available; [166207]

(3) what assessment he has made of equality of access to treatment and services for musculoskeletal disease; and if he will make a statement. [166209]

Dr. Ladyman: Three of the most commonly occurring musculoskeletal conditions are osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis and osteoporosis. Arthritis Care estimates that between 8 and 10 million people in the United Kingdom suffer from the condition.

Information on how much was spent by the national health service on the management and treatment of musculoskeletal disease specifically is not collected centrally. Primary care trusts (PCTs) receive allocations to cover the costs of all hospital and community health

services to meet the needs of the population they serve. The level of funding made available for the drugs, staffing and other costs of managing and treating musculoskeletal conditions is determined locally. It is for PCTs, in partnership with other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to provide health services for their populations, including those with musculoskeletal conditions.

Following reviews by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), the Department has made two new classes of drugs, Cox II inhibitors and anti-TNF therapy available to patients with these conditions.

The Department is driving forward a major programme of work to improve equality of access to all NHS treatment and care services. Maximum waiting times have fallen over the past few years and will continue to do so. By the end of 2005, the maximum waiting time for a first out-patient appointment with a consultant will fall to three months and the maximum wait for in-patient treatment will fall to six months. This will help all NHS patients, including those with musculoskeletal conditions.

NHS Budget

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what budget has been made available for 2004–05 to NHS Accident and Emergency departments for *(a)* art, *(b)* plants and *(c)* music; [167701]

(2) what budget is available to ward managers for the management of their wards; [167706]

(3) whether ward managers receive a direct financial allocation for their ward budget. [167707]

Mr. Hutton: Decisions on allocation of budgets are taken at local level by individual trusts.

Patient Information

Mr. Maples: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what measures are being taken to set aside funds to empower patients via *(a)* improved information access and *(b)* further development of the expert patient scheme. [169274]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The Department's "Improving Patient Experience" programme established the "Informed Patient" project, a three-year programme of work (2003–06) managed by NHS Direct Online. The project will improve the quality, range and accessibility of patient information; thereby empowering people to make informed decisions about their healthcare. Funding for this work amounts to £1,814,000 in 2003–04 and £2,127,000 for 2004–05. Funding for the third year will be agreed in early 2005.

Following the publication of the strategy document in September 2001, "The Expert Patient: A new approach to chronic disease management for the 21st century", the Department has funded and supported a community based pilot, from April 2002 to 2004 for each primary care trust (PCT) to provide training for people in the self management of long term conditions. Nearly all 300 PCTs in England have piloted the "Expert Patients" programme and data at the end of the pilot in April 2004 showed that almost 10,000 people had taken part. Funding has been allocated by the Department to support the mainstreaming of the programme across the national health service from 2004 to 2007.

Prescriptions

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many prescriptions were issued in each year since 1997; and how many of them were dispensed. [168582]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Information is available on prescriptions that are dispensed in the community in England. However there is no information available centrally on prescriptions that are issued but not dispensed.

The table shows the number of prescription items dispensed in the community from 1997. The information does not include prescriptions dispensed in hospitals or private prescriptions.

Further information on prescriptions dispensed in the community is available on the Department's website at http://www.publications.doh.gov.uk/prescriptionstatistics/index.htm.

Number of prescription items dispensed in the community in England

	Number (million)
1997	500.2
1998	513.2
1999	529.8
2000	551.8
2001	587.0
2002	617.0
2003	649.7

Thimerosal

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the link between Thimerosal in vaccines and autism. [163554]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As with all medicinal products, vaccine safety is continually monitored by the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) and its independent expert advisory body, the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM).

The only vaccines currently used in the routine childhood immunisation programme that contain thiomersal (also known as thimerosal) are the combined diphtheria/tetanus/wholecell pertussis/Haemophilus influenzae type B and the diphtheria/tetanus vaccines. Measles/mumps/rubella (MMR) vaccine does not contain thiomersal.

The MHRA and CSM have thoroughly reviewed the safety of thiomersal-containing vaccines, including alleged links with autism, on a number of occasions. In 2001, CSM conducted a major review of the available evidence and has considered new data as it has emerged. Following a review of further studies in 2003, including two United Kingdom studies involving more than 100,000 children, CSM advice was placed on the MHRA website at http://medicines.mhra.gov.uk. Further studies from Denmark involving almost half a million children have also specifically investigated the

suggested link between thiomersal-containing vaccines and autism. None of these studies found any evidence of a causal association.

On the basis of the available data, the advice of CSM remains that there is no evidence of harm from thiomersal contained in vaccines, with the exception of possible hypersensitivity reactions (typically skin rashes or local swelling at the site of injection). The CSM advises that the benefits of immunisation with such vaccines outweigh any potential risks of vaccination. This view concurs with that of the World Health Organisation.

TREASURY

Economic Inactivity

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many economically inactive adults of working age there are, broken down by *(a)* local authority and *(b)* reasons for economic inactivity. [168143]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. David Willetts, dated 4 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about economic inactivity. I am replying in his absence. (168143)

I have arranged for the information requested to be placed in the House of Commons Library.

The data provided gives the estimates of the number of economically inactive people and the reasons for their inactivity for each Local Authority. The figures are the averages for the twelve months ending February 2004, the latest period for which information is available.

However, please note that a large number of local area estimates are not given because the sample sizes are too small to provide reliable estimates.

As with any sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability.

Employment Statistics (Preston)

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in Preston; [169673]

(2) if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Preston over the last seven years. [169665]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Mark Hendrick, dated 4 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about unemployment. (169665, 169673)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Preston Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The attached table gives the annual average number of people claiming JSA for over 12 months, and the annual average number of these claimants aged 18 to 24 years, in the Preston constituency, for each year since 1997. The table also shows the annual average total number of JSA claimants in the constituency for these years.

Annual average number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), and number claiming for at least twelve months[1]

		Claimants for at least twelve months	
Preston parliamentary constituency, 1997–2003	*All claimants*	*All ages*	*Aged 18–24*
1997	3,364	917	135
1998	2,826	478	67
1999	2,632	536	23
2000	2,375	475	8
2001	2,118	391	6
2002	2,056	315	8
2003	1,894	262	10

[1] Computerised claims only.

Source:
Office for National Statistics

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Preston from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [169675]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in Preston since 1997. [169676]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Mark Hendrick, dated 4 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Preston. I am replying in his absence. (169675,169676)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs in Preston for 1997 and 2002, which is the latest year available.

Information is not available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] *in Preston parliamentary constituency: 1997 and 2002*

Number, per cent

	Full-Time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	52,800	71,600
2002	60,200	83,600
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	7,300	12,000
Percentage	13.9	16.8

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.

Source:
1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Preston on the latest date for which figures are available. [169677]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Mark Hendrick, dated 4 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Preston. (169677)

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of jobs in tourism related industries in Preston was 5,500. This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels

restaurants

bars

activities of travel agencies

library, archives museums etc

sporting activities

other recreational activities.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Preston in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [169682]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Mark Hendrick, dated 4 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Preston. I am replying in his absence. (169682)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the number of unfilled vacancies in the Preston travel-to-work area was 2558 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Employment Statistics (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in Wigan in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [169354]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Neil Turner, dated 4 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Wigan. I am replying in his absence. (169354)

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the number of unfilled vacancies in the Wigan travel-to-work area was 1,843 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in Wigan; [169358]

(2) what the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Wigan were in each of the last seven years. [169309]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Neil Turner, dated 4 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about unemployment. (169358, 169309)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Wigan Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The attached table gives the annual average number of people claiming JSA for over 12 months, and the annual average number of these claimants aged 18 to 24 years, in the Wigan constituency, for each year since 1997. The table also shows the annual average total number of JSA claimants in the constituency for these years.

Annual average number of people claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA), and number claiming for at least 12 months

		Claimants for at least twelve months[1]	
Wigan parliamentary constituency, 1997–2003	*All claimants*	*All ages*	*Aged 18–24*
1997	2,516	871	137
1998	2,029	339	46
1999	1,825	317	10
2000	1,629	252	[2]—
2001	1,444	232	[2]—
2002	1,325	191	8
2003	1,331	189	10

[1] Computerised claims only.

[2] Value between 1 and 5, not shown to prevent disclosure.

Source:

Office for National Statistics.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change there has been in full-time permanent jobs in Wigan from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [169359]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in Wigan since 1997. [169360]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. Neil Turner, dated 4 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Wigan. I am replying in his absence. (169359, 169360)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The following table shows the information requested relating to all jobs and full-time jobs in Wigan for 1997 and 2002, which is the latest year available.

Information is not available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] in Wigan parliamentary constituency: 1997 and 2002

Number, per cent

	Full-Time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	24,000	35,000
2002	24,200	36,400
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	200	1,400
Percentage	0.9	4.0

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.

Source:
1997: Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002: Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many workers in Preston have benefited from the national minimum wage. [169664]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Mark Hendrick, dated 4 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent question about the number of workers in Preston who have benefited from the national minimum wage (NMW). (169664)

This information is not available at local authority level.

However, the Office for National Statistics (ONS) calculates estimates of the number of jobs paid less than NMW rates for the United Kingdom and Government Office Regions. A guide to measuring low pay and associated articles and data can be found on the National Statistics website at: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/StatBase/Product.asp?vlnk = 5837&Pos = 1&ColRank = 1&Rank = 272

Budget Implications (Hull)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the effect that Budget 2004 will have on the Hull, North constituency. [169736]

Ruth Kelly: The Government has the long-term economic goal of maintaining macro-economic stability. Budget 2004 showed that all parts of the UK are set to benefit from the domestic stability delivered by the Government's macro-economic framework, with inflation forecast to remain low and close to target and the Government on track to meet its strict fiscal rules over the economic cycle.

Kingston upon Hull North has clearly already benefited significantly from Government policies to build a strong economy and a fair society. For example, since 1997 claimant count unemployment has fallen by over a third, long-term unemployment has fallen by over three quarters and long-term youth unemployment has fallen by almost 70 per cent.

The Neighbourhood Statistics Service provides a wide range of statistical information at Parliamentary Constituency level, taken from the 2001 Census and other sources. This service is freely available via the National Statistics website at www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk

Capital Gains Tax

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether the disposal of entitlement under the introduction of single farm payments will be subject to capital gains tax. [169329]

Ruth Kelly: Implementation and administration of the single farm payment scheme is the responsibility of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, in England, and the devolved administrations. Under general taxation principles, the tax treatment of any single farm payment to which an individual is entitled will depend upon the precise nature of the payment. However, from the information currently available, the Inland Revenue considers that the disposal of an entitlement to receive a single farm payment will normally be the disposal of a chargeable asset for capital gains tax purposes, and that the extinguishing of an entitlement to receive agricultural subsidies will also be a disposal for capital gains tax purposes.

Computer Equipment

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Preston have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [169674]

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Wigan have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [169357]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested is not available.

Customs Point, Coquelles

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much was spent in each of the last three years on the manned customs point that is staffed by the UK at Coquelles in France. [169967]

John Healey: The Law Enforcement arm of HM Customs and Excise is a flexible and intelligence-led organisation which regularly reviews its resource deployments against their latest assessment of risks. Information about the deployment of Customs staff at

specific locations is not available; exemption 4(*b*) (Law enforcement and legal proceedings) of the Open Government Code applies.

Economic Growth

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much the British economy grew on average per annum (*a*) in total and (*b*) per capita in the period (i) 1992 to 1997 and (ii) 1997 to 2003. [170100]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. David Willetts, dated 4 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking how much the British economy grew on average per annum (*a*) in total and (*b*) per capita in the period (i) 1992 to 1997 and (ii) 1997 to 2003. I am replying in his absence. (170100)

The UK economy grew by an average of 3.1% per annum between 1992 and 1997 and by an average of 2.6% per annum between 1997 and 2003.

On a per capita basis the UK economy grew by an average of 2.9% per annum between 1992 and 1997 and by an average of 2.3% per annum between 1997 and 2003.

Environmental Campaigns

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much funding he has allocated to Government departments to promote environmental campaigns in each of the last 10 years. [169770]

John Healey: Departmental Expenditure Limits are set through the bi-annual spending review process. Within these limits Government Departments are responsible for allocating funding to their full range of activities, including environmental campaigns where appropriate.

Housing (First-time Buyers)

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to introduce additional fiscal measures to help first time buyers purchase their homes; and if he will make a statement. [169903]

Ruth Kelly: The Government keep all taxes under review and announcements of fiscal measures are a matter for the pre-Budget report and Budget.

The Government are committed to addressing the instability and major problems of housing affordability that has characterised the housing market over past decades. The Government have announced they intend to implement a programme of change to the planning system and to the delivery of development so as to improve affordability and lock in macroeconomic stability, as recommended in the Barker Review of Housing Supply, a copy of which can be found in the Library of the House.

Influenza

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people died of influenza-related illnesses in each of the last 20 years. [169326]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Willetts, dated 4 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent question asking how many people died of influenza-related illnesses in each of the last 20 years (169326).

The latest year for which data are available is 2002. The number of deaths certified as due to influenza[1] are given in the table below, for the calendar years 1983 to 2002. Previous analysis[a,b] has shown that deaths certified as due to influenza under-estimate the increase in mortality associated with influenza outbreaks and epidemics.

Calendar year	*Number of deaths*
1983	796
1984	346
1985	662
1986	587
1987	190
1988	285
1989	2,114
1990	791
1991	248
1992	262
1993	439
1994	62
1995	251
1996	179
1997	347
1998	129
1999	585
2000	509
2001	38
2002	38

[1] The cause of death was defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) code 487 for the years 1983 to 2000, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes J10-J11 for 2001 and 2002.

[a] Curwen M, Dunnell K, Ashley J. Hidden influenza deaths: 1989–90. Population Trends 61 (1990), 31–33.

[b] Ashley J, Smith T, Dunnell K. Deaths in Great Britain associated with the influenza epidemic of 1989–90. 'Population Trends' 65 (1991), 16–20.

Office for National Statistics

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer for what reasons the proposed move of the Office for National Statistics office in Titchfield to Southampton, considered in submissions for the 2002 Comprehensive Spending Review, was not implemented. [164753]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Peter Walton to Mr. Mark Hoban, dated 4 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking for what reasons the proposed move of the Office for National Statistics office in Titchfield to Southampton, considered in submissions for the 2002 Comprehensive Spending Review, was not implemented. I am replying in his absence. (164753)

This proposal to relocate from Titchfield was not implemented because the ONS statistical modernisation programme was given highest priority for the available resources at the time of this Spending Review.

Public Liability Insurance

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the average cost of public liability insurance was in each year since 1997. [169899]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury does not collect regular information on average UK public liability insurance premium costs.

Retail Prices Index

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of the effect of applying hedonics methodology to the Retail Prices Index; what plans he has to make further such adjustments; and if he will make a statement. [170101]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Colin Mowl to Mr. David Willetts, dated 4 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question asking what assessment has been made of the effect of applying hedonics methodology to the retail prices index and what plans there are to make further such adjustments. I am replying in his absence. (170101)

Technical issues such as hedonic methodology fall within the remit of the National Statistician. Our estimate is that the change to hedonic methods has had a minimal effect on the Retail Prices Index (RPI) with less than a 0.05 percentage point reduction on the annual rate of change.

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has examined the possible use of hedonic methods for a number of items in the RPI, but has made the decision to implement the method only in those cases where it represents a significant improvement in methodology. This was the case for personal computers and digital cameras, where hedonic methodology has been implemented. However, for other goods, such as televisions, DVD players, still cameras and washing machines, the method has not shown conclusively to be an improvement and so has not been implemented.

In the future, ONS will continue to examine the use of hedonic methods on a case by case basis and intend to investigate their use for laptop computers and digital camcorders. We are not planning a blanket implementation of hedonic methods, but intend to use them only where they are proven to give a real improvement in methodology. This is likely to be mainly for high technology, fast-developing goods newly entering the RPI basket. Such goods are the most common subjects of hedonic methods in the consumer price indices of other developed countries.

Further details can be found in Adrian Ball's article 'The Introduction of Hedonic Regression Techniques for the quality adjustment of computing equipment in the Producer Prices Index (PPI) and Harmonised Index of Consumer Prices (HICP)', Economic Trends, vol No. 592, or by accessing the National Statistics website: http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/article.asp?ID=290&Pos=&ColRank=2&Rank=208

School Finance

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement setting out the total cash sums available to individual schools by way of direct per pupil payments following the Budget statement; and what the equivalent figures were for the previous years. [169331]

Ruth Kelly: In his Budget statement, the Chancellor set out a £7.4 billion increase in Education spending in England by 2007–08. This amounts to an average spend per pupil of at least £5,500, a figure £1,000 higher than in 2003–04. As part of the statement, he illustrated the scale of payments that are made directly to heads to increase their flexibility on budget decisions. He said that in 2005–06 heads would receive direct payments that sum to £55,000 for a typical primary and £180,000 for a typical secondary school. For 2003–04 the comparable figures were £50,000 and £165,000. Individual schools will receive different amounts according to their pupil numbers.

Sealskin

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how much trade has been recorded by HM Customs and Excise in *(a)* whitecoat sealskin, *(b)* blueback sealskin and *(c)* sealskin apparel in each year since 1998. [169407]

John Healey: Figures on imports and exports of sealskin and sealskin apparel are published under commodity codes 43017010, 43021941 and 43031010 in 'Overseas Trade Statistics' published by HM Customs and Excise, a copy of which is available in the Library of the House. However, figures for whitecoat and blueback sealskins are not separately identified.

Senior Citizens (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Wigan qualified for the 10 pence rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [169355]

Ruth Kelly: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10 pence starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 8,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Wigan constituency in 2001–02. A reliable answer cannot be given for 2000–01 because in the Survey of Personal Incomes the sample size of pensioners living in this constituency is relatively small compared to other constituencies. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Tax Allowances

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the effect of a 0.05 per cent. reduction in the rate of inflation would be on *(a)* total spending on social security benefit, *(b)* total spending on interest payments on Government debt and *(c)* tax revenues if tax allowances were to be raised in line with inflation. [170102]

Ruth Kelly: The inflation indices used to uprate social security benefits, tax allowances and debt interest payments are rounded to one decimal place prior to publication, and the impact of such a small reduction in inflation would depend on its effect on the recorded inflation index rounded to this level. Moreover, for social security benefits and some tax allowances the actual benefit and allowance levels are also affected by statutory rules on rounding. Therefore it is not possible to give accurate estimates for the effect of a 0.05 per cent. reduction in the rate of inflation. It might not have any effect at all.

Tax Credits

Mr. Drew: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many complaints, broken down by category, he has received following the introduction of new tax credit arrangements. [169330]

Ruth Kelly: This information is not available.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the number of child tax credit awards that will be reduced following the finalisation of 2003–04 awards. [169391]

Ruth Kelly: Chapter 4 of "The Child and Working Tax Credits. Modernisation of Britain's Tax and Benefit System. Number 10", April 2002, provided estimates of the number of families whose Child and Working tax credit awards may need to be reassessed due to rises in income. This is available at www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/Documents/Taxation Work and Welfare. No reliable estimates are available of the number of awards which will be reduced at finalisation.

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the number of families currently receiving a manual top-up payment in respect of a child tax credit award which has been reduced because of overpayment; who will see those payments *(a)* terminated and *(b)* reduced following the finalisation of their 2003–04 awards; and if he will make a statement. [169400]

Ruth Kelly: Since the start of the new tax year, families expected to have continuing entitlement to tax credits are receiving provisional payments based on the latest information held about their circumstances and income, while their claim for 2004–05 is renewed. Those payments may reflect the recovery of an overpayment from 2003–04, following the approach set out in Inland Revenue's Code of Practice 26, "What happens if we have paid you too much tax credit?". Families who had been receiving additional tax credit payments in 2003–04 are receiving provisional payments in the usual way, so that there is no need for continuing additional payments to them.

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of recipients of *(a)* child tax credit and *(b)* working tax credit have received payments above the level to which they are entitled; and what the average overpayment for each tax credit was. [170048]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Jarrow (Mr. Hepburn) on 22 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 663–664W).

Geraldine Smith: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether tax credit helpline advisors inform claimants about *(a)* the recovery of overpayments and *(b)* the availability of top up payments when they report a change of circumstances. [165414]

Dawn Primarolo: If after having reported a change in their circumstances claimants receive a revised award notice and require further information about their award, the helpline will be happy to advise them.

UK Aid Budget

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what plans he has to increase the UK aid budget to meet the UN target of 0.7 per cent. of GDP spent on overseas aid. [170217]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock) on 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 869W).

Unclaimed Assets

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what his Department's latest estimate is of the total sum of money lying dormant and unclaimed in United Kingdom bank accounts. [167602]

Ruth Kelly: There is currently no official estimate of the number of unclaimed deposits in UK banks or their total value.

Mr. Gale: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made with the initiative announced by his Department to reunite unclaimed assets with their rightful owners; and if he will make a statement. [167603]

Ruth Kelly: The Government announced in the Budget that we support the efforts of the British Bankers' Association, the Building Societies' Association and National Savings and Investments in trying to reunite unclaimed assets with their owners. As we have said in the Budget, it is right that more should be done in principle.

The Government will assess and report on progress on unclaimed assets at the time of the PBR.

Written Answers to Questions

Wednesday 5 May 2004

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Serious Fraud Office

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Solicitor-General what recent discussions the Serious Fraud Office has had with its EU counterparts. [169969]

The Solicitor-General: The Serious Fraud Office has ongoing operational contact with its EU counterparts. The SFO uses its investigation powers under the Criminal Justice Act 1987 to provide mutual legal assistance to other EU member states.

The Serious Fraud Office's Head of Policy recently attended a meeting at Eurojust and there are regular contacts between SFO senior staff and senior OLAF officials.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Administration Estimate

Mr. Burnett: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission, what the reasons were for the reduction in the Administration Estimate from 2000–01 to 2001–02, as indicated in Table 4 of the Commission's Annual Report for 2001–02; and what the final administration accounts outturn figure for 2002–03 was. [169406]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The reduction in the net cash required was due, in the main, to the decrease in expenditure on Portcullis House following its completion.

The resource outturn for 2002–03 on the House of Commons Administration Estimate was £180.0 million and the corresponding net cash requirement was £138.3 million. Further information can be found in the published House of Commons: Administration Resource Accounts 2002–03 (HC67).

Electricity Consumption

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission, pursuant to his answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 236W, on electricity consumption, what factors underlie the increase in consumption between 1997 and 2003; and what steps the commission is taking to reduce electricity consumption. [169864]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Underlying factors include the increase in size of the Parliamentary Estate, increased use of office equipment and improvements in environmental controls, such as ventilation, air extraction and air-conditioning, to meet new regulations. Energy awareness and good housekeeping are regularly promoted and the estate is maintained to a high standard; for example the main Palace chillers were replaced recently with modern high efficiency plant.

Security of Communications

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission, if he will make a statement on security of communications in the House against eavesdropping in respect of developments in Bluetooth technology. [169801]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The House of Commons authorities have taken a cautious approach to the introduction of wireless technology within Westminster because of security concerns. No services using wireless technologies will be offered until these concerns have been addressed.

I understand that the Bluetooth function available on some mobile telephones could allow access to data and services on such phones. If phone owners are concerned about this potential vulnerability, they should disable the Bluetooth option using the menus on the handset.

The Parliamentary Communications Department sent an e-mail with this advice to all network users on 30 April.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what her latest estimate is of the amount spent by her Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [168999]

Mr. Caborn: All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on principles set out in Government guidance.

The following table shows expenditure on entertainment by the Department. In a change to previous practice, figures from 1997–98 onwards are presented on an accruals basis. In 2002–03 changes were made in the way entertainment expenditure was captured to include associated staff costs following the contracting out of the hospitality service. Figures for 2004–05 are not available at present.

	£
1996–1997	41,000
1997–1998	15,269.81
1998–1999	24,496.51
1999–2000	33,359.78
2000–2001	51,666.75
2001–2002	32,586.56
2002–2003	87,150.29
2003–2004[1]	78,144.29

Notes:
[1] Provisional, pending finalisation of annual accounts.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what percentage of the

(a) crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by her Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170796]

Mr. Caborn: Over the last five years, DCMS has procured the following;

(a) Crockery: 100 per cent. British Manufactured

(b) Cutlery: 100 per cent. British Manufactured

(c) Glassware: 80 per cent. British Manufactured

New Opportunities Fund

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much of the New Opportunities Fund is being provided to support children with special needs; and if she will make a statement. [170614]

Estelle Morris: The information is not collected in the way requested. However, a number of the New Opportunities Fund's programmes focus on children with special needs and I have asked the Chair of the Fund to write to the hon. Member with further details. I will arrange for copies of the letter to be placed in the Libraries of both Houses.

Talented Athlete Scholarships

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much public funding has been spent on the Talented Athlete Scholarship Scheme; what sums are committed for *(a)* the current year and *(b)* future financial years; how many students are expected to be supported in 2004–05; and if she will make a statement. [171043]

Mr. Caborn *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* Exchequer funding of £3 million annually has been allocated to delivering the Talented Athletes Scholarship Scheme in 2004–05 and 2005–06. This year is the first round of the programme in which we are looking to help about 1,000 young talented athletes continue to develop in their performance sport alongside taking up employment or continuing with tertiary education. The first bursaries will be announced in early summer and the scholarships later in September.

WALES

European Structural Funds

9. **Julie Morgan:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what consultations he has had concerning the potential impact in Wales of changes in European structural funds after 31 December 2006. [169191]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I have regular discussions with colleagues across Government and with the Assembly about a number of issues, including European Structural Funds.

Dredging (Dee Estuary)

10. **Mr. Ben Chapman:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with English local authorities and environmental bodies regarding dredging in the Dee Estuary. [169192]

Mr. Hain: Regulation of the Port of Mostyn's dredging proposals is a matter for the National Assembly, the Environment Agency, and the Department for Transport. The Environment Agency is advised in England by English Nature, and in Wales by the Countryside Council for Wales. English Nature has agreed that the Countryside Council for Wales should represent it in discussions on these proposals.

Civil Service

11. **Paul Flynn:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what discussions he has had with the First Secretary of the National Assembly for Wales concerning the relocation to Wales of civil service jobs. [169193]

Mr. Hain: The First Minister and I have had and will continue to have regular discussions.

We will be working closely to pitch for as many of the jobs allotted for relocation to come to Wales—where we have a record second to none in providing a home for civil service jobs.

Small Businesses

12. **Mr. Bellingham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent representations he has received from small business organisations in Wales regarding start-up schemes. [169194]

Mr. Touhig: My right hon. Friend and I have regular meetings with small business organisations. The Government and the Assembly have created an extremely supportive environment to start up, grow and run a business.

Waiting Lists

13. **Miss McIntosh:** To ask the Secretary of State for Wales what recent discussions he has had with the First Secretary about progress in reducing waiting times. [169195]

Mr. Touhig: I regularly meet the Assembly Health Minister concerning the health service in Wales: waiting times is one of the topics that we frequently discuss.

The most recent Assembly quarterly waiting time statistics illustrates huge improvements in long waits for patients. There has been a 71.9 per cent. fall in the number of patients waiting over 18 months for in-patient treatment and a fall of over 36 per cent. in waiting times of over 18 months for an out-patient appointment.

Miners' Compensation

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Wales if he will make a statement on the *(a)* latest activities of the Welsh monitoring sub-group for the miners' compensation scheme in Wales and *(b)* latest figures for disbursements under the scheme. [169188]

Mr. Touhig: The Welsh Sub-Group of the Coal Health Claims Monitoring Group, which I chair, meets on a regular basis and will next meet on 24 May to discuss progress of miners compensation in Wales.

To date, £300 million for respiratory disease and over £106 million for vibration white finger have been paid out to ex-miners and their families in Wales—bringing the total under both schemes to well over £400 million.

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Anderson Inquiry

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) whether the final report of the mission, entitled "DG (SANCO)/3367/2001—MR Final", carried out from 1 to 5 October 2001 by the European Commission Food and Veterinary Office, was submitted to the Anderson Inquiry into foot and mouth disease; [166757]

(2) whether the Department's Inquiry Liaison Unit was informed of the final report of the mission, entitled "DG (SANCO)/3367/2001—MR Final", carried out from 1 to 5 October 2001 by the European Commission Food and Veterinary Office. [166758]

Mr. Bradshaw: There is no record of the final report, "DG (SANCO)/3367/2001—MR Final", being received by the Department's Inquiry Liaison Unit and it was not sent to the Anderson Inquiry on foot and mouth disease. However, Dr. Anderson did meet the EU Commission to discuss the foot and mouth 2001 outbreak and the lessons learned. Defra also provided the Inquiry Liaison Unit with a submission, which was passed to the Anderson Inquiry, which plotted the legislative changes, and gave copies of the legislation and the Department's working instructions, since the last foot and mouth outbreak in 1967. The submission included a copy of Council Directive 80/217. As I made clear in the Adjournment Debate on 16 March 2004, we believe that 80/217 was properly implemented in the UK. The application by this Government was consistent with previous administrations.

Aridity Index

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the aridity index was, broken down by country in *(a)* 1975, *(b)* 1985, *(c)* 1995 and *(d)* 2002. [165813]

Mr. Bradshaw: The aridity index is currently being developed as an index of desertification risk for Mediterranean areas by Spanish and Portuguese academics and supported by European research funds. It is an index of the average water available in the soil, defined as the ratio between mean annual precipitation and mean annual evapotranspiration. The research work is scheduled for completion by the end of 2004.

Breckland Farmland SSSI

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how the success of the stone curlew within the Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest is measured. [165144]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 19 April 2004]*: The stone curlew population will be assessed for the whole of the Breckland pSPA, which includes Breckland Farmland SSSI. This assessment is based on annual counts and is considered by English Nature in conjunction with available information on the UK population and distribution trends, to assess whether the pSPA is continuing to support the numbers of stone curlews for which it has been selected and make a contribution to the Favourable Conservation Status of the species across Europe.

The conservation objective for Breckland pSPA is to maintain in favourable condition the habitats of the internationally important population of stone curlew. To date, the successful recovery of the stone curlew within the pSPA can be measured by the increase in numbers of breeding pairs since the start of the recovery project in 1985 and that the target of 200 pairs set in the UK Biodiversity Action Plan for the numbers of breeding pairs was achieved two years ahead of schedule and continues to rise.

Mr. Spring: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the legal costs to date associated with the Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest and the proposed Breckland Special Protection Area are *(a)* excluding costs relating to legal challenges and *(b)* including costs relating to legal challenges; and what other costs to date have been incurred by (i) English Nature and (ii) her Department. [165130]

Mr. Bradshaw: The legal costs to date associated with the Breckland Farmland Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the proposed Breckland Special Protection Area incurred by English Nature are: *(a)* excluding costs relating to legal challenges, approximately £10,000; and *(b)* including costs relating to legal challenges, approximately £250,000, both amounts are subject to VAT.

The first amount *(a)* includes legal advice concerning the SSSI notification process and letters of objection together with legal representation at the English Nature Council meeting in July 2001. Included within the costs at *(b)* is the cost of the High Court proceedings as incurred by English Nature in the legal challenge brought by the hon. Patrick Fisher and the Trustees of the Hon. P.V Fisher's Children's 1986 Settlement.

With regard to any other costs incurred by (i) English Nature, I regret that these would be obtainable only at disproportionate cost but would cover the time provided by various members of staff involved in the proceedings. The costs incurred by (ii) Defra are negligible as the Department is not a party to the proceedings brought over Breckland Farmland SSSI.

Energy Efficiency (Wirral, South)

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what estimates she has made of the potential carbon savings that will be achieved in the UK as a result of implementing the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive by *(a)* 2010 and *(b)* 2020. [165280]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

The Government support the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive and propose to transpose it into law through the Building Regulations. It requires member states to set standards, to require the provision of

certificates, and to inspect boilers and air conditioning systems. It does not include specific carbon saving measures, and therefore no estimates of savings have been made. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is confident however that implementation of the directive will heighten energy efficiency in the public's mind, and hence lead to improvements in buildings producing carbon savings in due course.

EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the outcome was of the Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 26 April; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting record; and if she will make a statement. [169477]

Mr. Bradshaw: I represented the United Kingdom at the EU Agriculture and Fisheries Council on 26 to 27 April 2004.

After several hours of talks, the Irish Presidency concluded that it was not possible to identify a compromise proposal on the welfare of animals during transport that would command the support of a qualified majority of member states, and so the meeting concluded without agreement on that dossier. There are no plans to resume discussion of it. This outcome was disappointing for the Government, which had supported the Presidency's efforts to find a compromise that represented a genuine improvement in animal welfare over the current rules.

On the approvals process for genetically modified organisms, there was no qualified majority of member states, either in favour of or against, the approval of sweetcorn from Bt11 maize for consumption in the EU. Under the rules of procedure for such approvals, the Commission is now able to take a decision under its own responsibility, from 1 May.

Denmark reported on measures it has taken in response to dioxin levels in salmon fished in the Baltic Sea. Slovakia and Poland raised concerns about the rules on the carry-over of agricultural stocks on enlargement, which are designed to prevent speculation but which they consider to be over-bureaucratic. In response to a request from Denmark and Austria, the Commission indicated that it would bring forward a proposal within the next few weeks on thresholds for the adventitious presence of genetically modified material in seeds.

Farming

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what extra subsidy schemes severely disadvantaged area farmers may apply for. [169078]

Alun Michael: I refer the right hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Malden and East Chelmsford (Mr. Whittingdale) on 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 271W.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what headage of livestock is registered in Cumbria. [169079]

Alun Michael: The total livestock figures for Cumbria, according to the latest available census returns, are as follows:

	Number
Cattle and calves	446,241
Pigs	31,875
Sheep and lambs	1,951,139
Goats	1,620
Horses	5,163
Deer	493
Poultry	2,392,240

Source:
June 2003 Agricultural Census

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many farms there are in Cumbria. [169095]

Alun Michael: The number of registered agricultural holdings in Cumbria was 7,969 at the 19 April 2004.

The number of holdings in Cumbria as at the June 2003 Census was 7,849.

Source:
Farm Survey System 19/4/04, June Agricultural Census 2003.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether Cumbrian farmers will be subject to different cross-compliance measures from Scottish farmers. [169097]

Alun Michael: Agriculture is a devolved matter, allowing the Scottish Executive to tailor policies where appropriate and permitted under the relevant regulations.

Currently there are public consultations on possible cross-compliance measures in England and Scotland. Officials continue to work closely in the design and implementation of CAP reform policies, including cross-compliance, to develop complementary measures wherever possible.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether farmers in severely disadvantaged areas in Cumbria will be subject to different cross-compliance measures from farmers not in severely disadvantaged areas in Cumbria. [169098]

Alun Michael: Defra launched its consultation on proposed and possible measures for implementation of cross-compliance in England on 29 March 2004. Final decisions on cross-compliance will be taken after careful consideration of responses.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the average difference in payments between 2005 and 2013 will be for farmers *(a)* in severely disadvantaged areas, *(b)* not in severely disadvantaged areas and *(c)* in Scotland. [169099]

Alun Michael: Under the flat-rate system for allocating Single Farm Payment entitlement in England, the mean payment rate within each region will be similar between 2005 and 2013 even though individual payment rates will change during this transition. In Scotland, under the historic approach, both the mean and individual payment rates will change little over time. In both countries, however, some variation may arise from year to year due to movements in the prevailing exchange rate used to convert from euros and different rates of deduction for the national reserve, modulation and financial discipline.

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what effect the lower rate severely disadvantaged areas allowance will have on numbers of livestock in Cumbria. [169101]

Alun Michael: From 2005 decoupling will break the link between subsidy and production in the UK and cause farmers to reassess their farming operation and production decisions. Decoupling is not affected by the method chosen for allocating entitlement to the Single Farm Payment. The impact of decoupling on production patterns and livestock numbers is very difficult to assess. There are several studies on the Defra website that examine this at the UK level but there are no assessments by county.

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what differences in cross-compliance requirements will exist between farms in different regions in England; [168034]

(2) what differences in cross-compliance requirements will exist between farms in severely disadvantaged areas and non-severely disadvantaged areas. [168035]

Alun Michael: Defra launched its consultation on proposed and possible measures for implementation of cross compliance in England on 29 March 2004. Decisions on cross compliance will not be determined until all responses have been considered carefully.

Fisheries

Mr. Key: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether she has responded to the Cabinet Office Strategy Unit recommendation that she should designate the sea bass stock for recreational use; and if she will make a statement. [165929]

Mr. Bradshaw: "Net Benefits", the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit report giving recommendations for a sustainable and profitable future for UK fishing, was published on 25 March. These recommendations are presented as the basis for Her Majesty's Government, the Devolved Administrations, the fishing industry and all other stakeholders to determine future action. In response, the Fisheries Departments in the UK will engage intensively with stakeholders to develop by the end of 2004 an action plan for change and a timetable for its delivery. Defra has set up a dedicated team to advance this work. The need to balance the needs of the recreational and commercial sectors is one of the many important issues that were identified in the report and will be covered.

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many UK fishing vessels will be required to use pingers in gillnet fisheries in areas IV and VII under the provisions of the new Regulation agreed at the Fisheries Council on 22 and 23 March, on the basis of current fishing effort; [168244]

(2) what proportion of UK fishing effort will be exempt from the pinger requirement on the basis of the exclusion of vessels smaller than 12 metres under the provisions of the new Regulation agreed at the Fisheries Council on 22 and 23 March. [168246]

Mr. Bradshaw: The new Council Regulation to address cetacean bycatch will require pinger usage on vessels of 12 metres and over in ICES divisions VIId, e, f, g, h and j when using bottom-set gillnets or entangling nets. In ICES Area IV and division IIIa, the pinger requirement will apply to vessels of 12 metres and over using bottom set gillnets or entangling nets where the combination of net lengths used does not exceed 400 metres or where the mesh size used is greater than or equal to 220mm. The data are not available to isolate definitively the number of vessels falling into the latter categories; it is only possible to identify the total number of vessels of 12 metres and over using bottom set gillnets and entangling nets in the areas concerned. On this basis, and using 2003 fishing data, the number of UK vessels required to use pingers would be 63.

Bearing in mind the same caveats, the proportion of UK fishing effort (i.e. days at sea) using bottom set-nets and entangling nets exempt from the pinger requirement would be approximately 80 per cent. It should be noted, however, that this calculation does not take account of the length of net deployed by those covered by the pinger requirements which is a significant factor affecting bycatch rates.

Hops

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what definition her Department uses of *(a)* hedgerow hops and *(b)* standard hops under the new single payment regime. [168147]

Alun Michael: For the purposes of the Single Payment, no distinction is drawn between different types of hops.

Orchards

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) what definition her Department uses of an orchard; [168145]

(2) at what tree density her Department defines woodland as an orchard. [168146]

Alun Michael: There is no general definition of an orchard. Under present arrangements, densities above

50 trees per hectare have been regarded as ineligible for the purposes of claiming CAP subsidies and this is likely to continue in respect of the Single Payment.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps the Government will take to protect old varieties of apples if traditional orchards do not qualify for half subsidy. [168149]

Alun Michael: Old varieties of apple are protected in the National Fruit Collection and the conservation of traditional orchards is funded through the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which EU member states subsidise orchards. [168150]

Alun Michael: There is no provision within the Common Agriculture Policy for subsidies to orchards. However, member states may, in certain circumstances, allow the forage area within grazed orchards to be used in support of a Single Payment Scheme claim and make payments under rural development and conservation measures.

Rats

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what action the Government are taking to control the rat population. [169892]

Mr. Bradshaw: The Prevention of Damage by Pests Act 1949 puts the responsibility for the enforcement and monitoring of rodent control with local authorities. Water companies, like other owners and occupiers of land, have a duty of carrying out the necessary control measures when ordered to do so by local authorities.

Should local authorities fail to discharge their responsibilities under the 1949 Act, Defra has certain default powers to initiate action, and has oversight of the water companies who undertake control of infestations in sewers and water supplies. The Department of Health is responsible for advising on the health aspects of infestations. Our Departments liaise closely to ensure co-ordinated Government action is taken as necessary.

The Government take this matter seriously. Defra, along with the Department of Health, Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, Local Government Association (representing the local authorities), Water UK (representing the water companies), Chartered Institute of Environmental Health and Central Science Laboratory, participate in the National Working Group on Rats in Sewers. The aim of the group is the development of an ongoing co-ordinated rodent control strategy.

Defra is also undertaking a research and development programme, to develop or encourage the development of cost-effective, humane and environmentally acceptable methods of managing rat populations. This is due to be completed in March 2007. The Department also monitors the level of commensal rodent presence through the English House Condition Surveys, undertaken by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. This is the only large-scale random survey of commensal rodent presence.

A rat control technical advice leaflet and a range of others on similar topics are available from the mammal and bird licensing and advice pages of the Defra website (these are located at: www.defra.gov.uk/wildlife-countryside/vertebrates) and from Defra's National Wildlife Management Team.

Tenancy Reform

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on recent discussions with the Association of Chief Estates Surveyors and Property Managers in Local Government, with specific reference to tenancy reform and estate disposal and restructuring. [169741]

Alun Michael: As part of the Government response to the report of the Tenancy Reform Industry Group, my noble Friend the Lord Whitty met representatives of the Association of Chief Estate Surveyors and Property Managers in local government on 7 April together with representatives from the Local Government Association and farming organisations, to discuss county farms.

The Government value the contribution that the county farm system makes to the tenanted farming sector and the opportunities it provides for new entrants to pursue a career in agriculture. The Government share the concerns of the Tenancy Reform Industry Group about the potential adverse impact that continuing sales of statutory smallholdings might have in the longer term.

The meeting of 7 April discussed a number of issues stemming from the report of the Tenancy Reform Industry Group. This included the regulatory framework under which local authorities provide for statutory smallholdings and the way in which local authorities manage their county farm estates. The meeting also considered the way forward for county farms and how best to maintain a modern and efficient service for the future.

Veal Crates

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what recent representations she has made to the European Commission on the use and regulation of veal crates; and if she will make a statement. [169748]

Mr. Bradshaw: We have not made any recent representations on veal crates. In the UK there has been a unilateral ban on the use of close-confinement veal crate systems since 1990. The EU banned new veal crate systems from 1994. Systems existing before that date were granted a transitional period that permitted their use until 2006. From 2006 all such systems will be banned throughout the EU.

TREASURY

National Statistics

Paul Flynn: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many suicides were recorded in the UK in each of the last 10 years for *(a)* children and *(b)* adults. [169895]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Paul Flynn, dated 5 May 2004:

The most recently available information is for 2002. In routine statistics, ONS defines suicides as deaths from suicide and deaths from "injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted". In adults it is likely that most of these latter deaths are cases where the harm is self-inflicted but there was insufficient evidence to prove that the deceased deliberately intended to kill themselves so the Coroner returns an open verdict. This may not be the case in children, however, where open verdicts may not relate to self-inflicted injury. Therefore, figures for suicide and injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted are given separately in the attached table for the calendar years 1993 to 2002.

Note that, for this purpose, children have been classified as persons aged under 15, with adults aged 15 and over. This is to achieve consistency with previous published analysis.[1]

[1] Brock A and Griffiths C. Trends in suicide by method in England and Wales, 1979 to 2001. *Health Statistics Quarterly* 20 (2003), 7–18.

Number of deaths from suicide[1] and injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted,[2] in (a) children[3] and (b) adults[4]—United Kingdom, 1993 to 2002[5]

	Children[3]		Adults[4]	
Calendar year	Suicide[1]	Undetermined injury[2]	Suicide[1]	Undetermined injury[2]
1993	14	36	4,449	1,815
1994	13	26	4,368	1,722
1995	10	22	4,305	1,802
1996	6	25	4,160	1,691
1997	7	28	4,136	1,822
1998	6	19	4,383	1,774
1999	5	17	4,443	1,751
2000	9	21	4,282	1,673
2001	7	12	4,006	1,725
2002	8	16	4,059	1,664

[1] Deaths with a verdict of suicide were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes E950-E959 for the years 1993 to 2000 for England and Wales and Northern Ireland, and for 1993 to 1999 for Scotland, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes X60-X84 for the years 2001 and 2002 for England and Wales and Northern Ireland, and for 2000 to 2002 for Scotland (which also includes Y87.0).

[2] Deaths with a verdict of injury undetermined whether accidentally or purposely inflicted were defined using the International Classification of Diseases, Ninth Revision (ICD-9) codes E980-E989 for the years 1993 to 1999 for Scotland and for the years 1993 to 2000 for Northern Ireland, and the International Classification of Diseases, Tenth Revision (ICD-10) codes Y10-Y34 for the years 2000 to 2002 for Scotland (which also includes Y87.2), and the years 2001 to 2002 for Northern Ireland. Data for England and Wales were defined using ICD-9 E980-E989 excluding E988.8 and ICD-10 Y10-Y34 excluding Y33.9 where the Coroner's verdict was pending.

[3] Children were classified as persons aged under 15 to be consistent with previous analysis.[6]

[4] Adults were classified as persons aged 15 and over to be consistent with previous analysis.[6]

[5] Data for England and Wales are for deaths occurring per calendar year. Data for Scotland and Northern Ireland are for deaths registered per calendar year.

[6] Brock A and Griffiths C. Trends in suicide by method in England and Wales, 1979 to 2001. *Health Statistics Quarterly* 20 (2003), 7–18.

Mr. Amess: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many conceptions resulted in termination in each year since 1997, broken down by month; and if he will make a statement. [170092]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. David Amess, dated 5 May 2004:

The most recent year for which figures are available is 2001.

The total number of monthly conceptions and conceptions terminated by abortion for women of all ages, in England and Wales, 1997 to 2001 are given in the attached table.

Total number of conceptions, and number terminated by abortion, by month of conception for women of all ages England and Wales, 1997 to 2001.

	1997		1998		1999	
Month of conception	Total conceptions	Conceptions terminated by abortion	Total conceptions	Conceptions terminated by abortion	Total conceptions	Conceptions terminated by abortion
January	68,474	15,090	70,830	15,996	66,243	14,756
February	59,661	12,703	60,239	13,597	58,867	13,142
March	65,927	13,651	65,469	14,302	66,405	14,853
April	64,721	14,318	63,996	14,997	63,504	14,813
May	68,598	15,204	66,065	14,974	63,658	14,400
June	65,226	13,617	65,889	14,755	63,287	14,572
July	67,517	14,127	67,162	15,069	65,316	14,596
August	66,731	13,543	66,897	14,261	64,831	14,003

Total number of conceptions, and number terminated by abortion, by month of conception for women of all ages England and Wales, 1997 to 2001.

	1997		1998		1999	
Month of conception	*Total conceptions*	*Conceptions terminated by abortion*	*Total conceptions*	*Conceptions terminated by abortion*	*Total conceptions*	*Conceptions terminated by abortion*
September	64,943	13,250	66,692	14,223	63,865	14,278
October	70,393	14,971	69,075	15,106	65,797	14,566
November	66,952	14,016	65,145	14,007	65,106	14,343
December	71,218	16,011	69,520	16,094	67,085	16,267
Total	800,361	170,501	796,979	177,381	773,964	174,589

	2000		2001[1]	
Month of conception	*Total conceptions*	*Conceptions terminated by abortion*	*Total conceptions*	*Conceptions terminated by abortion*
January	66,116	15,183	67,873	15,794
February	61,406	13,927	58,089	13,665
March	65,566	15,157	63,188	14,867
April	61,101	13,991	59,642	14,067
May	64,791	15,181	65,256	15,773
June	62,811	14,606	62,501	14,835
July	61,893	13,617	62,104	13,831
August	65,458	14,308	65,339	15,067
September	62,641	13,918	61,812	13,763
October	65,011	14,431	66,363	15,031
November	64,044	14,704	64,595	14,840
December	66,117	15,339	66,669	15,302
Total	766,955	174,362	763,431	176,835

[1] Provisional.

Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Child Tax Credit

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in the Huntingdon constituency are in receipt of child tax credit. [170849]

Ruth Kelly: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, Official Report, column 98W.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Oldham West and Royton have received child tax credit. [170900]

Ruth Kelly: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Citizen Information Project

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on progress on *(a)* the Citizen Information Project and *(b)* the objectives of the UK Population Register. [170336]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the General Registrar, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Dennis Roberts to Mr. Nick Gibb, dated 5 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on progress on the Citizen Information Project and the objectives of the UK Population Register. I am replying in his absence. (170336)

The objective of the Citizen Information Project (CIP) is to put in place a common government infrastructure to enable the sharing of basic contact information (name, address, date and place of birth, sex, date of death (where relevant)) about citizens. This should lead to improved accuracy of the information held, more effective and efficient delivery of public services, and greater convenience and empowerment for citizens across the lifetime of their dealings with the state. It should also improve the base of statistical information underpinning the development and implementation of government policy.

CIP is being managed by the General Register Office, part of the Office for National Statistics. It is being taken forward as a staged project, subject to regular Ministerial review. A feasibility study was completed in 2003, and approval to proceed to the next stage of work (project definition) was announced by the Chief Secretary to the Treasury on 6 January 2004. In the project definition phase we will explore a range of options for delivering the project's aims, taking account of ongoing developments in related areas of work, including in particular the Identity Cards programme being led by the Home Office.

Departmental Procurement

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what percentage of the *(a)* crockery, *(b)* cutlery and *(c)* glassware procured by his Department over the last five years is of British manufacture. [170810]

Ruth Kelly: The Treasury's catering service has been contracted out for several years and the cutlery, crockery and glassware used in providing that service has been procured by the suppliers of that service.

Employment

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many job vacancies there were in the Huntingdon constituency in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [170855]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jonathan Djanogly, dated 5 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about job vacancies in Huntingdon parliamentary constituency.

According to Jobcentre Plus administrative records the number of unfilled vacancies in the Huntingdon travel-to-work area was 866 on average during 1997. This represents only a proportion of all the vacancies available, as not all vacancies are notified to Jobcentres.

Jobcentre vacancy statistics were withdrawn from National Statistics in September 2001 as a result of distortions to the data, which occurred following the introduction of new administrative procedures by Jobcentre Plus. Comparable figures for vacancies in 2003 are therefore unavailable.

Results from the ONS Vacancy Survey were released as National Statistics from July 2003, but are not available for local areas.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in Wirral, South from 1997 to 31 December 2003; [170302]

(2) how many new jobs have been created in Wirral, South since 1997. [170303]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Ben Chapman, dated 5 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Questions about full-time jobs and jobs created in Wirral South. (170302, 170303)

While statistics of new jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The following table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs, in Wirral South, for 1997 and the latest year available, 2002. No information is available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] in Wirral South parliamentary constituency: 1997 and 2002

Number, percentage

Number of employees	*Full-time*	*Total*
1997	16,000	22,700
2002	16,500	23,800
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	500	1,100
Percentage	3.0	4.9

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.

Source:

1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Gift Aid

John Barrett: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer pursuant to his answer of 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 686W, on gift aid, what assessment he has made of the effect of the abolition of gift aid claims on day memberships on donations to charities. [170046]

John Healey: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer I gave him on 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1351W, and 23 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 686W, and the answer my right hon. Friend the Chief Secretary gave him on 4 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1042.

In last year's pre-Budget report, the Chancellor announced changes to the Gift Aid rules which aim to maintain the principles of Gift Aid as a scheme designed to encourage donations to charity.

The Inland Revenue is consulting closely with affected charities in the heritage and conservation sectors on how this may best be achieved, and to ensure that there are no unintended side-effects.

These so-called "Day Membership" schemes do not generate additional donations, but merely reclassify admission fees as donations on which Gift Aid is then claimed. The changes are therefore not expected to reduce the total amount received from individuals by these charities in donations and admission fees, although the gift aid tax relief from the Government would no longer be claimable.

Household Debt/Income

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list the average *(a)* household debt per annum and *(b)* household monthly income in each year since 1997 in Greater London, broken down by borough. [170494]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Simon Hughes, dated 5 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question on average household debt per annum, and average household monthly income for the boroughs of Greater London. (170494)

The Office for National Statistics does not compile estimates of household debt below the UK level. Similarly estimates of quarterly household income are only available at the UK level. No estimates of monthly income are compiled.

ONS has published gross disposable household income (GDHI) at current prices at the NUTS1, 2 and 3 sub-national geographies. An explanation of how boroughs fit into these geographies is provided in the attached annex. These estimates were last published on 26 March 2002 and are presented in the table below. This data set runs from 1995 to 1999 and is consistent with the 2001 National Accounts. The estimates are available at. http://www.statistics.gov.uk/CCI/article.asp?ID=128&Pos=2&ColRank=1&Rank=224

Gross disposable household income per year NUTS1 and NUTS2 areas in London, 1997–99

£ per head

Area	*1997*	*1998*	*1999*
London	11,485	11,811	12,207
Inner London	12,089	12,363	12,935
Outer London	11,110	11,467	11,748

At the NUTS3 geographic level, data was only of sufficient quality for ONS to publish estimates of household income on a three year average basis. These are presented as indices relative to the UK average.

Index[1] of gross disposable household income (GDHI) per year NUTS 1, NUTS2 and NUTS3 areas in London, 1997–99

£ per capita (average over whole period)

Area	*GDHI Index*
London	121
Inner London	127
Inner London—East	106
Inner London—West	164
Outer London	117
Outer London—East and North East	112
Outer London—South	120
Outer London—West and North West	119

[1] Index value is 100 for the UK as a whole.

Annex

NUTS-3	*LAU 1 level/Boroughs*
Inner London—West	Camden, City of London, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Wandsworth, Westminster.
Inner London—East	Hackney, Haringey, Islington, Lambeth, Newham, Southwark, Lewisham, Tower Hamlets.
Outer London—East and North East	Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Enfield, Greenwich, Havering, Redbridge, Waltham Forest.
Outer London—South	Bromley, Croydon, Kingston upon Thames, Merton, Sutton.
Outer London—West and North West	Barnet, Brent, Ealing, Harrow, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Richmond upon Thames.

Income Tax

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Wirral, South qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [170275]

Ruth Kelly: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there were around 10,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Wirral South constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

IT Equipment (Tax Exemption)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in the Huntingdon constituency have benefited from 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [170843]

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Oldham West and Royton have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [170901]

Ruth Kelly: We regret that the information is not available to estimate the number of businesses in a given constituency which have benefited from the 100 per cent. first year capital allowances for the purchase of information and communication equipment.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many businesses in Wirral, South have benefited from the 100 per cent. tax exemption for the purchase of computer and internet equipment. [170301]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested is not available.

Job Creation (Huntingdon)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many jobs have been created in the Huntingdon constituency since 1997; [170850]

(2) what the *(a)* change and *(b)* percentage change was in full-time permanent jobs in the Huntingdon constituency from 1997 to 31 December 2003. [170851]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Dennis Roberts to Mr. Jonathan Djanogly, dated 5 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about full-time jobs and jobs created in Huntingdon. I am replying in his absence.

While statistics of jobs created are not available explicitly, statistics from surveys enable comparisons to be made of net changes, in numbers of jobs, from year to year.

The attached table shows the information requested, relating to all jobs and full-time jobs, in Huntingdon, for 1997 and the latest year available, 2002. No information is available about whether the jobs were permanent.

Number of full-time employees and total number of employees[1] in Huntingdon parliamentary constituency: 1997 and 2002

	Full-time	*Total*
Number of employees		
1997	36,900	50,000
2002	36,900	52,500
Change from 1997 to 2002		
Absolute	0	2,500
Percentage	0.0	5.0

[1] Employee jobs only, not self-employed jobs.

Source:

1997; Annual Employment Survey, rescaled 2002; Annual Business Inquiry (ABI).

Ministerial Meetings

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will list *(a)* the official meetings he has had with the Mayor of London since July 2000 and *(b)* the dates and subject of each meeting. [170570]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The Chancellor has had no official meetings with the Mayor since July 2000.

Mr. B. Bentley (Child Benefit)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how long it took to finalise the claim for child benefit submitted by Mr. B. Bentley of Quigley Street, Birkenhead; and if he will make a statement on his policy of transferring child benefit to grandparents when they become the main carer of the child. [170656]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The Inland Revenue is statutorily debarred from disclosing information relating to the affairs of individuals. Exemption 15 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information applies.

The rules governing the transfer of child benefit from one person to another are contained in the Social Security Contributions and Benefits Act 1992. Where a

child's parent voluntarily relinquishes entitlement to child benefit in favour of the child's grandparent, the grandparent will be entitled from the day following the last day the benefit was paid to the parent.

National Minimum Wage

Simon Hughes: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many young people aged 16 or 17 he expects will be entitled to the national minimum wage in *(a)* Greater London, *(b)* each London borough and *(c)* the United Kingdom in 2004–05. [170495]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Dennis Roberts to Mr. Simon Hughes, dated 5 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about national minimum wage. I am replying in his absence. (170495)

Information about entitlement to the national minimum wage is not available. However, estimates for the number of employees aged 16 and 17 from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) provide an upper limit for the number of people entitled to the national minimum wage.

The table below gives estimates of the number of employees aged 16 and 17 in the United Kingdom and in Greater London for the three month period ending February 2004. They include a small, but not measured, number of people enrolled on apprenticeship and pre-apprenticeship schemes who are not entitled to the minimum wage.

Number of employees aged 16 and 17 in the United Kingdom and in Greater London

	Three month period ending February 2004		
	Employees aged:		
Area	*16 and 17*	*16*	*17*
United Kingdom	602,000	227,000	375,000
Greater London	34,000	11,000	23,000

Source:
Office for National Statistics

As with any statistical sample survey, estimates from the LFS are subject to sampling variability and the sample size is too small to provide comparable estimates for London Boroughs with any reliability.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions his Department received in (i) the 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170764]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* Ordinary Written Questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for a Named Day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170765]

John Healey: The information is given in the following table:

	Ordinary written questions tabled	*Answered within a working week*[1]	*Named day questions tabled*	*Answered on the nominated day*
2002–03				
November 2002	203	158	67	54
December 2002	168	138	108	73
January 2003	476	360	62	45
February 2003	295	210	58	47
March 2003	442	363	43	31
April 2003	277	176	52	29
May 2003	298	246	37	24
June 2003	340	248	58	35
July 2003	253	164	31	20
August 2003	0	0	0	0
September 2003	181	139	39	30
October 2003	253	205	40	32
November 2003	160	143	25	18
Total	3,346	2,550	620	438
2003–04				
November 2003	53	50	7	7
December 2003	245	205	60	52
January 2004	304	253	43	27
February 2004	252	201	46	37
March 2004	346	267	102	55
April 2004	139	102	19	10
Total	1,339	1,078	277	188

[1] The Treasury's database records whether ordinary written questions are answered within a working week rather than five sitting days, which can be several days longer.

John Thurso: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer when he will reply to question 163123 tabled on 18 March, on meetings with the Chairman of the Strategic Rail Authority. [170870]

Mr. Boateng: I did so on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1114W.

Pensions

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the cost to the Exchequer would be under its proposed reform of pension taxation of imposing no lifetime saving allowance on pension savings in 2006–07 and each of the subsequent three years. [170235]

Ruth Kelly: There would be a cost attached to having no lifetime allowance under the proposed simplified pension regime. The size of this cost depends upon behavioural effects and any estimate of cost would inevitably be very broad-brush. However, given the potential additional pension savings from those in the top 1 per cent. of the earnings distribution, the cost to the Exchequer could be up to several hundred million pounds over this period.

Public Spending

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer whether he expects to meet his target of having achieved a modest surplus across the current economic cycle ending in fiscal year 2005–06. [171292]

Ruth Kelly: The UK public finances are underpinned by two fiscal rules: the sustainable investment rule and the golden rule. The golden rule states that over the economic cycle, the Government will borrow only to invest and not to fund current spending. Progress against the rule is measured by the average annual surplus on the current budget measured as a ratio to GDP over the economic cycle.

The average surplus on the current budget between 1999–2000, which is the Government's provisional judgment of the start of the current cycle, and 2005–06 when the Government project the economy will return to trend, as stated in the Budget 2004 (HC 301), table 2.6 page 34, is 0.1 per cent. of GDP. On this basis, the Government are on track to meet the golden rule.

Small Businesses (Shrewsbury)

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer (1) how many small businesses re-registered for VAT in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997; [170636]

(2) how many new VAT registrations of small companies there were in Shrewsbury and Atcham in each year since 1997. [170637]

John Healey: Statistics published by the Small Business Service for total VAT registrations for the Shrewsbury and Atcham area from 1997 are shown in the following table:

	New registrations	*Total registrations*[1]
1997	270	2,975
1998	270	3,015
1999	250	3,050
2000	270	3,070
2001	265	3,090
2002	290	3,130
2003	n/a	3,185

[1] Start of year.

However, total VAT registration data do not capture all business start-up activity. Businesses are unlikely to register if they fall below the compulsory VAT registration threshold, which has risen in each year since 1997. Similarly, businesses that de-register will not necessarily have closed. There were only 1.8 million out of 3.8 million enterprises registered for VAT at the start of 2002.

Tourism (Wirral)

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Wirral, South on the latest date for which figures are available. [170304]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Ben Chapman, dated 5 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Wirral South. (170304)

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of jobs in tourism related industries in Wirral South was 2,100. This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels

restaurants

bars

activities of travel agencies

library, archives museums etc

sporting activities

other recreational activities.

Unemployment

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in each year since 1997 in Wirral, South. [170276]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Dennis Roberts to Ben Chapman, dated 5 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (170276)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Wirral South Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Wirral South constituency for each year since 1997.

Annual average number of JSA claimants Wirral South constituency, 1997–2004

	Number of claimants
1997	1,860
1998	1,433
1999	1,335
2000	1,229
2001	1,008
2002	923
2003	848

Mr. Love: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the unemployment figures were in the constituency of Edmonton for *(a)* 1991–92, *(b)* 2001–02 and *(c)* 2003. [169302]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Dennis Roberts to Mr. Andrew Love, dated 5 May 2004:

The National Statistician has been asked to reply to your recent Parliamentary Question about unemployment. I am replying in his absence. (169302)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Edmonton Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Edmonton constituency for the years 1991, 1992 and 2001 to 2003.

Annual average number of JSA claimants, Edmonton constituency, years as shown

	Number of claimants
1991	4,118
1992	5,468
2001	2,284
2002	2,185
2003	2,301

TRANSPORT

Buses

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport (1) if he will allocate additional funds to local authorities to introduce free bus travel for *(a)* those of pensionable age and *(b)* those with disabilities; [169786]

(2) if he will allocate additional funds to local authorities to enable subsidised fares for *(a)* those of pensionable age and *(b)* those with disabilities to be made available at all times. [169787]

Mr. McNulty: We have no plans to allocate additional funds to local authorities to introduce free bus travel, or to extend subsidised fares, for pensioners and disabled people to all times.

The current statutory minimum requirement for concessionary travel in England introduced in 2001 ensures half fares for pensioners and disabled people on local buses for journeys made after 9.30 am. From April 2003, we extended concessionary travel schemes to men aged 60 to 64, bringing them into line with women of the same age. We provided funding to local authorities to cover the additional costs of implementing these initiatives. Local authorities may make more generous provision, including free travel on buses and trains, or for concessionary travel at all times, at their discretion in the light of their own financial priorities and local circumstances. Also, from May 2003, we have provided additional funding to enable half-fares to be made available on many scheduled long-distance coach services for people aged 60 years and over and for disabled people.

Off-shore Wind Farms

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what assessment he has made of the extent of interference with maritime navigational instruments from wind farms placed in UK territorial waters. [168262]

Mr. Darling: The Government will examine the extent of interference with maritime navigational instruments caused by wind farms. We will want to draw on international experience, for instance in Denmark, and also learn as much as possible from our own installations. We will use the offshore wind farm at North Hoyle as a test facility to provide input into the study. We intend to begin work as soon as possible so that the results are known before any consents to build wind farms under the second round of offshore development.

Piracy

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to issue an advice leaflet to the crews of British flagged ships concerning how best to defend themselves against piracy. [170055]

Mr. Jamieson: Detailed guidance already exists in the form of Marine Guidance Note MGN 241 (M)—(Measures to Counter Piracy, Armed Robbery and other acts of Violence against Merchant Shipping), published in November 2002 and issued to over 16,000 UK mariners. There are no immediate plans to re-issue the guidance but this is being kept under review.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures he has taken to help British flagged ships that sail *(a)* near Malaysia and *(b)* through the Straits of Malacca defend themselves against piracy. [170056]

Mr. Jamieson: I refer the hon. Member to my earlier answer given today (ref 170055). The Department for Transport has issued comprehensive guidance to UK mariners regarding the measures that UK flagged vessels should take to defend against acts of piracy while passing through the Malacca Straits. Additionally, the DfT will be represented at the International Maritime Bureau's (IMB) Piracy conference being held in Kuala Lumpur at the end of June. We will be highlighting and making a persuasive case for a more robust and co-ordinated international effort to crack down on piracy in the world's main hotspots such as the Straits of Malacca.

All British flagged ships are required under the new International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) code to appoint a Ship Security Officer (SSO) and submit a Ship Security Plan (SSP) to the DfT. Officials examine these plans and verify them on board prior to issuing the International Ship Security Certificate (ISSC), if appropriate. SSPs and vessels have to meet UK security standards and the plans contain many elements of good security practice, which help SSOs ensure ships are adequately protected.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many incidents of piracy were reported as having taken place against British vessels in 2003. [170063]

Mr. Jamieson: There were 17 incidents of piracy reported by the IMB against British vessels in 2003. This figure includes incidents against vessels flagged in UK and its Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many incidents of piracy were discovered at UK seaports by *(a)* UK border controls and *(b)* the Royal Navy in 2003. [170064]

Mr. Jamieson: There were no incidents of piracy discovered at UK seaports in 2003 by either UK border controls or the Royal Navy. There were also no piracy related incident reports for the UK, and the IMB annual report confirms that no such incidents were recorded for 2003.

DEFENCE

Accommodation

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) pursuant to his answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1604W, on accommodation costs, what the housing needs of the Service personnel living in private rented accommodation are; [169472]

(2) pursuant to his answer of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1604W, on accommodation costs, what plans he has to provide sufficient service accommodation in the Greater Portsmouth area to obviate the need for service personnel to rent in the private sector. [169444]

Mr. Caplin: All families housed in Substitute Service Family Accommodation (SSFA) in the Portsmouth area at present are in need of 4-bedroomed houses. Two PFI projects will provide a total of 148 x 4-bedroomed houses at the former HMS Daedalus site in Gosport, which should eliminate the need for privately rented accommodation, even allowing for an expected increase in Portsmouth-based personnel. The new properties are scheduled to be constructed within about 18 months.

In addition, there is currently a need for Substitute Single Service Accommodation in Portsmouth, for personnel temporarily displaced by Project EMMA, a major project replacing 1960s tower blocks with new accommodation, projected to provide a suitable level of accommodation for many years to come. A Portsmouth Single Living Accommodation Study is on-going, designed to assess the single accommodation need in the Portsmouth area and ensure that best use is made of existing accommodation.

Aircraft Carriers

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the benefits of full-sized aircraft carriers. [161245]

Mr. Ingram: The Strategic Defence Review concluded that the current Invincible class carriers should be replaced by two larger, more versatile, aircraft carriers capable of carrying a more powerful embarked air component. The carriers would have broad utility across a range of roles, consistent with the focus of maritime forces towards rapid deployment operations and wider power projection.

Size is not, however, an end in itself and the Department has not sought to fix the dimensions of these new aircraft carriers during the Assessment Phase of the CVF project. Parameters such as the ships size will instead reflect the design needed to meet the level of capability sought. It is to be expected that the design, and therefore size, of the ships will evolve as the Department seeks to balance, in conjunction with industry, overall performance, time and cost as part of normal Assessment Phase activity.

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the BAE Systems and Thales partnership is still his preferred prime contractor for the aircraft carrier programme; what alternatives are under consideration; when the appointment will be confirmed; and if he will make a statement. [166013]

Mr. Ingram: As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Defence announced on 30 January 2003, the best means of delivering the carrier programme is via an alliance approach involving BAE Systems, Thales UK and the Ministry of Defence.

The alliance approach remains the best way to deliver the programme within the time and cost parameters, and we continue to engage in discussions on the alliancing strategy to determine roles and responsibilities. Ministers are currently considering proposals on the overall CVF programme, the alliance strategy, and on when to proceed to the Demonstration and Manufacture phases.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make it his policy to ensure that *(a) the* entire value of future aircraft carriers will be spent in the UK and *(b)* in the event that overseas suppliers are necessary, 100 per cent. of the value of such contracts will be offset by purchases from the UK. [167641]

Mr. Ingram: It is intended that the Future Aircraft Carriers will be acquired in accordance with defence industrial policy and also to provide the armed forces with the equipment they require at the best value for money for the taxpayer. I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 13 January 2003, *Official Report*, column 404W to my hon. Friend the Member for Chorley (Mr. Hoyle).

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) if he will make it his policy to ensure that the final assembly and integration of modules of all future aircraft carriers will be at a UK shipyard; and if he will list the UK shipyards which have this capability; [167642]

(2) if he will list those companies which he has assessed as having the capability to construct the principal modules which will make up future aircraft carriers. [167643]

Mr. Ingram: In accordance with Government policy for the construction of Royal Navy warships, the Future Aircraft Carriers will be built in UK shipyards. As my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State announced on 30 January 2003, a combination of four UK shipyards potentially offer the best way forward to build and

assemble the vessels: BAE Systems Naval Ships at Govan, Vosper Thornycroft at Portsmouth, Swan Hunter on Tyneside and Babcock BES at Rosyth. We have not, however, ruled out the involvement of other yards and facilities depending on the build strategy that is selected. Final decisions on the potential four shipyards and other manufacturing facilities will be made based on achieving value for money while taking due cognisance of capability, capacity and resources across the UK shipbuilding industry.

Airfield Support Services Project

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence which officials involved in the preparation of Fire Study 2000 have also been involved with *(a)* the preparation of the Public Sector Comparator and *(b)* the evaluation of bids for the Airfield Support Services Project. [167250]

Mr. Ingram: The Airfield Support Services Project (ASSP) is seeking to achieve the most viable and cost effective solution for the provision of airfield support and wider fire services without compromising operational effectiveness and/or safety. Separately, Fire Study 2000 (FS 2000) investigated the potential for improved delivery of Defence Fire Services (DFS). The results of this study have been used to inform the ASSP Public Sector Comparator (PSC).

No official involved in the preparation of the FS 2000 report was a member of the ASSP PSC Working Group. Officials from the Defence Fire Service Headquarters did provide advice to the ASSP Team on what FS2000 savings were appropriate to the ASSP and an official who was a member of the FS 2000 Project Team also provided subject matter advice for the technical evaluation of industry proposals.

Armoured Mobility

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to improve armoured mobility for *(a)* the Army and *(b)* the Royal Marines; and if he will make a statement. [165384]

Mr. Ingram: There are a number of ongoing projects that improve the armoured mobility of the Army and Royal Marines.

We have procured appliqué mine blast and ballistic protection kits for the Combat Vehicle Reconnaissance (Tracked) (CVR(T)) vehicles. We have also procured eight Supacat TEMPEST Mine Protected Vehicles (MPV) to deliver a CounterMine Vehicle (CMV) capability. Both of these capabilities are deployed on current operations.

We are procuring 401 Future Command and Liaison Vehicle (FCLV) with an approved In Service Date (ISD) of November 2007 to provide protected tactical mobility for Combat, Combat Support and Combat Service Support Arms within the Army.

There are three vehicle programmes that will significantly improve the capability of the Royal Engineers' armoured mobility. We are procuring 33 TITAN vehicles to deliver the Armoured Vehicle Launcher Bridge (AVLB) capability and 33 TROJAN vehicles to deliver the Armoured Vehicle Royal Engineer (AVRE) heavy breaching capability; both have approved ISDs of December 2006. Additionally, we are procuring 65 TERRIER vehicles to deliver the Armoured Engineer Tractor (AET) capability with an approved ISD of December 2008.

A preliminary assessment has been made of the options to meet the Armoured Battlegroup Support Vehicle (ABSV) requirement in our armoured units. We are also studying the concept of a Warrior Mid Life Improvement programme. No final decisions have yet been made on these programmes and the ISDs will not be set until they pass their main gates.

We are currently completing the Concept Phase for the procurement of a family of network-enabled, medium-weight armoured vehicles to deliver the Future Rapid Effect System (FRES) capability. The In-Service Date for FRES will not be endorsed until the main investment decision, but on current plans, the intention is to introduce early variants into service around the end of the decade.

For the Royal Marines we are in the process of delivering 108 All Terrain Vehicle (Protected) VIKING vehicles, which includes Troop Carrying, Command and Repair and Recovery Vehicles.

Asset Tracking

Mr. Soames: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what progress is being made in acquiring an asset tracking system for the armed forces; and if he will make a statement. [165564]

Mr. Ingram: Asset tracking comprises a family of capabilities which allows visibility and management of inventory. Of these capabilities, Consignment Tracking and the Management of the Deployed Inventory were consistently identified as areas requiring attention from Lessons Identified from Operation Telic. After urgent investigation, we identified areas for investment and a number of recommendations to further improve the Ministry of Defence's consignment tracking capability, including that TAV (-) should be retained and formally supported. These recommendations are currently being considered.

Additionally, two other projects which contribute to Asset Tracking, Management of the Joint Deployed Inventory (MJDI) and Management of Materiel in Transit (MMiT) have been initiated.

Atomic Co-ordinating Offices

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many staff are employed in the Atomic Co-ordinating Offices in London and Washington; and what their civil service grades are. [166579]

Mr. Ingram: There are three staff employed in the Atomic Control Office, London and five staff in the Atomic Co-ordinating Office, Washington as follows:

Atomic Control Office London

1 x Band D, 2 x Band E2.

Atomic Co-ordinating Office Washington

1 x B1, 1 x B2, 1 x Band D, 1 x E1, 1 x Locally Employed Civilian.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the annual running costs are of the Atomic Co-ordinating Offices in London and Washington; and out of which budget they are taken. [166580]

Mr. Ingram: The annual running costs of the Atomic Control Office, London and the Atomic Co-ordinating Office, Washington are some £70,000 and £400,000 respectively. The costs of the London office fall to the Chief Scientific Adviser's Top Level Budget (TLB); the costs of the Washington office fall to the Centre TLB.

Defence Budgets

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the *(a)* defence procurement budget and *(b)* military research and development budget for each year from 1996–97 to 2005–06 (planned); and if he will make a statement. [156607]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence's cash outturn on defence equipment procurement for 1996–97 to 2000–01 is published in the United Kingdom Defence Statistics 2001 and 2002.

Our cash outturn for research and development for 1996–97 is published in "UK Defence Statistics 2001". Outturn figures for 1997–98 to 2001–02 are in UK Defence Statistics 2003. R&D outturn for 2002–03, on the same basis, is published in the MOD "Annual Report and Accounts 2002–03". R&D plans for 2003–04 and 2004–05 are published in the "Office of Science and Technology Forward Look 2003". Figures are not yet available in this form for 2005–06.

£ million

	Equipment procurement	*Total MOD Research and Development (R&D)*[1]
1996–97	9,494	2,144
1997–98	9,373	2,314
1998–99	10,281	2,140
1999–2000	10,094	2,272
2000–01	10,408	2,240
2001–02	—	2,057
2002–03	—	2,734
2003–04	—	2,579
2004–05	—	2,629

[1] From 2000–01 these figures are calculated on a resource basis.

Details of the MOD's "procurement" resource and capital outturn for the years 2001–02 to 2002–03 and plans from 2003–04 to 2005–06 are set out in The Government's Expenditure Plans for the MOD 2003–2004 to 2005–2006 (Cm 5912):

£ million

	Resource		*Capital*	
	Defence Procurement Agency (DPA)	*Major Customers' Research Budget (MCRB)*	*Defence Procurement Agency*	*Major Customers' Research Budget*
2001–02 outturn	2,710	414	4,356	0
2002–03 (estimated outturn)[1]	5,033	417	4,385	1
2003–04 (plans)	1,968	449	4,617	0
2004–05 (plans)	2,262	454	4,920	0
2005–06 (plans)	2,221	465	5,656	0

[1] The figures up to 2002–03 have not been restated to reflect a change in the Treasury Discount Rate and are therefore not directly comparable to the plan years.

The figures are presented differently in the Government's Expenditure Plans and Defence Statistics. The Government's Expenditure Plans define "procurement" expenditure as Defence Procurement Agency spending plus the Major Customers' Research Budget. The Major Customers' Research Budget represents money allocated for non-nuclear research, which forms part of the MOD's total net Research and Development expenditure. Defence Statistics shows total MOD net expenditure on Research and Development.

Defence Fire Service

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people are employed in the Defence Fire Service; and how many of these have indicated a willingness to become sponsored reserves in the event that the public sector comparator solution is selected for the Airfield Support Services Project. [167645]

Mr. Ingram: There are approximately 1,300 personnel based in the United Kingdom who are employed by the Defence Fire Service. A survey carried out in spring 2002 for Fire Study 2000, which has been used to inform the Public Sector Comparator for the Airfield Support Services Project, identified 420 fire fighters willing to become sponsored reserves.

Eurofighter Typhoon

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the position of each Eurofighter Typhoon partner in respect of when they will be ordering their Tranche II aircraft. [170108]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 30April 2004]:* It is not appropriate to comment on the position of our partner Eurofighter Typhoon nations in respect of their orders for Tranche II aircraft. The international arrangements for the project require that all four nations must agree the order before it can be placed on their behalf by the responsible NATO procurement agency.

Mr. Jack: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what discussions he has had with his partners in the Eurofighter Typhoon Project about the UK being allocated the building of the 18 aircraft destined for Austria; and if he will make statement. [170109]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* The Secretary of State for Defence has had no discussions with partners in the Eurofighter Typhoon project about the United Kingdom being allocated the building of the 18 aircraft destined for Austria. Austria has ordered 18 Typhoons from Eurofighter GmbH and the role of national contractors in their construction has yet to be decided.

France Campaign 1940

Mr. Charles Kennedy: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to commemorate the 64th anniversary of the contribution made by the 51st Highland Division who were captured at St. Valery-en-Caux. [169918]

Mr. Caplin: The valour of the 51st (Highland) Division at St. Valery-en-Caux is legendary. It is, however, Government policy to sponsor commemorations only for Jubilees of the Sovereign's Accession and 50th and 60th anniversaries and centennials of events of the greatest national significance. Nevertheless it is open to the successor units of those which fought at St. Valery to organise their own commemorations if they wish.

HMS Vanguard

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what safeguards will be in place for citizens of the Devonport area when the nuclear reactor of HMS Vanguard is fired up after her Long Overhaul Period (Refit). [166902]

Mr. Ingram: The nuclear reactor of HMS Vanguard is currently undergoing detailed inspection, revalidation and overhaul as part of the refit, and will be subject to rigorous testing prior to being operated. These measures are taken to ensure the safety of the reactor, and hence the safety of the workforce and members of the public. They are identical to those applied to all nuclear reactor systems towards the end of a refit where the submarine has been refuelled. All aspects of this work are subject to detailed safety justification and Devonport Management Limited (DML), as the nuclear site licensee, requires the prior approval of the UK's independent regulators, the Nuclear Installations Inspectorate, for all nuclear operations at Devonport Royal Dockyard. In addition, authorisation to operate refuelled nuclear submarines requires the approval of the Ministry of Defence's internal regulator. In the highly unlikely event of a nuclear incident, Devonport is covered by a site emergency plan, which is jointly prepared by DML and MOD. There is also an off-site emergency plan for which Plymouth City council is responsible.

Iraq

Jeremy Corbyn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his latest estimate is of the number of unexploded cluster bombs and bomblets that remain in Iraq having been dropped by British military operations. [166415]

Mr. Ingram: To date, around 930,000 individual items of unexploded ordnance have been cleared from the Multi-National Division (South East) Area of Operations. This figure includes around 5,800 items of submunitions, however this category is not broken down further into type of submunition or county of origin. Therefore it is not possible to quantify the number of unexploded cluster bombs and bomblets that remain in Iraq having been dropped by British military operations.

Paul Flynn: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what measures his Department has implemented to *(a)* trace and *(b)* recover munitions containing depleted uranium used by British forces in Iraq. [166871]

Mr. Ingram: An initial survey of the region has been started to mark known sites for clearance. Surface lying depleted uranium (DU) fragments are being removed from the battlefield as they are discovered.

The Ministry of Defence has provided the coordinates of targets attacked by British forces using DU ammunition to the United Nations Environment Programme which will assess DU levels as part of its post-conflict environmental survey of Iraq when the security situation allows.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will ensure that all investigations into alleged abuses by Coalition Forces in Iraq are conducted by a body that is *(a)* competent, *(b)* impartial and *(c)* independent. [166936]

Mr. Ingram: Formal investigations into alleged cases of misconduct by members of the UK Armed Forces are conducted by the Royal Military Police who are competent, impartial and, in exercising their constabulary powers, fully independent of the Army chain of command.

Investigations into allegations against members of other Coalition partners' Armed Forces are a matter for them to comment on.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will ensure that the findings of all investigations into alleged abuses by United Kingdom forces in Iraq are made public. [166937]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 45W to the hon. Member for Carmarthen, East and Dinefwr (Mr. Price).

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what arrangements exist for the sharing of information between United States military forces and *(a)* British forces and *(b)* the United Kingdom diplomatic representation to the Coalition Provisional Authority respectively, in respect of Iraqi civilians (i) killed and (ii) injured by military activities by US forces in Iraq.[167403]

Mr. Ingram: We liaise closely with all our partners in the International Coalition on a range of issues but casualties allegedly caused by other than UK Forces are a matter for the relevant partner nation to comment on.

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what attempts have been made to ascertain the number of Iraqi civilians *(a)* killed and *(b)* injured by British forces in Iraq since 1 May 2003. [167421]

Mr. Ingram: UK units report all confirmed fatalities of which they are aware arising from incidents in which they were involved and we have put in place a mechanism for central collation of unit reports. However, it is not always possible to confirm whether fatalities or injuries have occurred during a particular incident. For example, in some incidents we believe Iraqi dead and/or injured may have been taken away by their compatriots before UK forces could investigate. In other incidents UK forces have been forced to withdraw

before any Iraqi fatalities and/or injuries could be confirmed. Consequently, we have no reliable means of assessing the completeness of the information.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) how many students in full-time employment have interrupted their studies to serve with reserve forces in Iraq and the adjoining theatre over the last 24 months; [169225]

(2) how many students in full-time employment now serving with reserve forces in Iraq and the adjoining theatre interrupted their studies in order to do so.[169224]

Mr. Caplin: Generally, it is Ministry of Defence policy to grant an exemption from or deferral of call-out for reservists who are in full-time education if such an exemption or deferral is sought. Therefore, the overall number of individuals who have served or who are serving in Iraq and who were in full time education prior to call-out is thought to be very small. Precise figures are not held centrally, as this would require a trawl of computer records and an examination of individual personnel files to establish the information requested. This could be done only at disproportionate cost.

Kinnegar Army Base

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the future of the Kinnegar Army base at Holywood, County Down. [170031]

Mr. Ingram: Kinnegar is listed in the security normalisation annex of the Joint Declaration, as one of the locations where, in the context of a peaceful society, the regular garrison in Northern Ireland might be based.

Manning Control Points

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what criteria are used to identify soldiers for manning control; whether this information is readily available to soldiers on a regular basis as well as on entrance of contract; and if he will make a statement. [167841]

Mr. Caplin: The Notice Paper, a statutory document given to all new recruits, contains details of the soldier's Terms of Service and it states that a soldier's future employability will be reviewed after six, nine and 12 years' Colour service and that he or she may be discharged if their service is no longer required.

Commanding Officers are notified of those soldiers who will reach a Manning Control Point (MCP) within the next 15–18 months. At that stage, the soldier's career and employment potential will be reviewed taking into consideration: length of service, rank, trade and long term potential. Following this review, a soldier being considered for discharge by MCP is sent a letter, giving a minimum of 12 months notice. At this point, he or she is asked to sign a certificate to agree that they have been warned about their potential discharge.

Individual cases are then considered by the Army Personnel Centre against the prevailing manning situation within their Career Employment Group. Thus individuals are assessed for quality and employability against their peers and the required structure for their trade.

Merlin Helicopter

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many Merlin helicopters have been lost since their original delivery; for what reasons; and what plans he has for their replacement. [167644]

Mr. Ingram: Two Royal Navy Merlin Mk 1 aircraft have been lost since the Merlin entered service with the United Kingdom armed forces. The first crashed into the sea off north-west Scotland in October 2000 following the loss of both the main and tail rotor control. The second crashed at RNAS Culdrose on 30 March this year. The cause of this accident is still being investigated.

These helicopters will be replaced from the Departmental fleet, which allows for the loss of aircraft in service with front line commands.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the procedure is for acquiring spares for Merlin helicopters; and if he will make a statement. [168561]

Mr. Ingram: Merlin helicopter spares are acquired in the same way as those for the majority of other aircraft used by the United Kingdom armed forces. Spares requirements are calculated at regular intervals throughout the year based on activity levels, deployment patterns and mission types. Predicted requirements are then compared with current spares holdings and current orders from industry and the difference is the future requirement. The process of spares ordering and distribution is managed by the Defence Logistics Organisation working closely with the relevant front line command to meet current and predicated requirements.

MOD Land

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what account he takes when releasing Ministry of Defence land for development of the needs of *(a)* his Department and *(b)* the local community; and if he will make a statement. [169175]

Mr. Caplin: The interests of the Ministry of Defence are protected by ensuring that the disposal of surplus land and buildings (which are released only where there is no alternative defence use) is conducted in accordance with "Government Accounting" regulations—normally by means of sale on the open market with the benefit of outline planning permission or a planning brief. This necessarily involves consultation with the local planning authority and ensures best value for taxpayers generally.

In the case of the closure of major facilities, it is normal practice for officials in Defence Estates to work closely with the relevant local authorities, and to liaise with recognised local community bodies as part of the disposal process. We seek to take local aspirations into account wherever possible.

Naval Engineers

Chris Grayling: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reason his Department is replacing the post of engineering artificer in the Navy with the post of engineering technician; and what difference there will be in the qualifications required for the new post. [166689]

Mr. Ingram: A review of the structure, organisation and training of both the Warfare and Engineering Branches of the Royal Navy is currently taking place. It is probable that the term engineering technician will be adopted for all members of the engineering branch below the rank of Commissioned Officer, replacing the artificer and mechanic titles currently in use. The title artificer no longer adequately describes the professional role that those personnel undertake in the modern Navy. Replacing them with engineering technicians will align the Navy with the standards of competence published by the Engineering Council United Kingdom, and refresh the image of this key role against increasingly competitive recruitment market forces.

No change is anticipated to the entry qualifications for Naval Engineering Technicians. Men and women will be able to join with a range of academic qualifications that span those for today's mechanics and artificers. Once they have completed basic training, engineering technicians will progress according to their abilities, with the most able continuing to have opportunities for promotion to the officer corps.

Naval Procurement

Mr. Nicholas Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of through-life programmes to accompany future naval procurements. [166536]

Mr. Ingram: Each project is required to maintain a Through Life Management Plan which explains how the particular equipment will be supported through to the end of its life. This is subject to regular scrutiny throughout the equipment's life and, in particular, as part of the Main Gate business case submission.

The support through life for major future naval equipments is assessed against the Warship Support Agency's Maritime Support Strategy element. This forms part of the Defence Logistics Organisation sponsored Support Solutions Envelope.

Nimrod MRA4

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the progress of the Nimrod MRA4 aircraft programme; and when a decision will be made on approval for the production phase of aircraft numbers four to 18. [166901]

Mr. Ingram: The agreement reached with BAE Systems in February 2003, embodied in a formal contract amendment on 23 February this year, has put the Nimrod MRA4 programme on a much sounder footing for the future. Under the restructured contract, design and development and manufacture have been separated as far as possible, to ensure that technology is adequately de-risked before making further commitment to production price and schedule. Whilst risks and challenges remain, the development and production of the first three Nimrod MRA4 aircraft to be used in the flight trials programme is well under way and we are making good joint progress towards first flight this summer. Long lead item work continues on aircraft 4–18; a decision to exercise the option in the contract for full production is dependent on design maturity and price negotiation and is expected next year.

Officer Numbers

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* establishment and *(b)* strength of all ranks above OF 2 in the (i) Royal Navy and (ii) RAF was on the latest date for which figures are available; and if he will make a statement. [161059]

Mr. Ingram: As at 1 January 2004, the trained strength and requirement for all ranks above OF 2 in the Naval Service and RAF are shown as follows. The tables show figures for each equivalent NATO rank and these are set out as follows:

Naval Service[1]

Rank	*Trained strength*	*Requirement*	*Surplus/Deficit*
OF 9	4	3	+1
OF 8	7	10	-3
OF 7	30	28	+2
OF 6	99	91	+8
OF 5	280	270	[2]
OF 4	1,080	1,200	-120
OF 3	2,460	2,530	-70
All OF 3 and above	3,950	4,130	-180

[1] Naval Service figures include Royal Navy and Royal Marines.
[2] Less than five.

RAF

Rank	*Trained strength*	*Requirement*	*Surplus/Deficit*
(1)			
OF 6 to OF 9[1]	120	100	+20
OF 5	320	250	+70
OF 4	1,150	940	+210
OF 3	2,550	2,430	+120
(2)			
Specialists[2]	390	400	-20
(3)			
All OF 3 and above	4,530	4,130	+400

[1] The Trained Manpower Requirement (TMR03) does not break down the requirement by individual rank for OF 6 (Air Cdre) and above.
[2] Specialists are excluded from *(1)* and shown separately as a total of all OF 3s and above. Due to the way Specialists are posted, a rank breakdown is not readily available. Specialists are in the following branches: Medical, Med Spt, Dental, Chaplains, Legal and Princess Mary's Royal Air Force Nursing Service.

Note:
All figures over 100 and any derived from these figures are rounded to the nearest 10.

NATO Rank Codes and UK Service Designations

	Royal Navy[1]	*Royal Marines*[1]	*Army*	*Royal Air Force*
OF 10	Admiral of the Fleet	—	Field Marshal	Marshal of the RAF
OF 9	Admiral	General	General	Air Chief Marshal
OF 8	Vice Admiral	Lieutenant General	Lieutenant General	Air Marshal
OF 7	Rear Admiral	Major General	Major General	Air Vice Marshal
OF 6	Commodore	Brigadier	Brigadier	Air Commodore
OF 5	Captain	Colonel	Colonel	Group Captain
OF 4	Commander	Lieutenant Colonel	Lieutenant Colonel	Wing Commander

NATO Rank Codes and UK Service Designations

	Royal Navy[1]	*Royal Marines*[1]	*Army*	*Royal Air Force*
OF 3	Lieutenant Commander	Major	Major	Squadron Leader
OF 2	Lieutenant	Captain	Captain	Flight Lieutenant
OF 1	Sub-Lieutenant	Lieutenant/2nd Lieutenant	Lieutenant/2nd Lieutenant	Flying Officer/Pilot Officer
OF(D)	Midshipman	—	Officer Designate	Officer Designate

[1] The Royal Navy and the Royal Marines together make up the Naval Service.

Mr. Breed: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the differences between strength and establishment of officers in the Army. [161060]

Mr. Ingram: A comparison between current liability and current strength of Army officers is shown as follows:

Rank	*Liability*	*Strength*[1]
General/Lieutenant General	7	17
Major General	27	43
Brigadier	175	184
Colonel	546	561
Lieutenant Colonel	1,579	1,713
Major	4,540	4,723
Captain	4,850	4,465
Lieutenant/2nd Lieutenant	1,876	1,680

[1] As at January 2004.

The difference at Major and above is largely because the liability consists only of Army posts. Tri-Service rotational and competition posts and certain international appointments, for example to NATO, are not tied to British Army officers and therefore do not form part of the liability. In practice the Army does not carry a substantial surplus of officers, although there is provision for small margin to cover those in training and on resettlement prior to retirement.

The difference at Captain and below is due to a combination of factors. In recent years, the output from the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst, which is affected by both input and throughput, has not achieved the target. The number of junior officers is therefore lower than the requirement. The RMAS output target is now being met. Some posts are rank-ranged. In these instances the liability is shown against the lower rank although the incumbent may be of a higher rank. Officers holding temporary acting rank are shown against the strength at the higher paid rank.

Overseas Military Students

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what sums of money involved in training of military students for foreign Governments were *(a)* paid, *(b)* waived and *(c)* written off in each of the last three years; and which countries were involved. [168618]

Mr. Ingram: I will write to the hon. Member and a copy will be placed in the Library of the House.

Parachute Regiment

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the number of premature voluntary release applications *(a)* received and *(b)* approved in the last 12 months in (i) 1 Para, (ii) 2 Para and (iii) 3 Para; and if he will make a statement. [169306]

Mr. Caplin: The number of Premature Voluntary Release (PVR) applications received from soldiers in the Parachute Regiment between 1 April 2003 and 31 March 2004 was:

1st Battalion Parachute Regiment—702nd Battalion Parachute Regiment—653rd Battalion Parachute Regiment—60

All soldiers have a right to PVR once they have served the minimum engagement period, and provided they give appropriate notice. Information is not held centrally on the proportion of these applications that were subsequently withdrawn, but across the Army withdrawals amounted to some 38 per cent. of the total in the same period.

PVR information for officers is not currently broken down by unit, and could only be provided at disproportionate cost.

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the strength of the Parachute Regiment at *(a)* 1 April 2003 and *(b)* 1 April 2004 and the estimated strength for 1 April 2005; and if he will make a statement. [169307]

Mr. Caplin: As at 1 April 2004, the strength of the Parachute Regiment was 1,740. The corresponding figure on 1 April 2003 was 1,795. These figures exclude personnel from other units temporarily attached to the Parachute Regiment.

Projected strength for 1 April 2005 is not expected to differ significantly from the current level.

Postal Services

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what plans he has to review the provision of free postage for troop parcels for forces serving in Iraq. [167998]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to my written ministerial statement of 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 70WS, and subsequent answers of 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1155W, to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock), and 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1605W, to the hon. Member for Mid-Norfolk (Mr. Simpson).

A series of reviews were undertaken by the Ministry of Defence between July 2003 and February 2004 which concluded that the scheme should be extended to April 2004 when it was judged that the complete Operational Welfare Package and Expeditionary Forces Institute support would be in place. There are no further plans to review the provision of free postal packets to the Iraq theatre of operations.

I should also point out that the British Forces Post Office rate for a 2 kg postal packet to Iraq (equivalent to

the Royal Mail First Class Inland Rate) was £7.23. From 1 April 2004 the Royal Mail Group has reduced this charge to £6.89 and the British Forces Post Office has reduced its charge in line with this.

Radar

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what changes he proposes to the system of radar cover; and if he will make a statement. [165059]

Mr. Ingram: Options for future air defence radar cover are currently being considered. No decision has been taken.

RAF (Medical Personnel)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many vacancies exist for medical personnel at *(a)* RAF Leeming, *(b)* RAF Linton on Ouse, *(c)* RAF Dishforth and *(d)* Alanbrooke Barracks, broken down by (i) service, (ii) rank and (iii) specialisation; and if he will make a statement on his plans to fill those vacancies. [169990]

Mr. Caplin: The following vacancies exist for medical personnel, broken down as requested:

Vacancies—4

Base—RAF Leeming

Service—RAF

Rank—2 aircraftsmen, 2 civilians (1 part-time)

Specialisation—2 medical assistants, (1 physiotherapist, 1 part-time nurse)

AAC Dishforth and Alanbrooke Barracks, both Army bases, have no service vacancies. A military medical post at Flight Lieutenant level is currently vacant at RAF Linton on Ouse but is being filled by a civilian GP.

With the exception of one gapped medical assistant post, which can be managed within existing resources, action is in hand to fill all of these vacancies.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many medical personnel are based at *(a)* RAF Leuchars and *(b)* RAF Coningsby, broken down by (i) service, (ii) rank and (iii) specialisation. [169994]

Mr. Caplin: The following tables show the numbers of medical personnel based at RAF Leuchars and RAF Coningsby broken down by rank and specialisation. All are RAF personnel.

RAF Leuchars

Numbers of Medical Personnel	*Rank*	*Specialisation*
1	Squadron Leader	Medical Officer
1	Squadron Leader	Medical Officer (Full Time Reserve Soldier)
1	Civilian	Civilian Medical Practitioner
1	Flight sergeant	Medical Admin FS
1	Sergeant	Medical Administration
2	Corporal	Medical Administration
10	Aircraftsman	Medical Assistant
1	Sergeant	Pharmacy Technician
2	Sergeant	Staff Nurse Registered General Nurse
1[1]	Flight Lieutenant	Medical Support Officer 612 Squadron
1	Sergeant	Medical Administration

[1] From July 2004

RAF Coningsby

Numbers of Medical Personnel	*Rank*	*Specialisation*
1	Wing Commander	Medical Officer
1	Warrant Officer	Medical Administration
1	Sergeant	Medical Administration
2	Corporal	Medical Administration
5	Aircraftsman	Medical Administration
1[1]	Corporal	Staff Nurse Registered General Nurse
2[2]	Civilian	Physiotherapist civilian
1	Civilian	Nurse civilian

[1] Currently deployed

[2] One post covered by two part time personnel

RAF Sealand

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the impact on the local community of the loss of jobs at RAF Sealand in Flintshire; and what further plans he has for RAF Sealand. [169773]

Mr. Ingram: RAF Sealand was covered by a study into the future location of the RAF's Air Combat Service Support Units and other minor units. As I announced in my Written Ministerial Statement of 23 April 2004, (*Official Report*), column 30WS, I am inclined, subject to Trade Union consultation, to accept an option which would see the closure of RAF Sealand by April 2006. This would result in the loss of around 100 civilian jobs. The Defence Aviation Repair Agency which is located on the same site would not be affected. Any land that becomes surplus to requirements will be handled in accordance with usual procedures.

I would expect the impact on the local community of the closure of RAF Sealand to be negligible as Flintshire has an expanding economy and a low unemployment rate.

Royal Gibraltar Regiment

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what his Department's intentions are on the funding for the Royal Gibraltar Regiment; and if he will make a statement. [168851]

Mr. Ingram: A study into the missions, tasks and formation of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment is on-going. No final decisions have yet been taken. This study is part of the Ministry of Defence routine reviews/studies process. HQ British Forces Gibraltar and the Commanding Officer of the Royal Gibraltar Regiment are working closely to determine the most effective outcome.

Second Hand Equipment

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list the second hand equipment sold to each country in the last year for which records are available. [167069]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, columns 14–15W to my hon. Friend the Member for Leyton and Wanstead (Harry Cohen).

Special Forces

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many members of the *(a)* SAS and *(b)* SBS have (i) applied and (ii) been accepted for premature voluntary retirement in each month of the last 12 months; and if he will make a statement. [167852]

Mr. Ingram: It is the Ministry of Defence's practice not to release information regarding United Kingdom Special Forces. I am therefore withholding details under Exemption 1 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Trident Nuclear Warhead

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the latest safe in-service date for the British Trident nuclear warhead is; and if he will make a statement. [170331]

Mr. Hoon: The Strategic Defence Review noted the need to ensure that Trident could remain an effective deterrent for up to 30 years. The Ministry of Defence sponsors a comprehensive science and technology programme at the Atomic Weapons Establishment to ensure that the Trident warhead remains both safe and reliable throughout its service life.

Typhoon

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence when he intends to announce the second tranche of orders for Typhoon. [165459]

Mr. Ingram: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1634W, to my hon. Friend the Member for Pendle (Mr. Prentice).

United States Laboratories (UK Research)

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what work is carried out by *(a)* the Sandia National Laboratories, *(b)* the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories and *(c)* the Los Alamos National Laboratories on behalf of the United Kingdom Government. [166583]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence and the Atomic Weapons Establishment maintain collaborative contact with Sandia National Laboratories, the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories, and the Los Alamos National Laboratories under the 1958 UK/US Mutual Defence Agreement (Cm 537, as amended).

This contact, which may include the placement of specific work packages with the US facilities by or on behalf of HMG, principally relates to the stockpile stewardship programmes that ensure the continued safety and reliability of the UK's nuclear weapons stockpile. It would be contrary to the interests of national security to give further details of such activities, which I am therefore withholding under Exemption 1 (Defence, Security, and International Relations) of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

US Forces (Service Charges)

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the total income received for services rendered to the US visiting forces and their agencies was in 2003. [167744]

Mr. Ingram: The total receipts from invoices raised for services rendered to the United States visiting force and their agencies in the calendar year 2003 is £204.2 million. Most of this is in the form of direct reimbursement for the US visiting force works programme and civilian staff costs.

US Global Posture Realignment Process

Mr. Simon Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what information he has received regarding changes in numbers or strength of US forces based in the UK as part of the US Global Posture Realignment process; and if he will make a statement. [169135]

Mr. Ingram: Her Majesty's Government have been consulted but it would be inappropriate to speculate on the impact that the United States Global Posture Realignment process may have on US forces based in the United Kingdom until the US Government make an announcement.

US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many British personnel are stationed in the United States as part of the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement; and where they are located. [166578]

Mr. Ingram: Numbers of United Kingdom personnel stationed in the United States under the auspices of the 1958 Mutual Defence Agreement vary in line with operational and other requirements. The current number is five, all at the Atomic Co-ordinating Office in the British embassy in Washington DC (this figure includes a Locally Employed Civilian).

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many personnel are employed in the renegotiation of the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement; and what the estimated cost is of renegotiation. [166581]

Mr. Ingram: A number of Ministry of Defence personnel are involved in renegotiating the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement as part of their normal duties, and FCO personnel will be involved in its ratification. The cost of the renegotiation is primarily the cost of this staff effort. Since this task represents only a small proportion of individuals' workloads, it is not possible to provide an accurate estimate of the collective cost of their time.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list all the exchange of information and visit reports that have occurred in the last 12 months as part of the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement. [166584]

Mr. Ingram: In the last 12 months, exchanges of information by visit and reports have occurred under the following subject headings: Radiochemistry; Safety and Security; Safety Assessment Methodology; Intelligence; Non-Proliferation and Arms Control Technology; Enhanced Surveillance; Facilities and Infrastructure; Senior Visits; the Atomic Weapons Establishment Support Contract; and Miscellaneous.

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how many people visited *(a)* the Pantex Plant in America, *(b)* the Sandia National Laboratories, *(c)* the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories, *(d)* the Los Alamos National Laboratories, *(e)* the Nevada test site and *(f)* the Rocky Flats plant on behalf of the United Kingdom Government in the last 12 months as part of the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement. [166585]

Mr. Ingram: During the 12 months to 31 March 2004, there was a total of 190 visits by UK personnel to these sites under the 1958 US/UK Mutual Defence Agreement. The number of people visiting was as follows:

(a) the Pantex Plant: 41

(b) the Sandia National Laboratories: 205

(c) the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratories: 116

(d) the Los Alamos National Laboratories: 219

(e) the Nevada test site: 11

(f) the Rocky Flats Plant: 0.

These figures include personnel making more than one visit, and visits to several sites during a single trip.

Warships

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to his answers to the hon. Member for Mid-Sussex (Mr. Soames) of 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 949W, and 14 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 16W, on warships, for what reasons the refit of HMS Triumph was not programmed to begin on the expiry of the reactor certificate. [167942]

Mr. Ingram: The submarine refit programme is driven by the need to maintain the required number of submarines available to the fleet, while taking account of the requirement for submarines to refuel periodically. This programme is delivered in the most cost effective manner through a single stream refuelling capability at Devonport for Swiftsure and Trafalgar Class submarines (SSNs), of which HMS Triumph is one. Therefore, on occasion, a submarine may be berthed alongside for a period of time prior to the start of its refit. This is the case with HMS Triumph, whose refit will begin in summer 2005, once the SSN refitting and refuelling dock is vacated by HMS Talent. This programme accords with the Ministry of Defence's long term plan, which will continue to deliver sufficient submarines at high readiness to maintain defence outputs.

Wind Farms

Janet Anderson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether his Department issues guidelines in relation to planning applications for wind farms to be located within a certain distance of military installations involving radar. [169488]

Mr. Caplin: I will write to my hon. Friend and place a copy of my letter in the Library of the House.

NORTHERN IRELAND

Asthma

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he has taken to encourage local health and social care groups to adopt asthma as a particular interest among long-term conditions; and if he will make a statement. [169659]

Angela Smith: One of the key actions set out in Priorities for Action 2003–04 required Local Health and Social Care Groups (LHSCGs) to develop at least one project to increase the capacity of primary care to address chronic diseases, such as diabetes, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), asthma and coronary heart disease, in the primary care setting to reduce pressure on the hospital sector.

It is a matter for the Groups, based on their assessment of local need, to decide which of these chronic diseases is a priority in their local area. To date none of the projects undertaken focus specifically on asthma but some of the projects covering respiratory illnesses in the widest sense should bring some benefits to asthma sufferers.

I should also add that the Department is currently working to put in place a strategy to identify how the full spectrum of respiratory service provision, including asthma care in the primary care setting, should be configured up to 2010.

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what research he has collated on the earlier diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders in the Province; and if he will make a statement. [167718]

Angela Smith: There has been no DHSSPS funded research undertaken in Northern Ireland on the earlier diagnosis of autistic spectrum disorders.

Child Support Agency

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many cases have been dealt with by the Child Support Agency in Northern Ireland in each of the last two years. [170481]

Mr. Spellar: Over the last two years the Child Support Agency's (CSA) live load has consisted of 33,000 cases, representing some 50,000 children.

In order to maintain the existing caseload and administer new applications in each of the last two years

the CSA has carried out the following activities:

Case activities	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Applications cleared (in year)	8,703	8,184
Change of circumstances processed	13,972	12,803
Account inquiries handled	52,424	51,410
Cases requiring debt management	12,129	13,594

The total child support maintenance collected by the Agency in each of the last two years is as follows:

	Collections (£)
2002–03	12,520,000
2003–04	12,645,000

Conservation Area Status

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what effect the designation of conservation area status has upon the protection of trees within its boundaries. [170033]

Angela Smith: The effect of conservation area status is to prohibit the cutting down, topping, lopping, uprooting, wilful damage or wilful destruction of those trees in the conservation area that are not already protected by a Tree Preservation Order. Anyone carrying out such works is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding £30,000, or on conviction on indictment, to a fine.

A person may, however, serve notice upon the Department of the intended works and may carry out such works, either with the consent of the Department or after a period of six weeks from the date of the notice but before the expiry of a period of two years from that date. The Department may also decide, however, to protect the tree or trees in question by applying a Tree Preservation Order before the expiry of the six-week period.

District Policing Partnerships

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the Dungannon and South Tyrone District policing partnership will be established. [170480]

Mr. Pearson: Dungannon and South Tyrone District Policing Partnership (DPP) is the only one of the 26 DPPs yet to be established.

After very careful consideration over a period of time, and following consultation with the Northern Ireland Policing Board, my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, decided to issue on 2 February a letter of direction to the Mayor of Dungannon and South Tyrone borough council requiring the council to establish its DPP. This action was in accordance with Section 15 of the Police (Northern Ireland) Act 2000, which sets out the steps to be taken when a council has failed to set up a DPP. The letter that issued on 2 February gave the council two calendar months to reconsider its position.

The council have sought and obtained two extensions to this deadline and the new deadline for the council to comply with the direction is 28 May. It is hoped that the council will use this further period to reconsider their position and establish the DPP.

Dublin/Monaghan Bombings

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what information he has studied in relation to the extent of British security service involvement in the Dublin and Monaghan bombings of 1974. [169075]

Mr. Paul Murphy: As part of the Government's endeavours to helping Mr. Justice Barron's inquiry into the Dublin and Monaghan bombings as fully as possible, my predecessors and I examined all the potentially relevant information uncovered in the files of this Department and other Departments and agencies. There was no information to indicate that the British security forces were involved in the bombings, or that they were aware of the perpetrators' plans in advance. Had such information been uncovered, it would have been passed to Mr. Justice Barron.

Environment and Heritage Service

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on how the Environment and Heritage Service, Northern Ireland has fulfilled its obligations towards The Priory, In Holywood, County Down. [170034]

Angela Smith: Holywood Priory was scheduled for protection in 1932 under the 1926 Ancient Monuments Act and was re-scheduled in 1986 under the Historic Monuments Act (NI) 1971.

The Environment and Heritage Service (EHS) has carried out regular inspections of the condition of the Priory. Condition reports have recorded little evidence of deterioration. However, a need to remove some potentially damaging vegetation was identified. North Down Borough Council, the owners responsible for the care of The Priory, have been made aware of this and have removed the vegetation.

Under Policy BH1 of Planning Policy Statement 6—"The Preservation of Archaeological Remains of Regional Importance and their settings"—EHS has also advised Planning Service on various planning applications in the area which affected this site and/or its setting.

European Parliamentary Elections (Northern Ireland) Regulations

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland when the European Parliamentary Elections (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2004 were first made available in the Vote Office. [170247]

Mr. Spellar: Copies of the European Parliamentary Elections (Northern Ireland) Regulations 2004 were first made available in the Vote Office on 18 March 2004.

Fair Employment (Complaints)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, how many formal complaints

alleging breaches of fair employment and equal opportunity legislation have been made to the Office of Industrial Tribunals and the Office of Fair Employment Tribunals in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004 to date. [170405]

Mr. Spellar: The information is as follows.

Number of complaints

	Complaints registered with Fair Employment Tribunal	*Equal Opportunity complaints registered with Industrial Tribunals*
2002	481	1,014
2003	466	942
2004 (to end of March)	175	280

Free Fares for Senior Citizens

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many people in Northern Ireland have used the Free Fares for Senior Citizens scheme on public transport in Northern Ireland since its introduction; and how many people used the previous discounted fares scheme over an equivalent time period leading up to the introduction of the Free Fares for Senior Citizens scheme. [169761]

Mr. Spellar: Free travel for Northern Ireland residents aged 65 and over was introduced in October 2001. Translink do not have information about the number of people who have used the scheme since its introduction, but do have records of the number of passenger journeys undertaken. Those records show that 17,620,940 free passenger journeys were undertaken on Ulsterbus and City bus services between October 2001 and April 2004. Figures are not available for Northern Ireland Railways for this period.

Translink have advised that passenger journey figures are unavailable for half fare concessions prior to October 2001.

Gastroenteritis Outbreak

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many *(a)* admissions, *(b)* operations and *(c)* other procedures were postponed at each of the hospitals in the province as a result of the April outbreak of gastroenteritis; and if he will make a statement. [169656]

Angela Smith: The information requested on admissions, operations and other procedures could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

A total of 896 bed days at the Ulster hospital and 149 bed days at the Antrim hospital were lost as a result of the gastroenteritis during April. All elective surgery was cancelled at the Ulster hospital between 6 April and 26 April.

The impact of a gastroenteritis outbreak on services will depend on many factors including the level of the infection in the community, the proportion of affected staff, the clinical areas involved, the layout of hospital design, and the general pressures experienced by the trust.

The control measures being followed in the Ulster hospital are those recommended in national UK guidelines "Management of hospital outbreaks of gastroenteritis due to small round structures viruses". These include isolation of affected patients and exclusion from work of affected staff members, ward closure to new admissions, enhanced hygiene measures and domestic cleaning, restrictions on visitors, close monitoring of all wards and information and advice to staff, patients and visitors. The current outbreak of the virus is now showing signs of abating, wards are being reopened to patients and elective surgery is again being performed.

Leggatt Report

Mr. McGrady: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to bring into effect in Northern Ireland the recommendations of the Leggatt Report in the Review of Tribunals. [166138]

Mr. Paul Murphy: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the written answer given by my hon. Friend the Parliamentary Under-Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs (Mr. Leslie), on 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1656W.

Pensions Payment

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the change in numbers of pension payment order books at post offices in Northern Ireland was between 2002 and 2003. [170483]

Mr. Spellar: The decrease in numbers of pension books at post offices in Northern Ireland between 2002 and 2003 is 23,000.

Personal Protection

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what plans he has to withdraw personal protection from *(a)* members of the judiciary and *(b)* others in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [169745]

Mr. Pearson: The level of personal protection provided to individuals in Northern Ireland is an operational matter which the Chief Constable keeps under constant review. In line with Part II, Paragraph 4f of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information—

> "Information whose disclosure could endanger the life or physical safety of any person, or identify the source of information or assistance given in confidence for law enforcement or security purposes"—

it would be inappropriate to comment further on such issues.

Police Fund

Mr. Donaldson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the staff and administrative costs associated with the operation of the Police Fund have been in each year since its introduction, broken down by main budget heading. [170219]

Mr. Pearson: I have been advised by the Police Fund that the establishment and running costs associated with the operation of the Fund from 25 January 2002 to 31 March 2004 are as follows:

£

	Period from 25 January 2002 to 31 March 2003	*Period from 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004*
Personnel Costs	210,563	251,916
Accommodation Costs	13,202	14,777
General Administrative Expenses	106,351	58,121
Total	330,116	324,814

It should be noted that the figures for 2003–04 are subject to the annual external audit, which will commence on 1 June 2004.

Police Service

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what legal obstacles prevent formalised police exchanges between the Police Service of Northern Ireland and the Garda Siochana; and if he will make a statement. [170562]

Mr. Pearson: With the coming into force of the Police Service of Northern Ireland (Secondment) (Garda Siochana) Regulations 2004, there is no legal obstacle in the United Kingdom jurisdiction which would prevent police exchanges between the Police Service Northern Ireland and the Garda Siochana.

When I raised the subject at the meeting of the British-Irish Intergovernmental Conference on 21 April, I was assured that the Irish Government is currently working up reciprocal regulations to support secondments.

Roads

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the estimated cost is of providing a dual carriageway between the Toome by-pass and the City of Londonderry. [170486]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written directly to the hon. Gentleman in response to this Question.

Letter from Dr. McKibbin to Mr. Gregory Campbell, dated 4 May 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question about the estimated cost of providing a dual carriageway between the recently constructed Toome by-pass and the City of Londonderry. I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

The estimated cost of providing a dual 2-lane carriageway road between the end of the Toome by-pass and Londonderry would be in the region of £300 million to £400 million.

I hope this information is helpful.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the estimated cost is of providing a dual carriageway between the existing dual carriageway on the A26 and Glarryford and Coleraine. [170487]

Mr. Spellar: The Chief Executive of Roads Service (Dr. Malcolm McKibbin) has written directly to the hon. Gentleman in response to this Question.

Letter from Dr. McKibbin to Mr. Gregory Campbell, dated 1 May 2004:

You recently asked the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland a Parliamentary Question regarding the estimated cost of providing a dual carriageway between the existing dual carriageway on the A26 and Glarryford and Coleraine. I have been asked to reply as this issue falls within my responsibility as Chief Executive of Roads Service.

The estimated cost of providing a dual 2-lane carriageway road with at-grade junctions on the A26 between the end of the existing dual carriageway at Glarryford and Coleraine would be in the region of £130 million to £180 million depending on the standard of the road provided.

I hope this information is helpful.

Timber

Ms Walley: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether his Department plans to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber. [167615]

Mr. Pearson: There are currently no plans for Northern Ireland Departments to contribute financially to the establishment of the second phase of the Central Point of Expertise on Timber.

TK-ECC Plant

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of the assistance he can give to workers recently made redundant at the TK-ECC plant, Dundonald; and what meetings have been *(a)* held and *(b)* arranged with representatives of the workers regarding future employment prospects. [165909]

Mr. Spellar: Following meetings with TK-ECC Senior Management on 25 February and 3 March 2004, officials from the Department for Employment and Learning (DEL) took the lead in co-ordinating an inter-Departmental Outreach Service, at the company's premises at Dundonald from Monday 8 to Friday 12 March. Representatives from DEL, Invest NI, Social Security Agency and the Inland Revenue provided advice and guidance on a wide range of services including referrals to jobs and training opportunities, benefit claims and entitlement, advice on business start-up and entitlement to tax credits.

The primary objective of the Outreach Service was to secure alternative employment for as many of the work force as possible. In excess of 150 people were subsequently submitted to job vacancies with a further 120 receiving information and advice on training opportunities. In addition, Invest NI entered into discussion with 36 employees, 25 of whom were seeking to start their own business, with a further 11 seeking general business advice and direction. Invest NI also held preliminary discussions with the Managing Director of TK-ECC who was investigating the possibility of a new business venture. To date this has not progressed beyond the preliminary stage.

UK General Lighthouse Fund

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland (1) what discussions he has had with other Government Departments regarding the cessation

of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters; [168239]

(2) what discussions he has had with the Irish Government regarding the cessation of payments from the UK General Lighthouse Fund for the provision of navigational aids in Irish territorial waters. [168240]

Mr. Jamieson: I have been asked to reply.

The General Lighthouse Fund meets the cost of providing aids to navigation services for the British Isles as a whole, but the Government shares UK shipping industry concerns about the imbalance in the amounts of light dues collected in the UK and in Ireland. Since we reiterated in January our commitment to renegotiate the current level of funding from Ireland there have been further discussions at official level between the Department for Transport and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and with the Irish Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources. The Northern Ireland Office will also be involved as the dialogue progresses.

Ulster-Scots Agency

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the *(a)* procedure and *(b)* timescale for filling the vacant post of Chairman of the Ulster-Scots Agency. [170784]

Mr. Paul Murphy: Under the Implementation Bodies Agreement of 8 March 1999 made between the British and Irish Governments, the North South Ministerial Council fill the vacancy left by Lord Laird's resignation as Chairperson of the Ulster Scots Agency.

During suspension, such decisions are taken by the British and Irish Governments under the Agreement made between the two Governments on 19 November 2002.

No timescale for any such appointment has yet been set.

Andrew Mackinlay: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will make a statement on the reasons given by the Chairman of the Ulster-Scots Agency for his resignation. [170785]

Angela Smith: In a letter of resignation to the North South Ministerial Council on 23 April, Lord Laird stated that a lack of official support and public funding for the Ulster-Scots Agency were the reasons. This I refute.

The Budget for the Agency has trebled since 2000 to a current level of £1.7 million which is an 11 per cent. increase on last year's budget. This is within a care and maintenance arrangement as agreed by North South Ministerial Council.

My Department continues to work closely with the Ulster-Scots Agency in support of their work.

Youth Football

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what financial assistance was given to the promotion of youth development programmes in Northern Ireland football during 2003. [165996]

Angela Smith: The amount of financial assistance that was given to the promotion of youth development programmes in Northern Ireland during 2003 was £903,768. This amount was provided via the Departments of Culture Arts and Leisure, Finance and Personnel, Enterprise Trade and Investment and Social Development. The figures include £804,995 from the Department of Culture Arts and Leisure for the 2003–04 financial year.

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what further developments have been made in relation to the agreement reached regarding the assistance offered to the Irish Football Association to develop football in Northern Ireland. [169934]

Angela Smith: Discussions are ongoing between my officials, the Sports Council for Northern Ireland (SCNI), the Irish Football Association (IFA) and the Irish Football League (IFL) about arrangements for the provision of DCAL assistance offered to the IFA to develop football in Northern Ireland. In addition, I have approved the terms of reference for a SCNI-led Soccer Strategy Implementation Group, the membership of which will include senior representatives of the IFA. Steps are also being taken to arrange a first meeting of this group.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps he is taking to promote youth football in Northern Ireland. [168470]

Angela Smith: The Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL) has made available, via the Sports Council for Northern Ireland, £1.6 million for the promotion of youth football in Northern Ireland. Under this programme, 25 youth Football Development Centres, based at clubs, have been established across Northern Ireland. In addition, youth football is one of the key components of the soccer strategy initiative.

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether measures to promote youth football in Northern Ireland are dependent on the implementation of the soccer strategy. [168472]

Angela Smith: Current measures supported by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL), through the Sports Council for Northern Ireland, to promote youth football in Northern Ireland are not dependent on the implementation of the Soccer Strategy. The development of youth football in the future will be closely linked to the successful implementation of the Soccer Strategy process.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Anti-terrorism Legislation

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer to the hon. Member for Bethnal Green and Bow (Ms King) on 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1256–57W, on anti-terrorism legislation, if he will collate information on the religious background of those detained under UK anti-terrorism legislation. [166428]

Mr. Blunkett: I do not believe that the religion of an individual is relevant to whether or not they may have been involved in terrorism.

In respect of all detentions under anti-terrorism legislation, there is no requirement for detainees to provide information pertaining to their religion. This data is therefore not collated centrally and could not be obtained except at disproportionate cost.

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to his answer of 13 January, *Official Report*, column 669W, on the Terrorism Act 2000, if he will update the figures. [166813]

Mr. Blunkett: Police records show that since 11 September 2001, 562 people have been arrested under the Terrorism Act 2000 and that 97 of those have been charged with offences under that Act (please note that two persons previously reported as originally charged under the Terrorism Act 2000 had their charges amended during the prosecution process) resulting in 14 convictions.

53 people have been released directly into the custody of the immigration services. (Please note that the difference of one here is the result of a review, which identified an erroneous earlier report from a Constabulary.) A further 99 of those arrested under the Act have been charged under other legislation.

280 individuals were released without charge or further sanction. Information on any further action taken is not collated centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

Asylum and Immigration

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what he estimates the cost to central Government Departments of the medical inspection of immigrant service is in 2003–04. [156836]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to the response I gave to him today.

Brain Fingerprinting

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what evaluation he has made of brain fingerprinting technologies that monitor the involuntary electrical waves emitted by the brain. [169294]

Ms Blears: None.

Car Crime

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact of remote immobiliser technologies on reducing car crime. [166845]

Ms Blears: It is too early to make an assessment because the introduction of these technologies by the industry has been delayed until there is resolution of liability issues.

It is suggested that these legal liabilities include, liability for technology or system malfunction and who would take responsibility for vehicles that are remotely immobilised and subsequently causes an accident.

Charitable Status

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps he is taking to withdraw charitable status from groups that are raising money in the UK and channelling it to extremist and terrorist groups in India. [158060]

Fiona Mactaggart: This is a matter for the Charity Commission as the Government Department responsible for the regulation of charities in England and Wales. The Director of Operations will write to the hon. Member and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Clamping Companies

Mr. Alan Williams: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the Security Industry Authority to introduce regulations to control the activities of clamping companies. [170964]

Ms Blears: On current plans the Security Industry Authority expects to commence regulation of vehicle immobilisers by the end of 2004.

Criminal Records Bureau

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what estimate he has made of the number of existing home care staff who will require Criminal Records Bureau checks; [166008]

(2) how many existing care home staff had enhanced level Criminal Records Bureau checks processed by 29 February; what percentage this constitutes of the total number of existing care home staff; and if he will make a statement. [166018]

Ms Blears: As at 29 February, a total of 85,062 Disclosure applications from existing care home staff had been processed by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). This figure is made up of 80,327 Enhanced Disclosures and 4,735 Standard Disclosures. As at 21 April, the number of applications processed had risen to 105,765 out of a total received of 115,532.

There are no reliable figures to indicate what percentage of overall existing staff this represents, because initial estimates from the Department of Health were that checks would need to be carried out on 250,000 existing staff. However discussions with the care sector suggest that there is a high turnover of staff in this sector, and as a result the actual figure could be at least 20–40 per cent. lower.

In September 2003, the Department of Health issued its schedule to employers and owners in the care sector on the reintroduction of the previously postponed checks on existing care home staff. Initially, employers were asked to send application forms to the CRB by 31 December 2003. Because the number of applications received by that date were low and following discussion

between the Criminal Records Bureau, the Home Office and the Department of Health, this date was extended to 29 February 2004.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have *(a)* one, *(b)* two, *(c)* three, *(d)* four, *(e)* five and *(f)* more than five registrations with the Criminal Records Bureau. [167975]

Ms Blears *[holding answer 23 April 2004]:* I believe that the question refers to the number of people who have applied for more than one Disclosure from the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). I am unable to provide an answer, because the CRB's computer system does not hold this information centrally.

Custodial Sentences

Mrs. Ann Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many women were given a custodial sentence by courts in London in each month since January 2003. [168780]

Paul Goggins: Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Departmental Contracts

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what contracts have been awarded to the company Mitie by his Department since 2000; and what arrangements were put in place for collective bargaining. [166595]

Fiona Mactaggart: The available information held by the Home Office on the contracts awarded to MITIE since 2000 is as set out in the following table:

Unit	*Description of Contract*
(FSS) Forensic Science Service	Facilities Management—Lambeth 1/7/02–1/6/05 with an option to extend the contract for a further period of 24 months.
(UKPA) United Kingdom Passport Agency	Building Work. Counter/Reception refurbishment in Glasgow.
(HMPS) Her Majesty's Prison Service	Cleaning contract at HMP Long Lartin until 2004. Staff mess catering contract at HMP Long Lartin 30/4/01–29/4/04. Catering framework agreement under Phase 2 Project for Staff Messes and Visits Halls. Roofing contract at HMP Parkhurst. Roofing contract at HMP Leicester. Cameron House conversion contract at HMP Norwich. Works contract at HMP Ranby. Works contract at HMP Hindley. Roofing contract at HMP Hindley. Refurbishment contract at HMP Lewes. Installation of call system contract at HMP Exeter.
(NPD) National Probation Directorate	Facilities Management Services—National Probation Service (NPS) North Division Estate commencing 1/1/03. Facilities Management NPS West Division Estate commencing 1/4/03. Both contracts fixed for three years with options to extend both by four times, six month periods to a maximum of five years each

Departmental Staffing

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage of his Department's work force are non-civil servants, separately identifying *(a)* consultants and contractors, *(b)* secondees from other Government bodies and *(c)* temporary agency staff. [163631]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 31 March 2004]:* Contributions have been received from areas of the Home Department, including agencies, as follows:

	Agency staff (including non-civil servant inward secondees)	*Total staff*	*Percentage*
Immigration and Nationality Department	1,298	14,240	9.1
United Kingdom Passport Service	47	2,627	1.8
Centrally managed core Home Office	300	4,208	7.1
Forensic Science Service	90	2,615	3.4
Prison Service Agency	300	47,427	0.6

Note:
Inward Seconded staff who are civil servants are counted against normal staff counts; staffing returns for the Home Office Annual Report excludes agency staff.

John McDonnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the cost to his Department of contracted professional services was in each of the last five years. [163633]

Fiona Mactaggart *[holding answer 31 March 2004]:* The cost for contracted professional services for the Core Home Office in each of the last five years is as follows:

	£
1999	15,132,974
2000	33,130,017
2001	47,177,217
2002	58,509,500
2003	73,762,761

The Stage 2 RAB Resource DEL for the Home Office over the same period was:

	£
1999–2000	7,076,102,000
2000–01	8,398,131,000
2001–02	10,261,856,000
2002–03	11,088,502,000
2003–04	11,836,009,000

Expenditure expressed as a percentage of the Home Office DEL during the last five years was as follows:

	Percentage
1999–2000	0.21
2000–01	0.39
2001–02	0.46
2002–03	0.53
2003–04	0.63

The Immigration and Nationality Directorate accounted for around half of the cost for each financial year.

Drug Rehabilitation Treatment

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the waiting times for drug rehabilitation treatment for each drug action team in England were for each year from 1995–96 to 2003–04; and if he will make a statement. [163881]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I have been asked to reply.

The National Treatment Agency (NTA) has collected information on waiting times for all drug treatment modalities from 2001 for drug action teams. This is available on the NTA's website at http://www.nta.nhs.uk/programme/performance information popup.htmf#related.

In December 2001, the NTA developed a programme to tackle growing waiting times, setting targets on the maximum acceptable length of waits. Average waiting times have fallen in all treatment categories from between five to eleven weeks in December 2001, to two to five weeks in October 2003.

Gloucestershire Probation Board

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the membership of the Gloucestershire Probation Board is; and what the duration of that membership is. [168309]

Paul Goggins: There are currently 13 members on the Gloucestershire Probation Board, including the Chief Officer and Chair.

At present, there are two vacancies on this board. One new member has been selected and is awaiting pre-appointment clearance. The remaining vacancy is for a judicial representative who will be approved by the Department of Constitutional Affairs.

The Board may have a maximum of 15 members, and the term of appointment for all member appointments is three years, with the exception of the Chief Officer who is appointed on a permanent basis.

Interception of Communications

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many warrants have been authorised for the interception of telephone conversations, e-mails and postal mail in each of the last 10 years. [167078]

Ms Blears: The figures for the number of interception warrants issued in the last 10 years are published annually in the Annual Reports of the Interception of Communications Commissioner initially appointed under the Interception of Communications Act 1985 and now under the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000. Copies are available in the House of Commons Library.

Offender Management

Alan Simpson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he expects the Chief Executive of the National Offender Management Service to appoint the first Regional Offender Manager for the new service. [168838]

Paul Goggins: Advertisements for Regional Offender Manager posts appeared in the media from 18 April. Interviews of candidates will begin in early June as soon as possible after which the first appointments will be made.

Mrs. Ann Cryer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether regional offender managers will be required to *(a)* locate prisoners and *(b)* purchase places for prisoners, as close to their homes as possible. [168783]

Paul Goggins: Regional offender managers will assess individual offenders on a case-by-case basis and prescribe interventions appropriate to that offender. Wherever possible, the location of a prisoner's home will be taken into consideration.

Parliamentary Questions

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he will reply to the question tabled by the hon. Member for Stourbridge on 2 March, reference 158991. [165942]

Ms Blears: I wrote to my hon. Friend on 31 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1419W.

Parole

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons were recalled to custody having been released on home detention curfew in each of the last 12 months. [168025]

Paul Goggins: The number of persons recalled to custody having been released on Home Detention Curfew (HOC) in each of the last 12 months is given in the following table.

Reasons for recall include breach of HDC conditions, change of circumstances (for example, where a subject has involuntarily lost their curfew address or has withdrawn consent to be monitored) and being charged with a new offence.

Numbers recalled from and on home detention curfew England and Wales April 2003 to March 2004

	Recalled	On HOC
April 2003	226	3,135
May 2003	213	3,112
June 2003	196	3,174
July 2003	215	3,262
August 2003	207	3,772
September 2003	272	3,682
October 2003	288	3,574
November 2003	230	3,613
December 2003	272	3,779
January 2004	284	3,523
February 2004	264	3,444
March 2004	259	3,602

Policing/Crime Statistics

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Preston since 1997. [169697]

Ms Blears: Preston borough council has been allocated a total of £276,228 specifically for CCTV schemes since the introduction of CCTV funding in 1999. This was for two schemes under round two of the initiative.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage change in full-time police officers in Wigan there has been since 1997. [169333]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCD) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCD strength is only available from 2002.

Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Wigan BCU increased by 6.9 per cent. (from 442.5 to March.473.0). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Michael Todd) and within the Wigan BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much public funding has been spent on CCTV security cameras in Wigan since 1997. [169337]

Ms Blears: Since 1997, the Home Office has provided £1,604,450 to Wigan metropolitan borough council for CCTV schemes.

Prisoners

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many life sentence prisoners were *(a)* in Category C conditions and *(b)* in open conditions on (i) 31 March and (ii) 31 March in each of the last five years. [168026]

Paul Goggins: The number of life sentence prisoners held in *(a)* Category C prisons and *(b)* Open prisons on 31 March 2004 and in each of the last five years is given in the table.

Population of lifers in Category C and open prisons, 31 March

	Category C	Open
1999	767	314
2000	782	354
2001	870	304
2002	884	375
2003	966	397
2004	1,014	400

Mrs. Gillan: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners are expected to be released from custody *(a)* on home detention curfew, *(b)* on parole and *(c)* at the end of their sentence in each of the next 12 months. [168029]

Paul Goggins: Estimated figures for the number of prisoners expected to be released from custody on *(a)* home detention curfew (HOC), *(b)* on parole, and *(c)* at the end of their sentence, are not available. The numbers released on parole and HDC depend on the size and make-up of the prison population, general policy and individual decisions on early release.

The number of prisoners released from custody on HDC, recommended for parole, and the total number of discharges in 2002 can be found in tables 10.7, 10.1 and 3.13, 4.11 and 5.8 respectively of the publication 'Prison Statistics England and Wales 2002'. A copy of this publication is available in the Library.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many and what percentage of prisoners were assessed for basic literacy and numeracy in 2003–04; and what the rates were for each of the last 10 years. [169093]

Paul Goggins: All establishments provide an induction programme, screening and initial assessment of each offender's basic skills.

We are able to provide figures from 2001, but do not hold data for the past 10 years.

	Prisoners' basic skills assessments
2001–02	114,831
2002–03	118,800
2003–04	123,941

The number of sentenced prisoners received into prisons for the same period (not including recalls, non-criminals or fine defaulters) is:

	Number
2001–02	91,978
2002–03	94,807
2003–04	[1]92,247

[1] Final year figures yet to be confirmed.

Information is not collected and held centrally for each individual prisoner. Accordingly it is not possible

to express these figures as a proportion of annual throughput. Assessment figures would also include non-sentenced prisoners.

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prisoners aged *(a)* under 18, *(b)* 18 to 25, *(c)* 26 to 35, *(d)* 36–60 and *(e)* over 60 years were released to no fixed abode in each of the last 10 years. [169137]

Paul Goggins: The available information, from large-scale resettlement surveys of sentenced prisoners nearing release conducted in November-December 2001 and March-April 2003, is contained in the following table. Comparable information for preceding years is not available.

Proportion of prisoners without accommodation arranged on release, by prisoner type

Resettlement survey	*Percentage*	
	2001	*2003*
Male young offenders (aged 18–20)	23	10
Adult males (aged 21 or over)	34	30
Females	41	38
Total	33	29

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* suicides, *(b)* attempted suicides and *(c)* incidents of self-harm by serving prisoners there were in each of the last 10 years. [169089]

Paul Goggins: The numbers of self-inflicted deaths and numbers of incidents of self-harm in prisons in England and Wales are provided in the following table:

Calendar year	*Number of self-inflicted deaths*	*Number of incidents of self-harm (not available pre-1998)*
1994	61	—
1995	59	—
1996	64	—
1997	68	—
1998	84	3,207
1999	91	3,721
2000	81	5,227
2001	73	7,486
2002	95	9,745
2003	94	[1]16,223

[1] In December 2002, a new form for reporting self-harm was introduced across the prisons estate, which is known to have improved reporting practices. Please note therefore that much of the increase in reported self-harm in 2003 may have resulted from the change in reporting procedures rather than reflect an actual increase in incidence of self-harm.

Suicidal intent is not easy to establish. The reasons why people self-injure are highly complex, and it is difficult to distinguish between acts of self-harm that were attempts at ending life, and those which occurred for other reasons. It is not possible, therefore, for the Prison Service to extrapolate from the data recording incidents of self-harm those acts that may have been attempts at suicide.

Central to the suicide prevention strategy that I announced on 31 March is the need to reduce the level of distress in prisons and to promote the well being of all staff and prisoners. The strategy has strong support from partner agencies and external organisations, and is being developed in close partnership with the Department of Health. The Prison Service has also been developing a separate but related self-harm management strategy.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what proportion of the prison population has been diagnosed as suffering from dyslexia. [169132]

Paul Goggins: Past research suggests that the proportion of prisoners suffering from dyslexia could range from four to over 17 per cent. The new prison dyslexia project, currently under way in Yorkshire and Humberside, is designed to provide an authoritative answer to the question of the incidence of dyslexia and related learning disabilities among the prison population. A full report is expected at the end of the summer.

All establishments provide screening and initial assessment for prisoners. Potential dyslexia indicators can be identified through them. New diagnostic assessments for prisoners, to be administered after initial assessment by a specialist teacher, will offer guidance on when to refer learners for a full dyslexia assessment with an educational psychologist or other appropriately trained person.

Prisons

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the results of the audit to identify foreign nationals sentenced to a term of imprisonment will be available. [164404]

Paul Goggins: An audit by the Prison Service began in January to ensure that all relevant information on foreign national prisoners that it holds in its custody had been passed to the Immigration Service. This is particularly important for those who will be eligible for the Early Removal Scheme (ERS).

As this audit concerns the confirmation of personal data on prisoners between the Prison and Immigration Services there are no plans to make the results publicly available.

Probation Service

Ross Cranston: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the change in gross pension provision for the *(a)* National Probation Directorate and *(b)* National Probation Service (Local Area Boards) will be following the publication of the Spring Supplementary Estimates for 2003–04. [168462]

Paul Goggins: The Spring Supplementary Estimates for 2003–04 do not make any change in pension provision for either *(a)* the National Probation Directorate or *(b)* the local Probation Boards of the National Probation Service.

Staff in the National Probation Directorate are part of the Civil Service Pension Scheme. Staff in local Probation Boards are part of the Local Government Pension Scheme and the actuarial rate for employers' contributions was set in 2001 for the financial years 2002–03, 2003–04 and 2004–05.

Racial Harassment

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers preventing racial harassment have been introduced since 1997; and how many times these powers have been used in Birkenhead. [166486]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created new and separate offences where the offences of causing fear and violence or of causing harassment, alarm or distress under the Public Order Act 1986, or the offences of harassment or putting in fear of violence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 were racially aggravated.

Figures for the number of prosecutions in Birkenhead for this type of offence are not centrally available. Over the period 1999–2000 to 2001–02, Merseyside Police recorded a total of 434 harassment offences.

Prior to 1997, the Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976 prohibited discrimination on racial grounds. The RRA did not specifically refer to harassment, but it was clear from case law that racial harassment was a type of detriment capable of amounting to the kind of treatment prohibited by the Act.

As part of its fulfilment of its obligations under the EC Race Directive, the UK amended the Race Relations Act 1976 (by virtue of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003) so as to make it unlawful to harass a person, on grounds of race or ethnic or national origins, in the areas of activity covered by the 1976 Act.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what powers preventing racial harassment have been introduced since 1997; and how many times these powers have been used in Manchester Gorton. [167468]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 created new and separate offences where the offences of causing fear and violence or of causing harassment, alarm or distress under the Public Order Act 1986, or the offences of harassment or putting in fear of violence under the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 were racially aggravated.

Figures for the number of prosecutions in Manchester Gorton for this type of offence are not centrally available. Over the period 1999–2000 to 2001–02, Greater Manchester police recorded a total of 2,075 harassment offences.

Prior to 1997, the Race Relations Act (RRA) 1976 prohibited discrimination on racial grounds. The RRA did not specifically refer to harassment, but it was clear from case law that racial harassment was a type of detriment capable of amounting to the kind of treatment prohibited by the Act.

As part of its fulfilment of its obligations under the EC Race Directive, the UK amended the Race Relations Act 1976 (by virtue of the Race Relations Act 1976 (Amendment) Regulations 2003) so as to make it unlawful to harass a person, on grounds of race or ethnic or national origins, in the areas of activity covered by the 1976 Act.

Racism Action Plan

Lembit Öpik: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what role his Department envisages for the Racial Equality Strategy for Northern Ireland in the creation of a wider UK National Action Plan against Racism; and if he will make a statement. [167335]

Fiona Mactaggart: The Government are committed to implementing the outcomes of the Durban World Conference against Racism in a way that makes sense in the UK, given our long track record in tackling racism, inequality and discrimination. Many of the activities identified in the Durban programme of action are already under way throughout the UK.

The Home Office is currently developing a UK strategy on race equality and community cohesion. The Northern Ireland Administration is developing its own race equality strategy in respect of its areas of devolved responsibility, and both parties are working together to ensure coherence between the two strategies. We will continue to consult widely as this work develops. The Government are looking at our Durban commitments as part of our development of the strategy.

Roger Sylvester

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether public funds will be available to any of the eight police officers for their possible appeal against the inquest verdict that the death of Mr. Roger Sylvester in custody was an unlawful killing. [169891]

Ms Blears: The Court of Administration has now approved the application for a full Judicial Review of the verdict of unlawful killing reached by the inquest into the circumstances surrounding Roger Sylvester's death.

The Metropolitan Police Authority (MPA) has agreed to pay the officers' legal costs arising from the Judicial Review but only if it can also fund relevant costs to the Sylvester family. This matter is to be considered at an MPA meeting on 7 May 2004.

Serious and Organised Crime Agency

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the annual budget for the Serious and Organised Crime Agency will be; [166461]

(2) what *(a)* functions and *(b)* funds are being transferred from the National Criminal Intelligence Service to the Serious Organised Crime Agency. [166596]

Ms Blears: Proposals for the Serious Organised Crime Agency were set out in the white paper 'One Step Ahead: A 21st century strategy to defeat organised crime' (Cm6167), published on 29 March. The new Agency will bring together the National Criminal Intelligence Service (NCIS), the National Crime Squad (NCS), the investigative and intelligence work of Her Majesty's Customs and Excise (HMCE) on serious drug trafficking and the recovery of related criminal assets, and the Home Office's responsibilities for organised immigration crime The National Criminal Intelligence Service currently works on behalf of all United Kingdom law enforcement agencies, providing strategic and tactical intelligence on serious and organised crime,

nationally and internationally. These functions will be undertaken by the Serious Organised Crime Agency once it is fully operational.

The Serious Organised Crime Agency will be funded by the Home Office as an executive non-departmental public body; provision will be determined through the Spending Review 2004 process.

Sex Offenders Register

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been *(a)* added and *(b)* registered in total on the Sex Offenders Register in each year since its establishment, broken down by gender. [169106]

Paul Goggins: The notification requirements of the Sex Offenders Act 1997 (often known as the sex offenders register) came into force on 1 September 1997. These requirements have been be updated and strengthened through the Sexual Offences Act 2003.

Until 2001, data on the number of sex offenders were collated on a national basis from the police national computer. However, this arrangement was overtaken following the introduction of the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and the requirement on each police and probation area to produce annual reports detailing the work undertaken to safeguard the public and manage dangerous offenders in the community.

The MAPPA reports also include statistics on the number of offenders who are subject to the notification requirements. The 2001–02 reports state that on 31 March 2002 there were 18,513 registered sex offenders living in the community. The 2002–03 reports state that on 31 March 2003 there were 21,413 registered sex offenders living in the community. It is not possible to state the gender breakdown of these statistics.

The Violent and Sex Offenders Register (ViSOR), currently being developed by the Police and Information Technology Organisation, will have greater capacity to store information on sex offenders and provide statistics on the number of convicted sex offenders.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate the Prison Service has made of the number of serving offenders who have suffered from solvent abuse. [169062]

Paul Goggins: The Prison Service has no data on which to base any such estimate. Healthcare staff will manage any physical or psychological symptoms associated with solvent abuse. CARATs drug workers will address solvent abuse where it is part of polydrug-misuse.

The Substance Misuse Standard being developed by the Youth Justice Board will place a particular emphasis on solvent abuse, which tends to be more prevalent among younger people.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how much police authority funding has been granted to voluntary sector bodies to provide training in solvent abuse among children. [169067]

Ms Blears: This information is not held centrally.

Stop and Search

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department pursuant to the answer of 6 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 328W, on stop and search, how many arrests resulted from the 56 searches conducted between 6 March and 27 April 2003 under section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 in the vicinity of RAF Fairford. [166992]

Ms Blears: There were no results resulting from the 56 searches conducted between 6 March and 27 April 2003 made under Section 60 of the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994.

Terrorism Arrests

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether those detained on 19 and 20 April in Manchester in connection with alleged terrorist activity are *(a)* linked to Al Muhajiroon and *(b)* Supporters of Sharia; and if he will make a statement. [167992]

Mr. Blunkett: You will be aware that the investigation involving those arrested on 19 April 2004 in Manchester, and in some cases re-arrested subsequently, is ongoing. Therefore it would be inappropriate for me to comment.

David Davis: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what the *(a)* nationalities and *(b)* immigration status were of people arrested on suspicion of terrorist offences in each of the last five years; [167960]

(2) how many people arrested under anti-terrorist legislation have been identified as illegal immigrants in each of the last five years; [167961]

(3) how many people arrested under anti-terrorist legislation in each of the last five years are current or former asylum seekers in the United Kingdom; [167962]

(4) how many people have been *(a)* arrested, *(b)* charged and *(c)* convicted under anti-terrorist legislation in each of the last five years, broken down by offence; [167963]

(5) how many people were arrested in November and December 2003 on suspicion of terrorist offences, broken down by offence; what their *(a)* nationalities and *(b)* immigration status are; and how many are current or former asylum seekers in the United Kingdom. [167967]

Mr. Blunkett: Information on nationality and immigration status can be a key part of the investigation of terrorist offences and the police and Immigration Service work closely together in these cases. I legislated in the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 to make it easier to deport foreign nationals who have committed serious offences.

This information is now being collated centrally for statistical purposes but is not available for the years listed by the right hon. Member. It would, however, be disproportionate to require the police and courts to obtain, verify and record this information in all cases.

The available evidence suggests that only a small number of foreign nationals, asylum seekers or refugees commit serious crimes.

We are currently awaiting a breakdown of the available figures on arrests, charges and convictions from the Metropolitan police. I will write to the right hon. Member and place a copy in the Library once these have been received.

UK Border Controls

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether EU Directives prevent the UK from establishing UK border controls and customs points in other EU nation states. [169963]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

There is no EU Directive preventing the UK agreeing with another member state to carry out customs controls in their territory.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what plans he has to staff UK customs points outside UK borders. [169964]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

UK Customs have only one staffed customs point outside the UK and that is at Coquelles in France dealing with Channel Tunnel shuttle traffic. There are no plans to operate customs points elsewhere outside the UK.

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has held discussions with his counterparts in other countries *(a)* in the EU and *(b)* elsewhere with regard to mutual co-operation concerning the establishment of manned customs points for the UK outside UK borders. [169965]

John Healey: I have been asked to reply.

There have been no discussions regarding the establishment of staffed customs points outside the UK borders.

Extremist Websites

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what measures he plans to take to combat *(a)* recruitment and *(b)* fundraising through extremist and racist websites; and if he will make a statement. [168005]

Fiona Mactaggart: We have discussed these and attendant issues with the police, the Information Commission and the Internet Watch Foundation (IWF), all of whom are aware of the kind of websites he describes.

It is already an offence to incite others to commit any criminal offence. Under the Public Order Act 1986, it is also an offence to use threatening, abusive or insulting words or behaviour or distribute material which is threatening or abusive so that another person believes that immediate unlawful violence will be used against them or they will be caused harassment, alarm or distress.

It is important that existing laws be used where breaches of the criminal law occur. Anyone with concerns should make them known to the relevant authorities and to the IWF.

We are currently working on an e-crime strategy which will include consideration of issues like these.

Young Offenders

John Mann: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many young offenders were given a custodial sentence by courts in Wales in each month since January 2003. [168207]

Paul Goggins: Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

Mr. Carmichael: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many *(a)* young offenders and *(b)* juveniles were given a custodial sentence by courts in London in each month since January 2003. [168637]

Paul Goggins: Statistics on court proceedings for 2003 will be published in the autumn.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Departmental Policies (Sustainable Development)

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what steps he is taking to deliver sustainable development within Government; [165669]

(2) what progress has been made on his Department's Sustainable Development Strategy. [165670]

Mr. Pond: DWP is continuing to develop a Sustainable Development Strategy to support its Policy Statement. Details of the range of targets that the Department, including all of its agencies, are working to deliver are available to all staff via the Department's internal intranet.

DWP continues to publish specific target related strategies on its website, as targets within the Framework for Sustainable Development on the Government Estate are rolled out. A fully comprehensive strategy will be published once this process is complete. Progress on these targets and other related actions is, and will continue to be, published annually in the Department's Annual Sustainable Development Report.

The Department continues to make steady progress in the delivery of sustainable development. The two officials groups with responsibility for the delivery of the aims and objectives of the Department, as detailed within the DWP Sustainable Development Policy Statement, are continuing the work of fully embedding sustainability within processes across the whole range of businesses. Progress is again reported in the Department's Annual Sustainable Development Report.

Departmental Stationery

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the Department's main suppliers of *(a)* copier paper, *(b)* stationery, *(c)* envelopes and *(d)* paper for reports; what the name of each paper used was in each case; and what the (i) recycled and (ii) post-consumer recycled content of each type of paper is. [165642]

Mr. Pond: The main suppliers of copier paper to the Department for Work and Pensions are Guilbert, Banner, Glenmore Lomond, Premier Paper and the Paper Company.

The core recycled paper offered by all suppliers is "Evolve Office" which is made from 100 per cent. post consumer waste, although Guilbert also offer an own brand product "Recycled 3500", which is made from 80 per cent. post consumer waste.

The main suppliers for desk-top stationery are Guilbert and Banner, who also supply envelopes.

Reports that are produced and used internally use copier paper, (suppliers listed above). External reports are produced from papers supplied by Aspect, Astron Group, Belmont Press, British Loose Leaf, Corporate Document Services, Charisma, Cherry Print, COI, Colibri, Deanprint, Horner Brothers, Midland Regional Printers, Newtown Printers, Pickards, Print & design Factory, Print Art and Design, Print Solutions UK, Rosehill Press, Sandy Press, Slater Press and Trafford Press.

Disabled Workers (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on measures introduced to improve the working conditions of disabled workers in Oldham West and Royton in the last seven years. [170949]

Maria Eagle: We have a number of measures in place nationally to help improve conditions for disabled people at work, as well as measures to improve their access to services generally. None of these are specific to Oldham West and Royton, but all are available to disabled people who live and work there.

From 1996, the employment provisions of the Disability Discrimination Act required most employers of 20 or more staff not to discriminate against, and to make reasonable adjustments for, disabled job applicants or employees; in December 1998, we reduced this threshold to 15 employees. From October this year, the small employer exemption will be removed and most currently excluded occupations, such as police officers, fire-fighters, and partners in business partnerships will be brought within the scope of the Disability Discrimination Act employment provisions.

Jobcentre Plus runs a number of specialist programmes providing help for disabled people, including New Deal for Disabled People, Workstep, Access to Work, the Job Introduction Scheme, and Work Preparation. All these programmes provide practical advice and support to disabled people and their employers to help overcome work related obstacles resulting from disability. Since 1997–98 there have been year on year increases in both numbers helped and programme spend.

To help people access appropriate help, Jobcentre Plus has established a network of Disability Service Teams. The teams are made up of Disability Employment Advisers, Access to Work Advisers and Occupational Psychologists; their services are accessed through local Jobcentres.

Since April 2003, disabled people in work have been receiving financial support through the working tax credit. This is available if a person is working an average of at least 16 hours per week (self-employed or for an employer); and have a disability which puts them at a disadvantage in getting a job. 70,000 families (including over 32,000 adults without children) are benefiting from the disability element within the working tax credit, compared to 38,000 who benefited from the old disabled person's tax credit.

EU Social Chapter

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the effect of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Heywood and Middleton. [168530]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I have been asked to reply.

The residents of Heywood and Middleton have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to Parental Leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two Member States, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

In addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Health and Safety Executive

Tony Lloyd: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how much the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) paid Star Alliance consultants to advise on the restructure and refocusing of the Health and Safety Commission and HSE. [166862]

Jane Kennedy *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* The Health and Safety Executive employed the Star Alliance to assist with its change and modernisation programme at a cost of £1.088 million. This included the design and implementation of workshops for all staff to embed new values and behaviours; a leadership development and

training programme for all senior staff; advice on a new communications function and strategy; research on stakeholder and public attitudes; and developing and strengthening the organisation's change management capabilities.

Incapacity Care Allowance

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will make a statement on the incentives to work for those in receipt of incapacity care allowance and seeking part-time work with earnings over £4,000 per annum. [167177]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Since April 2000, people who participate in work trials and placements approved and arranged through Jobcentres can retain their incapacity benefits. Under the new Permitted Work rules for incapacity benefit, introduced from April 2002, recipients can earn up to £20 a week for an unlimited period, or work for less than 16 hours a week and earn up to £72 a week for 26 weeks. This can be extended for a further 26 weeks if progress is being made towards work of 16 hours a week or more. Those doing supported permitted work can earn up to and including £72 a week for an indefinite period. This earnings limit has been increased to its current level from £48 per week in 1998 to keep pace with increases in the National Minimum Wage.

Recipients of carer's allowance are not required to be available for, and actively seeking, work as a condition of entitlement to the allowance. However, working age carers living in Jobcentre Plus areas are required to attend, where possible, a work focussed interview, and are encouraged to keep in touch with the labour market.

Incentives to work for carer's allowance recipients who are seeking part-time work with earnings of over £4,000 per year are provided by the earnings rule which enables them to retain the allowance if their net earnings do not exceed £79 a week after deduction of allowable expenses. These include income tax, national insurance contributions, half of their superannuation contributions and some of the cost of providing care for the disabled person the recipient cares for and/or for the recipient's children whilst the recipient is at work. The earnings limit is set at the same amount as the lower earnings limit for national insurance contributions and is increased each year.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what estimate he has made of the number of recipients of incapacity care allowance who are *(a)* in employment, *(b)* of working age but not employed and *(c)* of working age, not employed but seeking work. [167178]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* Incapacity benefits provide a source of income for people of working age with health conditions or disabilities. There are around 2.7 million people with such conditions claiming incapacity benefit, severe disability allowance, income support or national insurance credits. More than 37,000 recipients of incapacity benefit and SDA currently do some permitted work whilst receiving the benefit. In addition, the Labour Force Survey suggests around 3 per cent. of those receiving these benefits have looked for work within the last four weeks.

As at 30 November 2003, some 32,500 recipients of carer's allowance were in employment and a further 365,000 working age recipients of the allowance were not employed. Although recipients of the allowance are not required to be available for, and actively seeking, work as a condition of entitlement to it, around 1,000 recipients were also claiming jobseeker's allowance and, hence, actively seeking work. There may be others who are actively seeking work, but do not use the services of Jobcentre Plus.

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many recipients of incapacity care allowance there were in each of the last five years. [167179]

Maria Eagle *[holding answer 22 April 2004]:* The information is in the table.

Incapacity benefits and carer's allowance recipients

	Incapacity benefit	*Thousands* *Carer's allowance*
1999	2,637.5	379.8
2000	2,677.9	397.6
2001	2,705.1	376.2
2002	2,710.1	402.7
2003	2,720.5	418.7

Notes:
1. Figures are rounded to the nearest hundred and are expressed in thousands.
2. Incapacity benefit figures are based on a 5 per cent. sample taken at the end of November each year.
3. Carer's allowance figures for 1999, 2001 and 2002 are based on a 5 per cent. sample taken at the end of December each year, figures for 2000 are estimated and figures for 2003 are based on a 5 per cent. sample taken at the end of November.
4. Figures include people receiving incapacity benefit, credits only cases and people in receipt of severe disablement allowance.

Source:
DWP information centre

Parliamentary Questions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when he will reply to Question 160679, tabled by the hon. Member for Northavon on 8 March 2004. [169392]

Mr. Pond: A reply was given to the hon. Member on 28 April.

Pathways to Work

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what independent evaluation of the Pathways to Work pilot programme has been undertaken. [168847]

Maria Eagle: The first tranche of Pathways to Work pilots were launched in October 2003 and the second tranche in April 2004. An independent evaluation of the pilots has been commissioned and will be carried out by independent research organisations managed by DWP analysts.

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what role there is for *(a)* private companies and *(b)* voluntary organisations in the delivery of Pathways to Work. [168848]

Maria Eagle: Seven Pathways to Work pilot areas are now operational; they are managed and run by Jobcentre Plus with additional specialist services provided from a number of sources.

The New Deal for Disabled People plays a key role in helping people on incapacity benefits into employment with support provided by organisations from the private, voluntary and public sectors. Jobcentre Plus also has contracts with private and voluntary organisations to deliver specialist disability employment programmes such as Work Preparation, Workstep, and Work Based Learning for Adults.

In addition, the Pathways to Work pilots provide condition management programmes in conjunction with NHS Primary Care Trusts to help people with health conditions to better manage their condition and help them successfully return to work. Primary care Trusts can commission services from local providers, from public, private or voluntary sectors, in order to meet specific requirements.

Pension Schemes

Sir Peter Tapsell: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if the Government will require solvent employers to make up any shortfall to the full buy-out value of an employer funded pension scheme that has been promised to members as their pension entitlement when the scheme is wound up, regardless of the date when the wind-up commenced. [169869]

Malcolm Wicks: The Government have already announced its intentions on "full buy-out" and has introduced Regulations that bring about a significant change to the protection afforded to scheme members.

The Occupational Pension Schemes (Winding Up and Deficiency on Winding Up etc.) (Amendment) Regulations 2004 were introduced to strengthen members' protection when a salary-related occupational pension scheme, subject to section 75 of the Pensions Act 1995, starts to wind up while its sponsoring employer is solvent.

The Regulations mean that the debt on the employer is calculated on the basis that the scheme should be able to meet the full costs of winding up and the full benefits that scheme members have accrued and expect to receive. The Regulations will ensure that members are more likely to receive the pensions they expect.

The Government expect sponsoring employers of pension schemes to take their obligations seriously and act in the spirit of the Government's stated intentions. However, the Government will not be requiring employers whose schemes started to wind up before 11 June 2003 to make up any shortfall in these schemes to the "full buy-out" level. To do so would mean that the Regulations affected schemes that started to wind up before the employer, trustees or other relevant parties were aware of the new requirements. It is possible that for some employers such a change could place a significant financial imposition on them that they had not budgeted for.

Pensions

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions which categories of contracted out rebates are *(a)* paid out in the form of reductions in the rate of national insurance contributions payable by an employee or employer and *(b)* paid directly into pension funds. [170980]

Malcolm Wicks: For Defined Benefit Occupational Schemes, the whole of the contracted-out rebate is paid through a reduction in the National Insurance contribution. For Defined Contribution Occupational Schemes, part of the contracted-out rebate is paid as a reduction in the National Insurance contribution and part is paid by the Inland Revenue direct to the scheme at the end of the relevant tax year. For Appropriate Personal Pensions Schemes (the term applied to personal pension schemes that can be used to contract out), the whole of the rebate is paid by the Inland Revenue direct to the scheme at the end of the relevant tax year.

Recycled Paper

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of copying paper used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [165671]

Mr. Pond: The UK Sustainable Development in Government Second Annual report shows that in the year ended 31 March 2003 recycled paper accounted for 3 per cent. of the value of desk top paper purchased by the Department for Work and Pensions. The post consumer waste element of that recycled paper was 80 per cent. or more.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what percentage of paper for printed publications used by the Department in 2002–03 was from recycled sources; and how much post-consumer waste this paper contained. [165672]

Mr. Pond: The UK Sustainable Development in Government Second Annual report shows that in the year ended 31 March 2003 recycled paper accounted for 41 per cent. of the value of paper for printed publications purchased by the Department for Work and Pensions. Subsequent information shows that these figures are inaccurate, and that the percentage of recycled paper made from post consumer waste is actually 10 per cent. We are working to identify the discrepancies in figures and progress will be reported on in the Department's annual Sustainable Development Report, and the annual Sustainable Development in Government report.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled, with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content. [165673]

Mr. Pond: The existing contract for the supply of office paper offers a mix of six different papers, of which two are recycled. An exercise is currently under way that will move the Department's office paper solely to recycled, which will have a minimum of 80 per cent. of post consumer waste, by early 2005.

Progress will be reported on in the annual Sustainable Development in Government report and in the Department's own annual Sustainable Development Report.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what measures he has put in place to ensure that his Department meets the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165674]

Mr. Pond: Procurement units within the Department for Work and Pensions have been made aware of the quick win target for the purchase of paper for printed publications.

New print contracts are currently being developed that will include options for recycled paper and progress will be reported on in the annual Sustainable Development in Government report and the Department's own annual Sustainable Development Report.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions by what date his Department expects to attain the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [165675]

Mr. Pond: An exercise is currently under way within the Department for Work and Pensions, which will be completed by early 2005, to move supply of core office copier paper to 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum content of 80 per cent. post consumer waste.

The Department is currently working to identify a common approach and policy, to enable us to meet the quick win targets for printed publications.

Progress on both these areas will be reported on in future Department for Work and Pensions Annual Sustainable Development Reports and the Governments Sustainable Development in Government Annual Report.

Sure Start

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Wigan have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant. [169314]

Mr. Pond: The available information is in the table.

Sure Start Maternity Grants for Wigan Jobcentre Plus District

Year	*Applications*	*Awards*
2000–01	1,205	1,055
2001–02	1,369	1,209
2002–03	1,785	1,405
2003–04	2,055	1,385

Notes:

1. Data are not available by Parliamentary Constituency. Wigan Parliamentary Constituency is part of Wigan Jobcentre Plus District, which was previously called Wigan and Leigh Social Fund District.

2. Data are given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Preston have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant. [169725]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the tables.

Sure Start maternity grants

	Applications	*Awards*
Preston social fund district		
2000–01	1,276	1,106
2001–02	1,536	1,305
2002–03	1,836	1,531
2003 April	152	95
Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus district		
2003 May to March	4,866	3,710

Notes:

1. In May 2003, Preston social fund district was combined with Blackpool social fund district and parts of South West Lancashire and, Lancaster and South Cumbria social fund districts to form Lancashire West Jobcentre Plus district. The data for the two different areas are not comparable.

2. SSMGs were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 have been excluded for data protection reasons.

3. Data are given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many mothers in Manchester, Gorton have made use of the Sure Start maternity grant. [167350]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the tables.

Sure Start maternity grants in Manchester Central Social Fund district

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	1,102	986
2001–02	1,200	1,065
2002 to December	984	858

Sure Start maternity grants in Manchester Jobcentre Plus district

	Applications	*Awards*
2003 January to March	1,039	889
2003–04	4,708	3,635

Sure Start maternity grants in area covered by Manchester, Oldham and Rochdale, and Bolton and Bury Jobcentre Plus districts

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	8,548	7,076
2001–02	10,197	8,036
2002–03	12,138	9,274
2003–04	12,715	9,411

Notes:

1. Data are not available by parliamentary constituency.
2. Manchester Gorton parliamentary constituency used to be part of Manchester Central Social Fund district and is now part of Manchester Jobcentre Plus district. The latter was formed in January 2003 from Manchester Central, Manchester South and Manchester Trinity Social Fund districts, together with part of Oldham Social Fund district. The data for the Social Fund district are not directly comparable with that for the Jobcentre Plus District.
3. In a set of interlocking boundary changes which took place in January 2003, six Social Fund districts were reorganised into the three Jobcentre Plus districts of Manchester, Oldham and Rochdale, and Bolton and Bury. For comparison purposes, data is given for the area covered by these three Jobcentre Plus districts. These data are shown for comparative purposes.
4. Sure Start maternity grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small numbers of cases for 1999–2000 have been excluded for data protection reasons.
5. Data are given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.

Source:

DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adoption

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress has been made on improving the *(a)* efficiency, *(b)* speed and *(c)* effectiveness of the Child Adoption Service; and if he will make a statement. [167203]

Margaret Hodge: In February 2000 the Prime Minister announced a review of adoption by the Performance and Innovation Unit (PIU). The PIU identified key problems and made recommendations in its report, published in July 2000.

Following this review the Government implemented a raft of measures to help improve the adoption service. The Government have:

set an adoption target for the year ending March 2005 for an increase of 40 per cent. in the number of adoptions of looked after children. The baseline for this target is the 2,700 adoptions arranged during the year ending March 2000. Up to the year ending March 2003 there had been an increase of nearly 30 per cent., with 3,500 children being adopted from care;

published statutory National Adoption Standards setting out clear timescales for adoption agencies to make decisions about children and prospective adopters;

set up an Adoption and Permanence Task Force to identify problems in service delivery and to strengthen and promote best practice. The task force has worked with many local authorities to develop and improve their adoption services;

developed an Adopter Recruitment Toolkit and a video for adoption agencies to support their local recruitment of prospective adopters;

established an Adoption Register for England and Wales to help identify potential links between children needing families and those waiting to adopt, and so widen the pool of potential adopters for children;

introduced the Adoption and Children Act 2002, which received Royal Assent on 7 November 2002. The Act overhauls the outdated 1976 Adoption Act and modernises the whole existing legal framework for domestic and inter-country adoption.

The Government have already implemented the following key provisions of the Adoption and Children Act 2002 (the Act):

1 June 2003: restrictions on adoptions from overseas;

31 October 2003: adoption support for adoptive families;

1 December 2003: parental responsibility for unmarried fathers who jointly register the birth of their child with the mother;

1 April 2004: advocacy services for children and young people.

The first phase of the independent review mechanism, which will cover prospective adopters whose adoption agency is minded not to approve them, became operational on 30 April 2004. We expect the provisions on Independent Reviewing Officers to come into force in September 2004.

A series of consultation documents are being published this year on other provisions in the Act. Copies will be available in the Library.

The regulations, court rules and guidance required to implement the core of the Act should be in place by the end of 2004. After a period for preparation and training, we expect the legislation to come into force in September 2005.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate he has made of the number of birth parents who wish to establish contact with children given up for adoption; and how he proposes to help them. [169045]

Margaret Hodge: The Adoption and Children Act 2002 (the Act) provides for two new access to information frameworks, which could facilitate contact between an adopted adult and his birth relatives. The Government are now consulting on the draft regulations and guidance to implement the provisions in the Act, and a copy of the consultation document is in the Library. Section 98 of the Act provides for access to information in relation to adoptions made before the commencement of the Act and sections 56 to 65 of the Act provide the framework for access to information in relation to post-commencement adoptions.

According to statistics from the Registrar General's Office, approximately 875,000 people have been adopted since the commencement of the Adoption Act 1926. It is only possible to speculate how many people may choose to exercise their right to apply for information under section 98 of the Act. When the numbers of birth parents and other relatives are

considered, there could be over two million people who might have an interest in applying or who may be the subject of an application.

The Government anticipate that there will be an initial surge of applications from those who have been waiting for section 98 of the Act to be implemented. Some adoption stakeholders have suggested that this could amount to around 20,000 to 30,000 initial applications. The Government intend the framework for section 98 to be implemented in two stages to help registered adoption support agencies, adoption agencies, the Registrar General and the courts manage the initial demand for services. We are consulting on this specific point as part of the overall consultation for the regulations and guidance on access to information and we will carefully consider the responses.

Adult Education

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Greater London, broken down by local education authority, in each of the last five years. [170497]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in each of the London Learning and Skills Council (LSC) areas is set out in the following table:

£000

LSC Area	*April 2001 to July 2001*[1]		*August 2001 to July 2002*		*August 2002 to July 2003*	
	Basic skills	*Key skills*	*Basic skills*	*Key skills*	*Basic skills*	*Key skills*
London North	8,753	985	14,099	1,395	18,829	1,921
London West	13,671	858	24,013	1,629	29,303	1,652
London Central	18,207	1,119	38,694	1,733	38,130	1,204
London East	14,746	1,476	31,412	2,114	39,783	2,367
London South	5,758	998	13,241	1,488	15,398	1,728

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Preston in each of the last five years. [169683]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Lancashire Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the following table:

Lancashire Learning and Skills Council (LSC)

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April to July 2001[1]	3,370	1,270
August 2001 to July 2002	6,577	1,857
August 2002 to July 2003	7,815	1,948

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Wigan in each of the last five years. [169277]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area, is set out in the following table:

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April 2001 to July 2001[1]	8,925	2,598
August 2001 to July 2002	15,369	3,586
August 2002 to July 2003	27,258	4,210

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Apprenticeships

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Wigan have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [169364]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years.

However, the table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1996 to March 2001 in the six Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) that amalgamated into Greater Manchester LSC—Bolton and Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and High Peak and Wigan.

Time period	*TEC/LSC*	*Advanced MAs*	*Foundation MAs*
April 1998 to March 1999	Bolton and Bury CCTE	800	600
	Manchester	2,400	700
	Oldham CCTE	400	300
	Rochdale CCTE	500	100
	Stockport and High Peak[1]	800	100
	Wigan CCTE	700	300
April 1999 to March 200	Bolton and Bury CCTE	900	1000
	Manchester	2,800	1,800
	Oldham CCTE	500	500
	Rochdale CCTE	500	600
	Stockport and High Peak[1]	700	700
	Wigan CCTE	700	600
April 2000 to March 2001	Bolton and Bury CCTE	700	1,200
	Manchester	3,200	2,600
	Oldham CCTE	500	700
	Rochdale CCTE	400	700
	Stockport and High Peak[1]	800	1,000
	Wigan CCTE	900	800
April 2001 to July 2002	Greater Manchester LSC	4,800	9,800
March 2001 to July 2002	Greater Manchester LSC	2,900	6,800

[1] TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years

Source:
TEC management information
LSC Individualised Learner Record
Denotes:
TEC also became part of Derbyshire LSC

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Burnley have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [167939]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Lancashire LSC area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1996 to March 2001 in the two TECs that amalgamated into Lancashire LSC—ELTEC and LAWTEC.

Time period[1]	*TEC/LSC*	*Advanced MA*	*Foundation MA*
April 1998 to March 1999	ELTEC	1,000	400
	LAWTEC	1,600	100
April 1999 to March 2000	ELTEC	800	1,100
	LAWTEC	1,900	1,800
April 2000 to March 2001	ELTEC	900	1,300
	LAWTEC	1,800	2,100
April 2001 to July 2002	Lancashire LSC	1,900	4,100
August 2002 to July 2003	Lancashire LSC	1,500	3,300

[1] TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.

Source:
TEC Management Information
LSC Individualised Learner Record

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of the Uxbridge constituency have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [168990]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the west London Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1996 to March 2001 in the three Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) that amalgamated into West London LSC—Focus Central London, north west London and west London.

Time period [1]	TEC/LSC	Advanced MAs	Foundation MAs
April 1998 to March 1999	Focus Central London [2]	1,700	500
	North west London	400	300
	West London [3]	1,300	1,000
April 1999 to March 2000	Focus central London [2]	2,300	1,200
	North west London	400	500
	West London [3]	1,000	1,400
April 2000 to March 2001	Focus central London [2]	2,500	1,900
	North west London	500	500
	West London [3]	1,100	2,100
April 2001 to July 2002	West London LSC	900	1,800
March 2001 to July 2002	West London LSC	600	1,200

[1] TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years. The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.
[2] Parts focus central London TEC became parts of central London and east London LSCs
[3] Part of west London TEC became part of south London LSC
Source:
TEC management information LSC Individualised Learner Record

Autism

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps his Department is taking to develop education facilities for children with *(a)* autism and *(b)* Asperger's syndrome. [168970]

Margaret Hodge: The Government are playing its part in raising awareness of autism and working in partnership with the voluntary sector and others to improve provision. Some children with autism benefit from mainstream provision, others from specialist provision. The SEN legislative framework and accompanying guidance helps schools and LEAs to support children with autism in the right setting. Children with autistic spectrum disorders, including those with Asperger's syndrome, are benefiting along with others from the considerable additional resources for education and the increase in spending on special educational needs.

My Department has issued, jointly with the Department of Health, guidance from the Autism Working Group to help providers plan and make good quality provision for children with autistic spectrum disorders. In February, we published "Removing Barriers to Achievement—the Government's Strategy for Special Educational Needs." (www.teachernet.gov.uk/senstrategy). The strategy sets out our long term vision for the education of children with special educational needs and a programme of action which incorporates a range of measures to support improvements in provision for these children and young people. These include an Inclusion Development Programme to support partnership projects involving education, health and social care, voluntary organisations, higher education institutions, special and mainstream schools, and early years settings to develop and pilot effective practice. Autistic spectrum disorders will be one of the key areas the programme will focus on initially. The strategy sets out a clear future role for special schools and recognises the part they play in making specialist provision for children with severe and complex needs, including many with autism and Asperger's syndrome.

CAFCASS

Mr. Oaten: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance he has given to CAFCASS on its response to the court of appeal ruling, Thorpe, Rix and Arden, 24 October 2002, on the failure of CAFCASS to meet its requirements under European Convention on Human Rights Articles 6 and 8. [167632]

Margaret Hodge: The decision to which the question refers, known as Re T (contact: alienation; permission to appeal) [2002] EWCA Civ 1736 and [2003] 1 FLR 531, did not in fact rule on "the failure of CAFCASS to meet its requirements under the European Convention on Human Rights Articles 6,8" as stated. The Court of Appeal (Lord Justice Thorpe) did, however, indicate that there were issues for the Government and judiciary to consider, including the services CAFCASS can be expected to provide "in order to assist the forensic process to satisfy Convention standards?"

No guidance has been issued from the Department of Constitutional Affairs or the Department for Education and Skills to CAFCASS on this matter.

Child Care (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on the number of children in Wigan who have benefited from the National Childcare Strategy; [169281]

(2) how many child care places have been created in Wigan since 1997. [169363]

Margaret Hodge: From April 1999 to December 2003 Wigan local authority created 5,072 new child care places helping some 9,169 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 2,853 helping some 5,245 children.

Computer Learning Centres

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many Capital Modernisation Fund computer learning centres have been established in Wigan. [169290]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: There are 21 Capital Modernisation funded centres in Wigan.

Education Funding

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much money has been

allocated to schools in Heywood and Middleton for information and communications technology since 2001. [168512]

Mr. Charles Clarke *[holding answer 27 April 2004]*: I refer my hon. Friend to my answer to his question on funding spent on computers for schools in Rochdale in each of the last seven years on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1258W.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what public funding has been spent on adult *(a)* literacy and *(b)* numeracy in Stalybridge and Hyde in each of the last five years. [168761]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated total spend on Skills For Life (the Government's strategy for literacy, language and numeracy needs of all post-16 learners from pre-entry level up to and including level 2) and on Key Skills (essential skills of communication, application of number and information technology), from April 2001 to July 2003, in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area is set out in the table:

£000

	Basic skills	*Key skills*
April to July 2001[1]	8,925	2,598
August 2001 to July 2002	15,369	3,586
August 2002 to July 2003	27,258	4,210

[1] The figures for April to July 2001 include costs incurred from August 2000 on learning aims continuing into April 2001.

From the information available to the LSC it has not been feasible to obtain estimates at constituency level or separate figures by subject without incurring disproportionate cost. Likewise it has not been feasible to obtain comparable figures for periods before April 2001 when the Skills for Life strategy was launched and the LSC was formed, but information shows it was considerably less than at present.

Education Expenditure

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much funding has been allocated for *(a)* marketing, *(b)* consultants, *(c)* advertising, *(d)* administration and *(e)* buildings for (i) the University for Industry, (ii) the learning and skills councils and (iii) the Connexions service, broken down by (A) centrally and (B) locally-allocated funds, in each year since 1997. [167575]

Mr. Charles Clarke: The information is as follows:

(i) *Ufi*

Ufi, launched in 2000, receives an annual grant from my Department which funds their infrastructure and operating costs such as product development. My Department does not specify the exact amount of money which should be allocated by Ufi on individual items. Figures have however, been provided in Table *(a)* following which show the funds expended by Ufi for marketing, consultants, advertising, administration and buildings provided on a central basis in each of the financial years since 1999. Much of the marketing developed centrally is also used locally by Ufi/learndirect centres and hubs. Marketing and advertising at local level does however remain the responsibility of Ufi/learndirect hubs and centres, many of which are private organisations who set their budgets accordingly. No central information is held on this local expenditure. Also, Ufi uses consultants to support the development of the national Ufi/learndirect network and does not allocate consultancy budgets at local level.

Table (a) Ufi

Funding allocated—centrally (£000)

	Financial year					
	1990–2000 17 months1 Actual	*2000–01 12 months Actual*	*2001–02 12 months Actual*	*2002–03 12 months Actual*	*2003–04 12 months Actual*	*2004–05 12 months Budget*
(a) Marketing[2]	1,969	8,224	9,767	10,126	10,156	8,721
(b) Consultants	560	741	1,117	1,637	2,927	389
(c) Advertising[2]	2,990	12,474	12,727	8,652	11,112	9,542
(d) Administration	9,408	12,418	17,309	20,106	21,435	25,007
(e) Buildings[3]	841	1,104	1,120	1,263	1,473	1,631

[1] Ufi Limited's first statutory reporting period was 17 months to 31 March 2000. The figures used are consistent with information filed with Companies House.
[2] The figures provided for 2004–05 have not been finalised and the analysis is based on the 2003–04 ratio.
[3] Accommodation related costs such as rent, rates, facilities management.

(ii) *Learning and Skills Council*

This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council. I have therefore asked Mark Haysom, the Council's Chief Executive, to write to the hon. Gentleman with the information requested and to place a copy of his reply in the Library.

(iii) *Connexions Service*

(A) *Central*

(a) and *(c)* Marketing and Advertising

The following table shows the amounts allocated in each year since the launch of Connexions in April 2001 for centrally-managed marketing and advertising activity in support of the Connexions Service.

(b) Consultants

No funding is allocated specifically for spending on consultants either nationally or regionally. However, consultants are engaged where this is judged to be the most cost-effective method of achieving objectives.

(d) Administration

Table *(b)* following shows the amounts allocated in each year since the launch of Connexions in April 2001

for the salaries and associated administrative costs of staff managing Connexions and a range of associated initiatives. In addition, the table also shows those amounts allocated to regional Government Offices for the salary and associated administration costs of their staff managing Connexions.

(e) Buildings

It is not possible to disaggregate the building costs associated with DfES Head Office staff working on Connexions from the costs of other Departmental staff using the same head office building, nor those costs associated with Government Office staff working on Connexions from those associated with other Government Office staff.

Table (b) Connexions service

Funding allocated—centrally (£000)

	Financial year					
	1999–2000	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
(a) Marketing	—	—	1,000	1,900	850	[1]—
(b) Consultants	—	—	[2]n/a	[2]n/a	[2]n/a	[2]n/a
(c) Advertising	—	—	4	1,678	2,861	tbc
(d) Administration						
Head Office[3]	—	—	5,637	5,784	6,098	tbc
Government Office	—	—	2,500	2,750	2,625	2,500
(e) buildings	—	—	[4]n/a	[4]n/a	[4]n/a	[4]n/a

[1] No allocation.
[2] No element of funding is earmarked specifically for this purpose.
[3] Head Office (HO) administration figures cover the costs of all staff working on Connexions and a range of associated policies and programmes. It is not possible to disaggregate the costs of staff working specifically in support of Connexions.
[4] It is not possible to disaggregate costs of HO/GO staff working on Connexions.

(B) *Local*

Local Connexions Partnerships have the flexibility to use their funding in a way which best meets local needs; no part of the funding that is allocated to them is ring-fenced for specific activities or purposes such as administration, buildings, marketing, advertising or consultants.

Excellence in Cities

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children in Manchester, Gorton have benefited from the Excellence in Cities programme; and what the per pupil spending was in each year since the programme's inception. [167446]

Mr. Miliband: The table shows the number of children in Manchester, Gorton benefiting from EiC, and the annual spend per pupil for the years in question.

	Number of children	*Total EiC expenditure*[1] *(£)*	*Spend per pupil (£)*
1999–2000	2,511	[2]132,000	52.57
2000–01	4,714	246,545	52.30
2001–02	4,437	621,273	140.02
2002–03	4,368	617,778	141.43
2003–04	4,361	1,204,434	276.18

[1] All funding figures supplied by Manchester Excellence in Cities Team.
[2] Estimate.

The large increase in the rate of EiC funding in 2003–04 is due to the extra funding provided through the Behaviour Improvement Programme and the Leadership Incentive Grant.

Field Study

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will estimate the number of *(a)* primary and *(b)* secondary pupils who attended at least one (i) field study and (ii) residential field study course in 2002–03; [170411]

(2) whether he plans to make attendance on a field study course a compulsory part of the National Curriculum. [170413]

Mr. Miliband: The Department does not collect information on the number of students attending field study centres on day or residential visits.

The geography curriculum already requires pupils to be taught to use fieldwork skills, which must be developed during investigations outside the classroom. We have no plans to make attendance on a field study course a compulsory part of the National Curriculum.

Mr. Alan Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment his Department has made of the impact of field study courses on pupil performance. [170412]

Mr. Miliband: This information is not collected by the Department.

Further Education

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students in further education failed to complete their course in each year since 1997. [167874]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Learning and Skills Council (LSC) routinely present the data in terms of retention rates for qualifications—some learners will be enrolled on more than one qualification. The retention rate is calculated as the number of qualifications completed divided by the number started (excluding transfers). The following table shows the retention rates for further education sector colleges and external institutions for each year since 1997–98.

Retention rates in LSC funded further education (%)

Institution type	*1997/98*	*1998/99*	*Year in which qualification was due to be completed 1999/2000*	*2000/01*	*2001/02*
Further Education Colleges	81	80	78	80	83
External Institutions	n/a	76	77	80	82
All institutions	n/a	79	78	80	83

n/a = not available
Source:
Individualised Student Record

Health Declaration Certificates

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the signature requirements for nursery staff for the Ofsted health declaration certificates are; and if he will reimburse staff for the cost of obtaining a signature from a general practitioner for this certificate. [169758]

Margaret Hodge: The health declaration certificate signature requirements for nursery staff are a matter for the Office of Standards in Education (Ofsted) and I have asked HM Chief Inspector for Schools, David Bell, to write to the hon. Gentleman and place a copy of his letter in the Library. There are no plans to reimburse the cost of obtaining a signed general practitioner's declaration to nursery staff that may require one.

Hospital Education

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what guidance his Department has produced on the education of children in hospital; and when this guidance was last updated. [170314]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* In November 2001 the DfES jointly with the Department of Health issued the statutory guidance, "Access to Education for children and young people with medical needs". The guidance sets out national minimum standards of education for children who cannot attend school because of their medical needs, including children in hospital. There are no current plans to update the guidance. However, the Department have been working to ensure that the guidance is implemented.

In June 2003 joint DfES /NHS Estates Guidance was also issued offering advice on the design of education accommodation in hospital settings. The guidance is designed to assist the process of designing excellent education provision in hospital settings whether new of refurbished.

Learning and Skills Council

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the total budget of the Learning and Skills Council has been in each year since its establishment; and what it is for 2004–05. [169975]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The budgets allocated to the Learning and Skills Council in each year since its establishment and for 2004–05, as notified in the relevant Grant Letters to the LSC are as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	5,536.000
2002–03	7,310.890
2003–04	8,095.374
2004–05	8,674.103

The Learning and Skills Council budget however, is subject to in-year changes which have altered the final position as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	to 5,501.507
2002–03	to 7,612.954
2003–04	to 8,420.535
2004–05	to 8,693,613

Looked-After Children

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many looked-after children there have been in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough in each year since 1994; and what proportion of children have been continuously looked after for at least 12 months in (i) Greater London and (ii) each London borough. [168881]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The information requested is shown in the following tables.

Number of children looked after at 31 March, and percentage of those who had been continuously looked after for at least 12 months[1, 2]

	1994		*1995*		*1996*		*1997*	
	Number looked after[3]	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after*[3]	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after*[3]	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after*[3]	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*
England	49,300	69	49,600	67	50,500	67	51,200	69
London	9,220	68	9,140	69	9,200	68	9,000	71
Inner London	4,760	71	4,750	71	4,820	70	4,720	74
Camden	275	75	260	76	260	68	270	69
City of London	0	0	—	0	—	—	—	0
Greenwich	285	75	280	81	295	72	330	73
Hackney	485	75	480	74	490	72	485	71

Number of children looked after at 31 March, and percentage of those who had been continuously looked after for at least 12 months[1, 2]

	1994		1995		1996		1997	
	Number looked after[3]	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after*[3]	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after*[3]	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after*[3]	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*
Hammersmith and Fulham	345	75	325	78	325	66	305	76
Islington	370	72	370	77	380	70	400	72
Kensington and Chelsea	220	58	235	66	235	75	210	78
Lambeth	705	72	735	68	715	74	670	78
Lewisham	495	72	455	71	480	71	475	74
Southwark	550	69	580	71	590	71	570	78
Tower Hamlets	375	78	380	60	360	79	355	48
Wandsworth	385	64	385	62	380	65	375	71
Westminster	265	65	275	67	305	60	275	78
Outer London	4,465	65	4,390	67	4,385	66	4,280	68
Barking and Dagenham	180	63	145	77	135	75	135	76
Barnet	180	59	170	66	180	64	180	69
Bexley	120	59	115	62	130	59	145	44
Brent	410	66	365	78	345	75	330	72
Bromley	220	61	240	66	240	68	250	71
Croydon	350	64	310	62	340	59	330	65
Ealing	360	71	360	76	345	80	370	71
Enfield	195	66	200	67	200	72	200	71
Haringey	545	61	495	61	360	69	315	74
Harrow	120	62	125	65	150	59	150	69
Havering	155	64	160	70	150	64	130	69
Hillingdon	185	55	245	46	310	57	255	60
Hounslow	240	72	230	69	250	64	255	71
Kingston Upon Thames	105	71	100	71	90	72	85	73
Merton	170	70	165	71	185	63	170	70
Newham	385	61	410	67	415	66	395	65
Redbridge	105	68	125	50	125	49	145	49
Richmond upon Thames	75	61	80	61	90	51	75	59
Sutton	115	67	110	62	110	68	125	65
Waltham Forest	245	69	235	72	235	69	235	74

	1998		1999		2000		2001	
	Number looked after3	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after3*	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after3*	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*	*Number looked after3*	*Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months*
England	53,300	69	55,500	70	58,100	70	58,900	73
London	9,090	69	9,590	69	10,400	68	10,910	70
Inner London	4,630	70	4,820	71	5,150	71	5,370	71
Camden	295	59	300	64	330	72	315	77
City of London	0	0	-	0	5	-	-	-
Greenwich	375	72	425	68	465	66	510	64
Hackney	445	70	480	73	490	77	495	74
Hammersmith and Fulham	295	68	340	62	365	63	395	52
Islington	405	72	465	70	545	70	530	79
Kensington and Chelsea	215	71	225	70	215	68	235	63
Lambeth	630	78	655	69	735	71	775	75
Lewisham	490	68	465	77	495	65	545	72
Southwark	600	71	610	75	600	75	655	76
Tower Hamlets	265	63	250	67	280	73	270	68
Wandsworth	350	73	325	78	345	76	365	69
Westminster	270	70	270	68	290	68	265	77
Outer London	4,455	67	4,775	68	5,240	65	5,540	68
Barking and Dagenham	145	71	210	71	235	66	285	59
Barnet	185	68	215	66	265	55	285	60

	1998		1999		2000		2001	
	Number looked after3	Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months	Number looked after3	Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months	Number looked after3	Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months	Number looked after3	Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months
Bexley	180	58	180	69	200	66	205	73
Brent	310	72	325	67	295	76	320	70
Bromley	235	73	250	60	250	70	295	73
Croydon	330	78	365	77	395	71	480	60
Ealing	350	75	370	65	430	73	410	76
Enfield	210	57	255	66	250	76	275	68
Haringey	350	69	355	66	435	59	460	63
Harrow	145	56	155	73	175	43	180	59
Havering	135	77	135	51	165	55	150	77
Hillingdon	305	63	310	56	385	53	420	70
Hounslow	260	66	240	80	255	65	320	65
Kingston Upon Thames	95	81	100	67	105	63	95	67
Merton	180	68	195	71	185	70	180	77
Newham	445	58	480	75	485	68	480	73
Redbridge	155	54	145	61	145	66	140	77
Richmond Upon Thames	80	71	95	52	110	51	110	62
Sutton	115	62	130	63	145	69	155	78
Waltham Forest	250	77	265	68	325	61	295	63

	2002		2003	
	Number looked after3	Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months	Number looked after3	Percentage continuously looked after for at least 12 months
England	59,700	72	60,800	73
London	11,390	70	11,740	72
Inner London	5,420	73	5,350	75
Camden	355	64	345	63
City Of London	5	—	5	—
Greenwich	540	68	555	71
Hackney	460	87	455	90
Hammersmith and Fulham	435	68	390	75
Islington	485	77	480	77
Kensington and Chelsea	240	65	240	65
Lambeth	710	78	645	83
Lewisham	550	77	565	75
Southwark	655	75	680	76
Tower Hamlets	330	60	330	75
Wandsworth	365	68	365	71
Westminster	285	65	305	63
Outer London	5,970	67	6,390	70
Barking and Dagenham	350	68	385	67
Barnet	330	65	380	67
Bexley	225	64	230	69
Brent	360	66	355	74
Bromley	325	74	310	74
Croydon	575	67	680	70
Ealing	380	79	410	76
Enfield	300	61	310	71
Haringey	465	60	520	58
Harrow	165	71	160	91
Havering	160	72	165	57
Hillingdon	420	62	460	60
Hounslow	340	75	320	79
Kingston Upon Thames	80	60	85	60
Merton	200	65	175	72
Newham	550	63	675	66
Redbridge	175	66	150	65
Richmond Upon Thames	125	73	115	81
Sutton	150	79	165	89
Waltham Forest	300	61	340	74

[1] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short term placements

[2] Figures between 1 and 5 inclusive have been suppressed and replaced by a hyphen (-)

[3] National figures have been rounded to the nearest 100. Regional figures have been rounded to the nearest 10. All other figures have been rounded to the nearest 5

Source:

Children Looked After by Local Authorities, Year Ending 31 March 2003

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what proportion of children with parents who have learning disabilities were taken into care in each year since 1996 in *(a)* Greater London and *(b)* each London borough. [168882]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* This information is not collected centrally.

Marriage and Relationship Support

Andrew Selous: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what reasons the funding application to the Marriage and Relationship Support programme by Care for the Family for a National Couple Support Network was turned down. [168162]

Margaret Hodge: The Care for the Family (CFF)—National Couple Support Network application was a partnership bid involving CFF and two other organisations. The objective of this project was to network with registrars and other agencies to access couples preparing for marriage and/or requiring relationship support. Although a strong bid both in presentation and concept, the application was rejected because of an overlap with pilot projects currently being funded by through the Marriage and Relationship Support (MARS) Grant programme.

Nurseries

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new nurseries have been established in Birkenhead since 1997. [167647]

Margaret Hodge: Wirral metropolitan borough council is responsible for determining local need for nursery provision in Birkenhead and holding information on current provision. Under the Neighbourhood Nurseries scheme 348 new nursery places have been created in the Wirral, of which 175 are in Birkenhead.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new nurseries have been established in the London borough of Hillingdon since 1997. [168989]

Margaret Hodge: The London Borough of Hillingdon is responsible for determining local need for nursery provision in Hillingdon and holding information on current provision. Under the Neighbourhood Nurseries scheme 8,737 new nursery places have been created in London, of which 70 are in the Hayes Early Years Centre in the London borough of Hillingdon.

Pathfinder Areas

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills when he expects to announce the results obtained in the 14 to 19 Pathfinder areas. [169453]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Report '14–19 Pathfinders: An Evaluation of the First Year' was published in January. A copy is available on the 14–19 pathfinders website www.dfes.gov.uk/14–19pathfinders and can also be accessed at www.dfes.gov.uk/research/.

The second year's evaluation of the complete pathfinder programme, including Warrington's and the other phase two ones which started last September, is currently being undertaken. The Report is expected to be published in February 2005. In the meantime, we are monitoring all pathfinders1 progress through their termly reports which they are required to submit as a condition of their receiving grant. We publish these periodically on the pathfinders website.

Post-16 Education

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the names of the members of the working party on provision of post-16 education and training; how many times it has met; and what its remit is. [166718]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Working Group on 14–19 Reform was established in spring 2003, to develop proposals for the long-term reform of 14–19 learning. Its members are: Mike Tomlinson CBE (Chair); John Berkeley OBE, Senior Fellow and Director National Apprenticeship Monitoring Unit, SEMTA (Sector Skills Council for science engineering and manufacturing technologies); Simon Culmer, Operations Director, Cisco Systems UK and Ireland; David Eastwood, Vice Chancellor, University of East Anglia; Carmel Flatley (up to June 2003), Director of HR and Training, McDonald's Restaurants Ltd.; Ian Ferguson (from July 2003), Chairman Data Connection Ltd.; Dr. Helen Gilchrist CBE, Principal, Bury College; Edward Gould, Master, Marlborough College; John Guy, Principal, Farnborough 6th Form College; Carolyn Hayman OBE, Chief Executive, the Foyer Federation; Colin Hilton, Executive Director, Liverpool City council; Professor David Melville CBE, Vice Chancellor, University of Kent; David Raffe, Professor of Sociology of Education, University of Edinburgh; Jennifer Slater, Principal, Northallerton College; Ken Spours, University of London Institute of Education; Kathleen Tattersall OBE, former Director General, Assessment and Qualifications Alliance.

The Working Group has met 13 times to date. It was set up in spring 2003, following publication of "14–19: Opportunity and Excellence", the Government's strategy for reform of 14–19 learning, and asked to make proposals for reforms to achieve:

- strengthened structure and content of full-time vocational programmes, and to offer greater coherence in learning programmes for all young people throughout their 14–19 education;
- assessment arrangements for 14 to 19-year-olds that are appropriate to different types of courses and styles of teaching and learning, with the overall amount of assessment manageable for learners and teachers alike; and
- a unified framework of qualifications that stretches the performance of learners, motivates progression, and recognises different levels of achievement.

Pupil Attainment (London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 11-year-old pupils in London, broken down by local education authority, have reached level 4 in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [170496]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

Key Stage 2 test results for 1997–2003 (provisional), analysed by local education authority and Government Office Region

	Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above							
	2003[1]		2002		2001		2000	
	English	Maths	English	Maths	English	Maths	English	Maths
London GOR	75	71	73	72	74	70	72	70
City of London	97	79	93	89	86	75	79	75
Camden	77	73	72	70	76	73	72	70
Hackney	62	58	65	65	62	60	61	60
Hammersmith and Fulham	77	75	74	76	77	74	72	70
Haringey	66	64	65	66	67	64	63	61
Islington	69	68	68	67	64	65	69	66
Kensington and Chelsea	83	78	80	79	80	79	83	80
Lambeth	71	66	67	67	68	66	68	65
Lewisham	73	69	69	66	71	65	68	65
Newham	66	65	63	68	65	64	64	63
Southwark	69	61	66	62	65	61	65	61
Tower Hamlets	73	70	70	67	72	69	67	68
Wandsworth	74	66	73	72	74	67	72	68
Westminster	78	76	77	77	77	76	77	76
Barking and Dagenham	70	68	69	73	72	72	71	70
Barnet	80	78	81	79	81	77	81	78
Bexley	77	69	75	72	78	71	77	72
Brent	75	70	74	75	74	72	74	72
Bromley	83	78	80	77	81	75	80	76
Croydon	77	70	74	71	75	70	73	70
Ealing	76	72	74	74	76	72	72	70
Enfield	76	71	73	74	74	71	72	68
Greenwich	69	66	68	66	64	61	63	62
Harrow	81	76	80	79	78	74	80	76
Havering	80	78	80	78	79	75	78	75
Hillingdon	80	74	78	77	81	75	78	74
Hounslow	75	72	71	71	73	69	72	69
Kingston upon Thames	81	76	80	77	80	76	80	76
Merton	75	66	73	68	74	66	75	69
Redbridge	77	73	78	75	77	72	76	73
Richmond upon Thames	87	82	84	83	85	81	84	81
Sutton	81	76	80	78	80	72	80	74
Waltham Forest	69	68	66	65	68	63	66	65
England (all schools)	75	73	75	73	75	71	75	72

Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above

	1999		1998		1997	
	English	Maths	English	Maths	English	Maths
London GOR	68	67	64	56	60	59
City of London	81	81	89	85	80	80
Camden	69	70	62	58	60	65
Hackney	53	55	52	47	48	49
Hammersmith and Fulham	63	60	61	54	58	61
Haringey	60	61	56	49	55	54
Islington	65	65	58	51	56	57
Kensington and Chelsea	73	74	69	58	67	66
Lambeth	62	63	56	48	52	52
Lewisham	63	63	59	52	55	54
Newham	54	59	51	45	48	47
Southwark	58	57	54	46	50	50
Tower Hamlets	58	62	51	45	47	51
Wandsworth	65	63	64	56	61	59
Westminster	70	71	69	62	63	63
Barking and Dagenham	65	68	60	54	52	54
Barnet	76	76	73	66	70	68
Bexley	72	68	68	59	68	65
Brent	67	70	64	60	61	60
Bromley	77	74	73	66	74	72
Croydon	71	68	66	57	63	61
Ealing	70	70	66	57	62	60
Enfield	67	68	66	56	59	59
Greenwich	58	59	52	48	50	51
Harrow	76	72	74	65	70	69
Havering	78	76	71	65	71	67
Hillingdon	75	70	68	64	66	66
Hounslow	70	67	63	57	61	57
Kingston upon Thames	79	76	73	67	72	68
Merton	69	68	66	53	58	55

Percentage of pupils achieving level 4 or above

	1999		1998		1997	
London GOR	*English*	*Maths*	*English*	*Maths*	*English*	*Maths*
	68	67	64	56	60	59
Redbridge	72	71	70	61	65	59
Richmond upon Thames	83	81	79	74	76	75
Sutton	78	73	68	61	70	66
Waltham Forest	62	60	60	51	57	54
England (all schools)	71	69	65	59	63	62

[1] Provisional.

Pupil Behaviour

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what projects his Department has initiated to improve the behaviour and attendance of pupils in schools; and what the total budget for each of the projects is. [170026]

Mr. Ivan Lewis *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* The present Government spending on behaviour and attendance related activities and projects since 1997 is set out in the table.

Grant/scheme	*Year*	*Amount (£ million)*
Behaviour Grant	1997–98	10.4
	1998–99	11.4
Schools Inclusion:		
Pupil Support Grant (SIPS)	1999–2000	28.5
	2000–01	69.1
	2002–03	84.5
Behaviour Improvement Programme	2002–03	50
	2003–04	85
KS3 Behaviour and Attendance Strand	2003–04	24
Primary Behaviour and Attendance pilot	2003–04	5
Positive Activities for Young People funding	2003–04	24
Funding to EiC areas for Learning Support Units and Learning Mentors	1999–2000	17
	2000–01	69
	2001–02	103
	2002–03	121
	2003–04	134

In December 2002, the Secretary of State launched the Improving Behaviour and Attendance Programme, a coordinated programme with various universal projects including the behaviour and attendance strand of the Key Stage 3 strategy, which provides all secondary schools with audit and training materials and consultancy support (and a primary strategy currently being piloted); new legislation in the Anti-Social Behaviour Bill to reinforce parental responsibility for behaviour and attendance, national truancy sweep campaigns; and the anti-bullying charter. Certain targeted schools, such as those in EiC and high street crime areas, receive more intensive support through the Behaviour Improvement Programme. BIP provides assistance to those most in need, though Learning Mentors; Learning Support Units; multi-agency Behaviour and Education Support Teams; and police in schools.

Pupils (Continence Problems)

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the extent to which continence problems are a factor for exclusion in schools. [171131]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This information is not available. My Department started to collect data on the reasons for exclusions from summer term 2003, but this does not pick up any continence or other medical-related exclusions. Pupils should only be excluded from school in response to serious breaches of the school's behaviour policy and if allowing the pupil to remain in school would seriously harm the education or welfare of the pupil or others in the school.

Return-to-work Skills

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many women in Wigan have visited an information and communications technology training centre in order to learn skills to return to work. [169361]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: In the period October 2003[1]—March 2004, 5,200 people visited a UK online centre in Wigan; 2,912 (56 per cent.) of these people were women. Since Learndirect was launched in 1999, 6,066 people from Wigan have enrolled on a Learndirect course. 3,331 (55 per cent.) of these people were women. Of the total number of women who enrolled on a course, 8 per cent. did so in order to learn skills to return to work.

[1] Please note the complete statistics are not available for UK online prior to September 2003 as the DfES did not collect these data on a centre-by-centre basis.

Rights of Access (Fathers)

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the legal framework underpinning the rights of access for fathers to children following marital breakdown. [168412]

Margaret Hodge *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The Children Act 1989 establishes the legal framework within which most separated parents are able to reach agreement about arrangements for the future of their children without recourse to the courts. However, it is open to any parent to apply for a contact or residence order, regardless of whether the parents are (or have been) married to each other. In all questions that come before the court about the upbringing of a child, including issues of residence and contact, the court is required to treat the welfare of the child concerned as its paramount consideration. In considering contact applications, the court will decide on the facts of each individual case what is in the best interests of the child. There is no automatic "right" of contact for either fathers or mothers. The interests of the child come first.

The Government have no plans to amend the Children Act 1989 in relation to this core principle.

The Government recognise that the facilitation and enforcement of contact orders is a serious issue. I refer the hon. Member to the announcement I made on 19 March regarding the Government's response to the Children Act Sub-Committee Report 'Making Contact Work', and to the on-going work on the facilitation and enforcement of contact by the Department of Constitutional Affairs.

School Computers

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Oldham, West and Royton in each of the last seven years; [170925]

(2) how much money has been allocated to schools in Oldham West and Royton for information and communications technologies since 2001. [170931]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However, Oldham, West and Royton is in Oldham LEA and in the last seven years schools in Oldham have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Oldham LEA (£)
1998–99	570,322
1999–2000	651,147
2000–01	1,132,641
2001–02	1,244,258
2002–03	1,826,832
2003–04	1,828,641
2004–05	2,329,471

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Bootle in each of the last seven years; [171125]

(2) how much money has been allocated to schools in Bootle for information and communications technology since 1997. [171297]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However, Bootle is in Sefton LEA and in the last seven years schools in Sefton have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Sefton LEA (£)
1998–99	587,146
1999–2000	813,934
2000–01	955,931
2001–02	1,350,818
2002–03	1,890,315
2003–04	1,925,992
2004–05	2,492,326

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on computers for schools in Preston in each of the last seven years. [168124]

Mr. Charles Clarke: My Department does not collect information on school spend on computers at constituency level. However, Preston is in Lancashire LEA and in the last seven years schools in Lancashire have benefited from the following funding through the Standards Fund grant for ICT (including match funding from the LEA):

	Allocation to Lancashire LEA (£)
1998–99	2,500,000
1999–2000	1,627,867
2000–01	5,576,036
2001–02	6,483,142
2002–03	8,983,493
2003–04	9,169,124
2004–05	11,892,478

School Results

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what procedures are used to *(a)* collect information on the results of (i) SATs, (ii) GCSEs and (iii) A levels from schools and *(b)* prepare that information for publication. [170312]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* We do not collect test and examination results direct from schools. The National Curriculum test results for Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 are provided to the Department by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's National Assessment Agency (NAA). The NAA collect those results from the External Marking Agencies at the same time as the results are issued to schools. Similarly, GCSE and A level examination results come to the Department from the Awarding Bodies at the same time as the results issue to students and schools.

To enable publication of accurate information in the school and college performance tables, we collate the test and examination results achieved by pupils and ask schools to check (and if necessary amend) the information held centrally by the Department. This relieves schools of the burden of providing all the information direct, while enabling verification that our data and calculations are correct prior to publication.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps have been taken to assess the validity of the methodology for producing school value-added results; and how the results have been verified. [170313]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The methodology used by the Department for producing school VA results has been arrived at after a long process of development. This was initiated by the "National Value added project" commissioned by SCAA (a forerunner of QCA) which reported in 1997. The project, carried out by leading academics at Durham university, showed that it was valid to measure school value added using progress between Key Stage tests and public examination results.

The findings of this project were used to develop a detailed methodology for the Autumn Package, which has been used by schools for self-improvement from 1998 onwards, and then piloted for the Performance Tables with a sample of schools within each key stage. As part of each stage of piloting, there was an extensive

evaluation process including discussing both methodological and practical issues with the pilot schools. This showed that that the methodology was broadly understood and accepted as valid by schools. There followed a full consultation exercise, before rolling out publication of a key stage to all schools.

At an early stage in this process the methodology was discussed at a meeting of the Education subgroup of the Royal Statistical Society.

In producing the value added measures each year, the underlying pupil data on prior and current attainment is provided to schools for checking, to ensure that all results are accurate and have been matched correctly.

Schools (Acts of Worship)

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what action he is taking to ensure that schools meet their obligations in respect of daily acts of worship. [169805]

Mr. Charles Clarke: As part of the basic school curriculum, all maintained schools must provide a daily act of collective worship for all its registered pupils. Schools' compliance with this statutory requirement is considered as part of school inspections. Inspectors are required to report formally on compliance and their overall judgment on governance will take this matter into account.

I am currently considering a range of proposals that are intended to help schools deliver their statutory responsibility on collective worship, and will announce the way forward in due course.

Teachers TV

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what reports he has received on the impact of the Teachers TV pilot; and whether he expects it to go live as planned in August. [170463]

Mr. Miliband *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The Teachers TV pilot was comprehensive, testing 44 programmes during February and March with a sample of circa 1,000 teachers, heads, governors and classroom assistants. We have recently received the research data.

Once we have analysed the data from the research we will announce a decision on whether we will be proceeding to full channel launch. We expect to do this in June.

Truancy

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on the measures the Government are taking to deal with truancy; [169950]

(2) what the most recent figures are for truancy rates. [169951]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: Truancy is measured as the percentage of half school days missed due to unauthorised absence and stands at 0.70 per cent. for 2002/03. This is an improvement on the 2001/02 level of 0.72 per cent. and is equivalent to around 1,300 more pupils back in school each day. The 2002/03 level of school attendance of 93.17 per cent. is the highest ever recorded since national records began in 1993/94. These data indicate that the Department's Behaviour and Attendance Strategy, launched in December 2002, is making a positive impact on truancy. For example, 125 of the secondary schools supported by the targeted Behaviour Improvement Programme reduced truancy by 0.09 percentage points between 2001/02 and 2002/03—almost five times the national average. The programme is being evaluated and the good practice identified will be disseminated more widely. In this school year, we have made behaviour and attendance audit materials and training for staff available to every secondary school and we are piloting materials for primary schools in 25 local education authorities. In addition to providing support and good practice, for schools and their pupils, we are making it clear that we do not tolerate any unjustified absence from school. Since December 2002, national truancy sweeps have stopped over 50,000 pupils out of school, almost 40 per cent. of whom were judged to be truanting and, in about half of cases, the truant was with a parent. We have therefore introduced new measures, such as the Fast Track to Prosecution system and parenting contracts and penalty notices, to promote and reinforce parental responsibility for their child's school attendance.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

HIV/AIDS

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) whether combating the spread of AIDS in Africa will be a UK priority during its period of chairmanship of the G8 in 2005; [170514]

(2) whether combating AIDS in Africa will be a UK priority during its presidency of the EU in 2005. [170599]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: In December 2003 the Government published their "Call for Action on HIV/AIDS". The document was the first stage in stepping up our efforts to tackle the HIV/AIDS epidemic and sets out our clear intentions to provide high-level political leadership, to push for more resources to be made available and to work together more effectively with other donors. The Call for Action also signalled that HIV/AIDS, with a special focus on Africa, would be a centrepiece for our Presidencies of both the G8 and of the EU in 2005. DFID is currently developing ideas about how best to use our G8 Presidency to promote accelerated international action on HIV/AIDS.

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what joint activity within the EU is being undertaken to combat AIDS in Africa. [170598]

Hilary Benn: Joint European Union (EU) actions to combat AIDS in developing countries are carried out within the framework of the European Commission's Programme for Action (PfA), entitled: "Accelerated action on HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB in the context of poverty reduction". The PfA entails a series of actions to increase the impact of existing interventions to combat HIV/AIDS; increase the affordability of key

pharmaceuticals; and encourage investment in research for the development of global public goods to tackle HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis (TB) and malaria.

In order to help increase the affordability of medicines the EC supports the provisions of the Doha declaration on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS). The EC supports a strategy of tiered pricing of essential pharmaceuticals, whereby consumers in developing countries pay only for the basic production costs of patented drugs plus a modest mark-up. During the last two years the tiered pricing concept has become widely accepted within the EU. A major achievement was the adoption in May 2003 by the Council of a Regulation to avoid trade diversion into the EU market of certain key medicines, sold at reduced prices in developing countries.

In terms of increasing investment in research and development of specific global public goods to tackle HIV/AIDS and other diseases affecting the poorest, substantial resources have been allocated from the Research Framework Programmes for HIV/AIDS, malaria and TB research, including the establishment of the new European and Developing Countries Clinical Trials Partnership (EDCTP) initiative. More information on the PfA is available at //europa.eu.int/comm/development/body/eu_africa/docs/maladies_transmissibles_en.pdf.

The EU is committed to increasing the impact of interventions to tackle HIV/AIDS. However, progress has been slow in terms of increased support for health. Notwithstanding the large price reductions obtained since the adoption of the PfA, only few have access to anti-retroviral medicines, and to effective TB and malaria interventions. The proportion of national budgets devoted to health, and donor support needs to be increased.

Globally, the EC has been proactive in addressing the issues covered by the PfA, for example in the context of the G8, at EU/US summits, and at the EU/African Union Forum. The Commission also contributes to and is an active Board Member of the Global Fund to fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (GFATM). HIV/AIDS is among the priority development issues in the 2004–06 multi-annual strategic programme agreed by EU Heads of Government at the December 2003 European Council. The UK will prioritise HIV/AIDS and Africa during its Presidency next year. DFID is co-ordinating it's work closely with initiatives planned under the other five Presidencies during the 2004–06 period.

Malaria

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what recent estimate his Department has made of the number of predicted fatalities from malaria among *(a)* key workers, *(b)* pregnant women and *(c)* children under five years in Sub-Saharan Africa in each year between 2004 and 2014; and if he will make a statement; [170300]

(2) what recent assessment his Department has made of the change in the level of malaria fatalities in Sub-Saharan Africa. [170299]

Hilary Benn: The Department for International Development has not made any estimates of the predicted fatalities among different groups of people from malaria. DFID looks to the World Health Organisation to provide a technical lead on such questions.

Great progress was made in reducing malarial mortality in the 1970s and 1980s, yet many parts of Africa are now seeing an increase in the number of deaths from malaria. Malaria is Africa's leading cause of child mortality and constitutes 10 per cent. of the continent's overall disease burden. Approximately 3000 people die from malaria each day in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA).

A key cause of the recent rise in malaria deaths is an increase in resistance to antimalarial drugs, and the lack of affordable alternatives. In addition the capacity of health systems in Sub-Saharan Africa is often inadequate to respond effectively to malaria.

Nonetheless, malaria remains a disease that is preventable, treatable and curable. This Department remains strongly committed to meeting the Millennium Development Goal to halt and begin reversing the incidence of malaria by 2015, recognising the importance of malaria, not just in terms of disease burden, but also the potential it has to undermine economic growth and human development.

Since 1998 DFID provided in excess of £110 million to support malaria control activities globally and at country level. At the global level this includes support to Roll Back Malaria; a $280 million commitment to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB and Malaria (which will fund distribution of insecticide impregnated bed nets and appropriate ant-malarial medication); support to the Medical Research Council; support to the Malaria Consortium Resource Centre; and initiatives to help find new low-cost malaria treatments.

DFID also supports malaria control activities at country-level through our bilateral county programmes, either through direct support to the health sector or through general budget support. DFID is committed to supporting national governments and their partners to help ensure that effective drugs and commodities including effective anti-malarial drugs are accessible to the poor. Since 1997 DFID has committed £1.5 billion to strengthen health systems to deliver vital drugs and health care treatment.

Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan Pipeline

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many *(a)* domestic and *(b)* international representations his Department has received since 2002 concerning opposition to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline. [170981]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development received the following representations on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline:

609 letters, either direct from a member of the public, or from/via an MP, or from an NGO,
3,529 emails,
8,587 campaign cards,
and 11 Parliamentary Questions.

DFID also holds meetings with interested parties in the UK. Although some of the representations DFID has received relating to the Baku-Tbilisi- Ceyhan pipeline were from international organisations and individuals, the great majority were from within the UK. Unfortunately our systems do not allow us to determine exact numbers of domestic and international representations without incurring disproportionate cost.

Microfinance Projects

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how much money his Department spent on microfinance or microcredit projects *(a)* in total and *(b)* by continent in each year since 1997. [170465]

Hilary Benn: Access to financial services for people living in poverty is a critical condition for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. Since 1990, DFID has been working with many partners in the UK and overseas to broaden access for poor people to financial services, including microcredit.

In addition to specific programmes that have microfinance as the central activity, DFID has supported many programmes within which microcredit has played a small but important role. In addition DFID has provided funds for research into microfinance, and innovation funding for new microfinance products. DFID has not maintained a central register of these various applications of funding for microfinance over the past 15 years.

Since 1997, DFID has spent or committed in excess of £150 million on programmes where microfinance has been a core activity. Of this sum, approximately £70 million has been spent or committed in Africa, with the most of the remainder funding microfinance programmes in South Asia, East Asia, Russia and the Caribbean.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) what discussions his Department has had with *(a)* the United Nations Development Programme and *(b)* other UN departments in advance of the United Nations Year of Microcredit in 2005; and if he will make a statement; [170466]

(2) what discussions he has had with external organisations regarding the promotion of microfinance and microcredit as a priority during *(a)* the Prime Minister's Commission for Africa over the next 12 months and *(b)* the UN Year of Microcredit 2005. [170512]

Hilary Benn: DFID, alongside other donors, has for many years actively supported the development of policies and institutions to extend the outreach of sustainable microcredit and other financial services to the poor. As an active member of the Consultative Group to Assist the Poor (CGAP), an international agency of 29 donors promoting best practice globally in the microfinance industry, DFID has been instrumental in linking CGAP with the organisers of the International Year of Microcredit.

The UN Capital Development Fund, and the UN's Secretariat's Department of Economic and Social Affairs, will jointly co-ordinate the preparation activities of UN system for the International Year of Microcredit. DFID officials have met with the United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) Secretariat staff on three occasions in the last six months. In addition DFID has facilitated discussions between CGAP and UNCDF with the objective of enhancing joint messages on microfinance, and possibly jointly participating in events during the year.

DFID officials have also met with Citigroup, one of the private sector sponsors of the year, and plan to meet with other international and UK organisations currently involved in the provision of microfinance overseas.

DFID is committed to the growth of small enterprise, and issues of trade and growth are being considered as among the UK's priorities for the Presidency of the G8 in 2005. The first meeting of the Commission for Africa is being held on the 4 May, and this meeting will consider themes and priorities for detailed study. Support for promoting private sector development to accelerate the continent's growth is clearly a likely topic, and such support may have linkages with financial sector development objectives.

Following additional debate with other donors, and through CGAP, the UK will further contribute to the preparations for the International Year of Microcredit. Following very recent discussions, Consultative Group on Aid for the Poorest (CGAP) has issued a set of "Key Microfinance Messages for the UN Year of Microcredit" as a contribution to international knowledge messages for dissemination during the International Year. DFID plans to support specific UN Year events in the UK next year, and hope to finalise and announce them in the autumn of this year.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which 20 non-governmental organisations working in *(a)* Africa and *(b)* Asia received the highest amount of grant from his Department for microfinance or microcredit projects in each year since 1997. [170467]

Hilary Benn: DFID provides financial support according to local needs and circumstances. DFID does not maintain figures to provide detailed comparisons between NGOs. A small NGO, with a few thousand borrowers living within a small locality, might benefit as much from a small DFID development grant as a large microfinance NGO, with hundreds of thousands of borrowers, might from a more significant grant.

In Asia, many local NGOs have benefited from grants provided by DFID and other donors to "apex" organisations such as PKSF in Bangladesh, and the Small Industries Development Bank of India. DFID has also provided significant support directly to large NGOs in Bangladesh such as BRAG and Proshika, and to the Aga Khan Foundation in Pakistan.

In Africa, DFID has supported both UK, international, and local microfinance NGOs. International organisations supported include Opportunity International, CARE International, Oxfam, and World Vision. Local NGO microfinance organisations supported include CETZAM in

Zambia, WEDCO in Kenya, and Concern in Malawi. Others include Sinapi Aba in Ghana, K-REP in Kenya, and CRESCE in Mozambique.

DFID is seeking to build financial systems that work for the poor. NGOs are not the only route to achieve successful financial services. Private banks and other commercial institutions can also provide useful financial services on a sustainable basis, and informal mechanisms, such as rotating savings and credit clubs also have an important role to play, particularly in hard to reach locations. Finally, savings and credit co-operatives, in many developing countries, serve more poor clients than microfinance organisations. It is therefore important for DFID to support many players in the financial sector so as to achieve sufficient outreach to poor people, and to ensure financial sustainability.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assessment his Department has undertaken on the effectiveness of *(a)* microfinance and *(b)* microcredit programmes in (i) specific African countries and (ii) other developing world countries; and if he will make a statement. [170542]

Hilary Benn: DFID agrees that microfinance is a powerful weapon against poverty, and that access to financial services enables poor people to both increase their incomes, and to reduce their vulnerability to external shocks. DFID is committed to ensuring that microfinance is used effectively, both to create sustainable institutions, and to impact on the livelihoods of poor people.

DFID has commissioned microfinance impact assessment surveys in many African countries, including Kenya, Malawi, Mozambique and Zambia. Similarly, DFID has supported impact assessment in Bangladesh, India, Russia and other countries in Asia and Europe. DFID has also commissioned substantial international research activities into microfinance.

Several UK academic institutions, such as the Institute of Development Studies in Sussex, are continuing this tradition of detailed research into the impact of microfinance. With the assistance of other international partners, such as the Ford Foundation, microfinance impact research more recently has been examining the wider impact of microfinance, in other words its impact on the local and national economy rather than just the impact on households participating in direct microfinance.

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development how many women and children *(a)* worldwide and *(b)* in Africa his Department estimates have been lifted out of poverty as a result of microfinance or microcredit programmes (i) in total and (ii) in each year since 1995. [170543]

Hilary Benn: DFID has supported microfinance for many years, as a means to allow poor people in developing world to escape poverty. However, microfinance is not a magic solution to the problem of poverty in the developing world. Even where detailed impact assessment has shown that microcredit has assisted a household to, say, increase its income to a level about a national "poverty line", there are invariably many factors at work simultaneously. The status of education and health, whether local markets function well, and the development of skills and competition, will all have a part to play in reducing poverty.

DFID does not seek to estimate figures on poverty reduction by type or cause. In its 2003 "State of the Microcredit Summit Campaign Report", figures collected from some 2,500 microcredit institutions globally indicate that they have reached some 42 million clients among the poorest people in their countries. According to this source, of these poorest clients, 79 per cent. were women.

On regional basis, microfinance is reaching many more people in Asia than in Africa. The challenge of expanding the outreach of financial services for poor people in Africa cannot be left to specialist microfinance institutions alone. Non-bank institutions such as post offices, savings and credit cooperatives, and building societies already reach many more people than microfinance organisations. Commercial banks are also expanding their outreach in many cases in Africa. DFID's objective is to contribute to the widening of the whole financial sector so as to better serve poor people in Africa.

Safe Water Projects

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the *(a)* names and *(b)* funding amounts of projects aimed at improving access to safe clean water funded (i) directly, (ii) on a multi-lateral basis and (iii) on a bi-lateral basis by his Department in the last two years. [167771]

Hilary Benn: DFID's overall aim is to reduce global poverty and promote sustainable development, in particular through achieving the internationally agreed Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). DFID's goal in the water sector is to enable poor people to lead healthier and more productive lives by helping to increase and sustain their access to safe drinking water supply and appropriate sanitation.

The recent Water Action Plan shows that DFID's total bilateral expenditure on water and sanitation was £82 million in 1999–00, £91 million in 2000–01 and £87 million in 2001–02. These levels represent around 6 per cent. of DFID's total bilateral aid budget respectively in each year. DFID channels a significant proportion of its assistance through multilateral organisations such as the World Bank and UN organisations (£1.3 billion in 2001–02). DFID's contribution to multilateral spending on water and sanitation is estimated at around £40 million per annum.

The information on DFID's regional based development assistance to the water sector is currently being updated and will be available later this year. DFID's key focus at the moment is taking the Water Action Plan forward to help achieve the MDG's.

Water and Sanitation

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what analysis he has made of the implications of the World Bank Report, Global Development Finance 2004 for *(a)* public and *(b)* private financing of water and sanitation

infrastructure in developing countries; and if he will ensure that his Department's budget for 2005 to 2008 provides the UK's full share of the increases in public financing indicated as necessary by that report. [170036]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The Department for International Development (DFID) endeavours to consider all of the latest information on the world economy and development finance, including the World Bank's Global Development Finance 2004. This information informs DFID policies and the methods that it uses to provide funding to developing countries, including for the water and sanitation sector. It also informs the budgeting process, and will therefore be considered in relation to DFID's budget for 2005 to 2008.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Buildings (Energy Performance) Directive

Mr. Laurence Robertson: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what progress has been made on implementing the EC directive on the energy performance of buildings; and if he will make a statement. [170971]

Phil Hope: Considerable progress has been made with preparing our proposals for implementation, which will be published this summer as part of the wider consultation on proposed amendments to the energy efficiency provisions in the Building Regulations. As indicated in the 2003 Energy White Paper, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister aims to bring these amendments into effect by the end of 2005 as part of our programme to reduce carbon emissions, and also in order to implement the Directive by the due date of 4 January 2006.

Camping Sites (West Sussex)

Mr. Gray: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what recent discussions she has had on exempting camping sites in West Sussex from revised planning controls. [170754]

Keith Hill: While DEFRA has policy responsibility for campsite certificates, under section 269 of the Public Health Act 1936, the responsibility for planning policy on campsites lies with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

Currently, Part 27 of the "Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995" permits the use of land and the erection of tents by members of certain recreational organisations for the purposes of recreation or instruction, unless the land in question is a building or within the curtilage of a dwelling house.

The hon. Member will appreciate, however, that I am not able to comment on specific cases due to the appellate nature of the First Secretary of State, my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister.

Housing

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Wigan since 1997. [169267]

Keith Hill: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Wigan's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by over 645 per cent. Wigan and Leigh Housing, an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), was set up on 1 April 2002 to manage and maintain council homes on behalf of Wigan council.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what assessment he has made of how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of Oldham, West and Royton since 1997. [170877]

Phil Hope: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. Oldham's allocations in the period 1997 to 2003–04 have risen by over 430 per cent. following the creation of First Choice Homes Oldham, an arms length management organisation which manages and maintains council properties on behalf of Oldham council. These allocations have been supplemented by the announcement of £53.5 million to be made available to the Oldham/Rochdale Housing Market Renewal pathfinder project between 2003–04 and 2005–06.

Mortgage Repossession Orders

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the number of *(a)* home owners, *(b)* private tenants and *(c)* other occupiers who become homeless as a result of mortgage repossession orders in each of the last 10 years. [170634]

Keith Hill: Annual figures for the total number of repossession orders made since 1997 are as follows:

	Number
1997	57,056
1998	66,055
1999	60,194
2000	52,081
2001	45,723
2002	39,748
2003	39,732

About three in five of such orders are usually suspended, and need not result in actual repossession so long as the borrower complies with the repayment arrangements set out in the suspended order. When an order is not suspended the parties can still negotiate a compromise to avoid repossession.

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the support provided by central and local government to homeowners facing mortgage repossession orders in 2003. [170635]

Keith Hill: 229,000 people were assisted through income support for mortgage interest in 2002–03 at a cost of £320 million. Local housing authorities have a duty to ensure that advice and information about homelessness and prevention of homelessness are available free of charge to anyone in their areas.

Mr. Sarwar: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on the number of mortgage repossessions carried out in each of the past 10 years. [170646]

Keith Hill: The following figures cover UK mortgage lending by Council of Mortgage Lenders members. The figures for repossessed properties include those that were voluntarily surrendered.

	Number of mortgages at the end of the period	*Properties repossessed by the lenders during the period*	
		Number	*Percentage*
1993	10,137,000	58,540	0.58
1994	10,410,000	49,210	0.47
1995	10,521,000	49,410	0.47
1996	10,637,000	42,560	0.40
1997	10,738,000	32,770	0.31
1998	10,821,000	33,870	0.31
1999	10,981,000	29,990	0.27
2000	11,169,000	22,860	0.20
2001	11,243,000	18,280	0.16
2002	11,360,000	11,970	0.11
2003	11,458,000	7,630	0.07

Planning

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what guidance his Department issues to ensure that local authorities take account of economic importance in planning decisions. [170380]

Keith Hill: A number of planning policy statements set out the important role which planning policies and decisions can play in promoting sustainable economic growth, for example, draft Planning Policy Statement 1—Creating Sustainable Communities—on which we are currently consulting. The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is currently working on a revision of Planning Policy Statement 4—Planning for Economic Development—on which we expect to consult later in the year.

The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Bill has been amended to require the applicant in respect of a development which is designated as a major infrastructure project, to prepare an economic impact report if the Secretary of State directs. Details on the form and content of such a report will be set out in secondary legislation on which we will consult in due course.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will list the value of the contract with Robson Brown for each component of the Your Say campaign. [169257]

Mr. Raynsford: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 366W. With reference to the main components of the Your Say campaign, Robson Brown spend to date and projected future spend is as follows:

	£
(a) Production and distribution of leaflets	45,305
(b) Posters	[1]20,000
(c) Broadcast media	438,560
(d) Newspaper advertising	54,894
(e) Events	67,303

[1] TBC.

These are not final costs. At this time, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister is still awaiting final estimates for further paid activity, in particular any outdoor, and press activity.

Regional Government

Mr. Clifton-Brown: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the *(a)* cost was in 2003 and *(b)* projected cost is over the next three years of staffing and infrastructure for each of the eight regional assemblies; and how each is funded. [166893]

Mr. Raynsford: The Regional Chambers are voluntary bodies and not agencies or arms of the Government. They have specific responsibilities that are supported through the provision of Government grant, including: scrutiny of the work of the Regional Development Agency; acting as the Regional Planning Body; and the development and articulation of a representative regional voice.

For the financial years 2003–2004 and 2004–2005 the levels of grant allocated to each Chamber are set out in the following table:

		Grant £
Chamber	*2003–04*	*2004–05*
East of England	1,874,000.00	2,112,000.00
East Midlands	1,631,000.00	2,056,000.00
North East	1,408,000.00	1,708,000.00
North West	1,837,000.00	2,536,000.00
South East	2,186,000.00	3,280,000.00
South West	1,613,000.00	2,101,000.00
West Midlands	1,671,000.00	2,071,000.00
Yorkshire and the Humber	1,655,000.00	1,923,000.00
Total	13,875,000.00	17,787,000.00

Grant allocations for future years have not yet been agreed. In regions where elected regional assemblies are set up, the designated responsibilities of the Regional Chamber will pass to the new assembly, and Government grant will cease to be made to the Chamber.

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not hold information on the staffing and infrastructure costs incurred by each Chamber.

Some Chambers also receive funding from other sources within the region, including their constituent local authorities, through their payment of membership subscriptions.

Retained Distribution Centre

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the annual cost of his retained distribution centre was in 2003–04. [169261]

Yvette Cooper: The annual cost of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's distribution centre was some £620,000 in 2003–04. This included £343,000 for fulfilling requests for ODPM publications and £277,000 for distributing other material to specific target audiences for individual projects.

Roadside Advertising

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what advice his Department offers local authorities regarding the sale of roadside and roundabout advertising. [171122]

Keith Hill: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister does not give specific advice to local authorities regarding the sale of roadside and roundabout advertising.

Scottish Power

Mr. George Osborne: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister on what occasions in the last two years Ministers in his Department have had meetings with representatives of Scottish Power. [164252]

Yvette Cooper: Neither my right hon. Friend the Deputy Prime Minister nor any other Minister in the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister has held meetings with representatives of Scottish Power UK Plc, on issues relating to the commercial interests of the company, during the last two years.

Supporting People Overspend

Mr. Drew: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will identify by local area the impact of the savings expected to be made to meet the requirements of the Supporting People overspend. [167891]

Yvette Cooper: There has been no overspend of the Supporting People budget. The Supporting People budget was fixed at the total level of funding spent on housing related support as at the 31 March 2003 and has been capped. Given that the budget was much higher than predicted, the Government launched an Independent Review into the programme to look at value for money issues. The review found that £1.8 billion was too much to pay for the legacy programme with the result that the Government required authorities to make a small level of efficiency savings. The majority of these savings have been re-allocated back into the programme to pay for new supported schemes that came on stream in 2003–04.

Undeveloped Land

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will publish figures for the estimated amount of undeveloped land zoned for industrial use in England. [171110]

Keith Hill: The information requested is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate cost.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

1911 Census

Mr. Horam: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs when the contract was signed *(a)* to digitise and *(b)* to micro film the returns for the 1911 Decennial Census of population for England and Wales; when the census returns for 1911 will be made available to the contractors; and if he will make a statement about the progress which has been made with the 1911 Census project. [169821]

Mr. Leslie: The National Archives is beginning to develop plans so that the public will enjoy the widest possible access to the 1911 census returns for England and Wales when they are released in 2012. At the present time no contract for the digitisation or microfilming of the census returns has been signed.

House Repossessions

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how many house repossessions there have been in each region per quarter since 2002. [171164]

Keith Hill: I have been asked to reply

The number of properties repossessed by lenders was 11,970 in 2002 and 7,630 in 2003. These figures cover UK mortgage lending by Council of Mortgage Lenders members and include properties that were voluntarily surrendered. Figures are not published on a regional or quarterly basis.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Ethiopia (Anuak People)

Ann McKechin: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what action the Government propose to take pursuant to Article 2 of the 2004 Stockholm International Forum Declaration regarding the Anuak people of Ethiopia. [170047]

Mr. Mullin: We are concerned about the violence in Gambella and the loss of life among the Anuak people there. Our ambassador in Addis Ababa raised our concerns with the Ethiopian Prime Minister on 13 April and I plan to raise the matter with Prime Minister Meles in London on 5 May.

EU Constitution

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what rights will be afforded to elected regional assemblies and parliaments under the proposed draft EU Constitution. [170183]

Mr. MacShane: The draft Constitutional Treaty does not intervene in member states' internal constitutional arrangements. However, the draft Constitutional Treaty does introduce a mechanism for national parliaments to monitor the application of subsidiarity, and provides for national parliaments to consult regional parliaments with legislative powers on the application of that mechanism.

Iraq

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will list the countries to which Iraqi oil has been sold, stating the volume in each case; and if he will make a statement. [169156]

Mr. Straw: The Iraqi State Oil Marketing Organisation (SOMO) is the body responsible for the sale of Iraqi oil on the international market. Information on the countries to which Iraqi oil has been sold since April 2003 and the volume in each case has not been published by the SOMO and is not in the public domain.

Information on the countries to which Iraqi oil was sold before April 2003 under the Oil for Food programme is available on the US Department of Energy—Energy Information Administration website at http://www.eia.doe.gov/emeu/ipsr/t417.xls.

Liberia

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment he has made of the success or otherwise of the demobilisation effort in Liberia; and if he will make a statement. [169901]

Mr. Mullin: The UN Mission in Liberia restarted the disarmament and demobilisation of all sides in the Liberian conflict on 15 April 2004. 18,415 fighters had already been disarmed since the conflict ended. Since April a further 4,924 former combatants have entered the disarmament and demobilisation process. There have been no reports of any major security incidents. In the long term, the real test will be how effectively those who have been disarmed and demobilised can be reintegrated and rehabilitated back into Liberian society.

Sudan

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs if he will consult other members of the United Nations Security Council with a view to a resolution under Chapter VII of the Charter to address the situation in Darfur, Sudan. [169440]

Mr. Mullin: On 8 April the Sudanese Government and the Sudan Liberation Movement and Justice and Equality Movement signed a ceasefire agreement.

Our priority now is to encourage the parties to implement the agreement. We do not consider that a Resolution under Chapter VII of the United Nations Charter would be appropriate. However we remain in close contact with other Security Council members about Darfur. The UN Under-Secretary General for Humanitarian Affairs briefed the Security Council about Darfur on 2 April, and we expect that there will be another briefing soon.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what developments have been made to establish a clear international mechanism to monitor *(a)* the attack on civilians and *(b)* the access of agencies providing humanitarian assistance in Darfur, Sudan. [169325]

Mr. Mullin: The 8 April Ceasefire Agreement provides for a Ceasefire Commission, with a role for the international community. We hope that such a monitoring mechanism will help ensure the protection of civilians and also the effective disbursement of humanitarian assistance. We are in close contact with the parties and other members of the international community, including the African Union, to try to help set up such a monitoring mechanism as quickly as possible. The AU chaired a meeting on this matter in Addis Ababa on 19–20 April, and we understand that they are currently in consultation with the parties. We are in almost daily contact with the Government of Sudan and the Darfur groups about the crisis in Darfur.

HEALTH

Drug Services

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate is of the number of clients being managed by each drug service in England; and if he will make a statement. [163899]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department does not collect this information centrally.

The latest national data for December 2003 show that there are 140,900 drug misusers in treatment, a 41 per cent. increase on the 1998–99 baseline. These figures indicate that we are on track to meet the Government's target of doubling the numbers of drug misusers in treatment by 2008.

Food Additives

Phil Sawford: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he has taken to encourage the *(a)* reduction and *(b)* removal of additives from food. [166616]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I am advised by the Food Standards Agency that legislation on food additives is harmonised throughout the European Union. Food additives are only authorised following a rigorous safety assessment by independent scientific experts.

As part of the authorisation process limits are established to restrict the level at which an additive can be added to food. These legal limits are set to ensure that safety levels are not exceeded and that additives are only added at the minimum level necessary to achieve their intended technological function.

When additives are used in food, they must be declared in the list of ingredients, either by name or E number. There are no plans to encourage the removal of additives from food.

Abortion

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many pregnancies have been terminated at four weeks gestation in the last five years for which statistics are available; and if he will make a statement. [169011]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Terminations performed at four weeks gestation in England and Wales.

	Number
1998	264
1999	290
2000	185
2001	169
2002	187

Source:
Statistics Division, Department of Health.

The most common gestation period at which terminations are carried out is eight weeks.

Agency Nurses (Weston Area)

Brian Cotter: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much money was spent by the Weston Area Health NHS Trust on agency nurses in each year since 1997. [167525]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The table shows expenditure by the Weston Area Health National Health Service Trust for non-NHS nursing, midwifery and health visiting staff from 1997–98 to 2002–03.

	Expenditure (£)
1997–98	82,802
1998–99	138,981
1999–2000	164,014
2000–01	506,890
2001–02	1,306,195
2002–03	2,239,507

Source:
Annual financial returns of NHS Trusts1997–87 to 2002–03

Autism

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the percentage of autistic spectrum disorder sufferers of working age who are in full-time employment. [167713]

Maria Eagle: I have been asked to reply.

We have made no estimate of the percentage of people living with autistic spectrum disorder of working age who are in full-time employment.

Blood Transfusion

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the revised approach to the Better Blood Transfusion Strategy will be published; [163478]

(2) what progress has been made in implementing the Better Blood Transfusion Strategy. [163479]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Since the publication of the Health Service Circular 2002/009, "Better Blood Transfusion—Appropriate Use of Blood", in July 2002 we have seen some improvements including greater participation in the serious hazards of transfusion reporting system and an increase in the number of hospital transfusion committees. As indicated by my right hon. Friend, the Secretary of State for Health in his statement to the House on 16 March, the Chief Medical Officer is producing a revised approach to better blood transfusion and work on this is under way.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps he is taking to identify whether there is a causal connection between the donor and recipient of the blood transfusion where a variant vCJD transmission may have occurred. [163613]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A paper by Llewelyn CA. *et al* (2004); Lancet; Vol.363, pp 417–421 reported more details of the possible link between a donor and a recipient of blood where variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD) transmission may have occurred. The paper has been placed in the Library. This paper concluded that human prion diseases, including vCJD, may be transmissible through blood transfusion but that through the study only of natural disease can evidence of an actual iatrogenic (caused by medical examination or treatment) risk be identified. With the current extent of scientific knowledge, it is unlikely it will be possible to prove that there was a definite causal link between donor and recipient.

Breastfeeding

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much his Department spent on promoting breast feeding in 2001–02 and 2002–03. [166465]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department produces a number of educational resources and promotional materials to communicate positive messages about breastfeeding to mothers, families, friends, health professionals and others in the community. The materials are available year round but are actively promoted during the national breastfeeding awareness week in May of every year. The awareness week is also the focus of specific regional promotional events.

In addition, during 2001–02, the Department spent just under £1 million as part of the infant feeding initiative, which provided support for 79 best practice community-based projects on breastfeeding and funded two part time national infant feeding advisers as well as other work related to promoting breastfeeding. The Department continues to have a national infant feeding adviser and the 79 projects have been evaluated. The evaluation will form the basis of best practice guidance to health professionals; to be launched at this year's awareness week from 9 to 15 May.

The total spend on promotion of breastfeeding is shown in the table.

	Amount spent (£)
2001–02	1,115,000
2002–03	263,000

Capio Healthcare (Newcastle)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* value and *(b)* target capacity for the independent treatment centre awarded to Capio Healthcare in Newcastle is; what types of treatment it will offer; and when he expects the treatment centre to be functioning. [168700]

Mr. Hutton: The treatment centre at Newcastle is part of the independent sector treatment centre spine chain. The final contract has not yet been signed. It is expected that the treatment centre will open in April 2005 and will provide approximately 1,600 procedures per year for five years across a range of specialties including hernia repair, skin surgery, breast surgery, varicose vein, and ear, nose and throat and oral surgery; and 2,000 associated outpatient assessments.

Carcinogen Exposure

Vera Baird: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the Committee on Carcinogenicity's conclusions were concerning the relative safety for young girls and adult women of exposure to dioxins through the vagina; [168993]

(2) what basis the Committee on Carcinogenicity concluded that *(a)* exposure to dioxins through the vagina would be a form of background exposure and *(b)* safe exposure to dioxins through the vagina should be measured on the basis of daily levels of absorption. [168951]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The risk assessment of exposure to dioxins in young girls and adult women through the vagina has not been considered by the committee on carcinogenicity in food, consumer products and the environment.

Chlamydia

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether it is possible to introduce chlamydia screening for all women aged 16 to 24 years immediately; and what the possible barriers to providing such screening are; [164862]

(2) if he will estimate the cost of providing chlamydia screening for *(a)* all women aged 16 to 24 years, *(b)* all women over 16 years, *(c)* men aged 16 to 24 years and *(d)* all men; [164864]

(3) if he will estimate the cost in 2003–04 of treating complications in chlamydia, including the cost of treating infertility; and if he will make a statement. [164871]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave him on 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1066W, which set out the reasons why the nationally chlamydia screening programme is being phased in rather than implemented immediately.

Estimates of the cost of providing chlamydia screening for the groups stated are not available.

An estimate of the cost in 2003–04 of treating complications in chlamydia, including the cost of treating infertility is not available.

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1065–66W, on chlamydia screening, what the cost of implementing the programme in each of the primary care trusts has been so far; and what estimate he has made of the cost of the third phase of the programme. [165676]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The chlamydia screening programme incorporates 26 programmes, covering consortiums of 84 primary care trusts (PCTs). The cost of implementing each programme varies, dependant upon the size and the number of tests the programmes plans to undertake. The cost of implementing the programme in each PCT is not available, but the total estimated costs of the first three years of the chlamydia screening programme, from 2000 to 2003, are £13.5 million. The estimated costs for the third phase of the programme are £5.5 million over three years.

Competent Authorities (EU Accession States)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action the European Commission proposes to take in relation to accession states which are not compliant with their EU obligations, with particular reference to requirements on regulation and training in the health professions. [165903]

Mr. Hutton: The Commission's assessment is that training in all the acceding countries will meet minimum requirements after 1 May. It is for the Commission to determine what action to take in relation to any acceding countries which do not meet these requirements.

Diagnostic Testing

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action his Department is taking to encourage the use of diagnostic tests in *(a)* general practitioner surgeries and *(b)* pharmacies to reduce referrals to secondary care; and if he will make a statement. [169710]

Mr. Hutton: The Department is committed to improving access to diagnostic services in primary and community settings to prevent inappropriate hospital visits.

Work is under way to develop the role of practitioners with special interests in primary care to undertake outpatient appointments and to help improve access to diagnostics and treatment. The National Primary and Care Trust Development Programme is providing specific support to strategic health authorities and primary trusts to help expand the range of services provided locally.

The new contractual framework for community pharmacy, once agreed, will recognise the increasing role community pharmacies are playing in providing access to diagnostic testing.

Elective Admissions (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the levels of elective admissions to the NHS in Manchester, Gorton in the past five years. [167389]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected on a constituency basis, but at National Health Service trust level. Data for NHS trusts are shown in the table.

In year elective admission Episodes for Manchester NHS trusts, 1998–99 to 2002–03

NHS Trusts	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	49,071	47,969	46,217	n/a	n/a
Central Manchester and Manchester Children's Hospital NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	55,824	58,663

Notes:
1. N/A—not available.
2. Figures have not been adjusted for shortfalls in data (i.e. the data are ungrossed).
3. A finished admission episode is the first period of in-patient care under one consultant within one healthcare provider. Please note that admissions do not represent the number of in-patients, as a person may have more than one admission within the year.

Source:
Hospital Episode Statistics (HES) Department of Health

Elective Surgery

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he has made available on the maximum amount of time that a patient seeking elective surgery should have to wait *(a)* for an appointment with a consultant and *(b)* for an operation following that consultation before being offered the choice of faster treatment in an alternative hospital. [170657]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The NHS Plan sets out the maximum waiting time targets for consultant led services. As at 1 April 2004, the current maximum waiting time standard for first outpatient appointment following a referral from a general practitioner or general dental practitioner is 17 weeks. The maximum waiting time for inpatient admission following the decision to admit by the consultant is nine months.

Choice of hospital for patients who are expected to wait longer than six months for elective surgery is being rolled out between April and August this year. "Guidance (Choice of Hospital, Guidance for PCTs, NHS Trusts and SHAs on offering patients choice of where they are treated)" issued in July 2003 sets out the responsibilities of national health service organisations in delivering choice of hospital to patients waiting longer than six months.

The guidance advises that patients who are expected to wait more than six months for elective surgery should be contacted at the earliest opportunity and certainly before they have waited five and a half months. Patients may need to be contacted earlier to allow an offer of faster treatment.

Strategic health authority plans for the implementation of choice of hospital for patients waiting longer than six months set out the local arrangements for offering patients faster treatment in an alternative hospital.

Erectile Dysfunction

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the recorded incidence of erectile dysfunction was, broken down by age group, in the last year for which figures are available. [168445]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We do not hold information centrally about diagnosis of erectile dysfunction.

Food Labelling

Ms Atherton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans the Secretary of State has to replace sugar and carbohydrate labelling of food products with the glycaemic index. [167650]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Nutrition labelling rules are agreed at European Union level and there are currently no proposals to introduce requirements to replace sugar and carbohydrate labelling of food products with a declaration of the glycaemic index.

The Food Standards Agency (FSA) recommends that the amount of carbohydrate and sugar present be given as part of the nutrition label of a food product, even when such information is not required by law. Research shows that consumers value this information and would prefer it to be accompanied by an indication as to whether the level is high, medium, or low. The FSA is developing advice on how this might be done.

Health Infrastructure Funding

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the health infrastructure developments in England funded through the European Investment Bank in the last five years. [169806]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* In England, the European Investment Bank has part funded the private finance initiative (PFI) schemes at Dudley Group of Hospitals National Health Service Trust, East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust (Blackburn) and Barking, Havering and Redbridge Hospitals NHS Trust.

Health Ombudsman

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will publish the guidance which his Department has given strategic health authorities for reviewing long-term care assessments in the light of the Ombudsman's report. [169230]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* No official guidance was issued. A suggested process to assist strategic health authorities was provided, copies of which have been placed in the Library. All strategic health authorities now have systems in place to review past continuing care cases.

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) pursuant to the answer of 1 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 703W, on Health Ombudsman's Report (Long-term Care), in which areas of the country the reviews of this issue have *(a)* been fully completed and *(b)* not been fully completed; [169231]

(2) when he expects all the cases of people suspected of wrongly paying for their long-term care following the Health Ombudsman's report on the subject will be *(a)* reviewed and *(b)* resolved; [169232]

(3) how many of the reviews of long-term care have been completed; whether the deadline of the end of March 2004 was met; and when he expects all the reviews to be completed. [169233]

Dr. Ladyman *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* All strategic health authority areas have some investigations outstanding. The Department has set no new time-scales for the completion of currently outstanding cases, or any further cases which may arise, but the national health service is expected to complete them all in a thorough and timely manner.

Health Services (Birkenhead)

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the effect on residents of Birkenhead of the Health Development Agency. [166568]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The work of the Health Development Agency (HDA) is focussed on service delivery that supports the whole of the region's public health development.

The HDA manages the national healthy school standard, which is part of the Government's national strategy to reduce health inequalities for children. The regional management of the programme is delivered in partnership with Sefton local education authority.

The North West HDA organised the largest ever regional public health conference in March 2004 to address the problem of obesity. Over 300 regional public health professionals, including representatives from health services responsible for Birkenhead, learned of the latest obesity data for the region and collaboratively planned a regional obesity action plan. The workshop drew together best practice from across the region and in addition to the HDA guidance on obesity, this will provide the basis for local and regional work to tackle obesity in the coming years.

The North West HDA is currently working with the North West public health observatory and the regional cancer registries to review the main causes of cancer related deaths across the region.

The HDA, in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University and the North West public health observatory, is currently completing a regional report, "Alcohol: A Situational Analysis for the North West".

Healthy Eating

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what discussions his Department has had with the fast food industry regarding super size fast food portions and their effect on health. [160793]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The potential impact of super sized food on diet and health is recognised and we are committed to improving the dietary intakes of the whole population. I, and my officials, have met regularly with industry and their trade associations, as well as individual stakeholders, as part of the development of the food and health action plan. The consultation process on the public health White Paper will provide further opportunities for discussions with all stakeholders.

Hip Operations

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hip operations in *(a)* North Yorkshire and *(b)* Sheffield he calculates could be done for £30,000 on the basis of the costs of such operations since January. [140571]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Figures are not available for the costs of such operations for the period commencing January 2003. However, based on the average cost for the financial year 2001–02, eight primary hip replacement operations could be carried out for £30,000 in national health service trusts in North Yorkshire. Six primary hip operations could be carried out for £30,000 in Sheffield.

Source:

Reference Costs 2002, Department of Health.

Hospitals (Alert Status)

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospitals were on *(a)* red alert and *(b)* amber alert status in the last month; and if he will make a statement. [167408]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not held centrally. The Department does not use the terms amber or red alert. Some acute trusts use the terms to indicate how busy they are and consequently what escalation procedures need to be taken to reduce pressures. Such escalation procedures are locally agreed and activated by the trusts themselves. The Department does not routinely collect information on when escalation procedures are activated.

Immigrant Medical Inspections

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what additional and earmarked funds are made available to support the medical inspection of immigrants at *(a)* Heathrow and *(b)* other ports in England; and which bodies are in receipt of those funds; [156837]

(2) what costs towards the medical inspection of immigrants service are met *(a)* from central Department of Health budgets, *(b)* through budgets held by the Health Protection Agency and *(c)* by primary care trusts from their standard allocations. [156838]

Miss Melanie Johnson: No data are collected centrally on the costs to the national health service of providing medical inspectors to carry out medical examinations of prospective entrants to the United Kingdom.

Some other costs associated with medical inspection were met by the Department of Health, up to and including 2002–03, as shown in the table. From 2003–04, the budget from which these costs are met has passed to the Health Protection Agency.

A Cabinet Office review is considering the issue of imported infections and immigration, including health screening. We will consider when this review is completed whether any changes are needed to funding arrangements in support of medical inspection.

£

Port	Who is reimbursed	Total for 2002–03	What is reimbursed
Heathrow	London borough of Hillingdon	2,005,768	Rent and administration costs, including clerical staff
Gatwick	Crawley borough council	753,597	Rent and administration costs, including clerical staff
Stansted	Uttlesford district council	81,004	Rent and administration costs, including clerical staff
Manchester	Manchester City council	49,528	Rent and administration costs, including clerical staff
Dover	Maidstone Weald PCT (meeting expenses previously met by the local authority)	35,195	Administration costs, including clerical staff
Waterloo	Home Office	5,745	Rent and utilities
Hull and Goole	Hull and Goole Port health authority	4,888	Rent and utilities
Newhaven	Brighton and Hove City primary care trust (meeting expenses previously met by the local authority)	1,340	Rent and utilities

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how port health responsibilities are reflected in the funding formula for primary care trusts; [156840]

(2) whether primary care trusts hosting ports were subject to the same level of top slice as other primary care trusts when the Health Protection Agency was first established. [156849]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Revenue funding is allocated to primary care trusts (PCTs) on the basis of a weighted capitation formula which is used to calculate PCTs' target shares of available resources based on population size, age distribution and additional need and the cost of providing services. The formula does not take into consideration specific responsibilities such as port health. An explanation of resource allocation is in the booklet, "Resource allocation: weighted capitation formula". Copies of this booklet are available in the Library.

The 2003–04 baselines for all PCTs were adjusted to take account of functions to be transferred to the Health Protection Agency, before the allocations were made for that year.

Mr. Randall: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost in 2003–04 to the Hillingdon Primary Care Trust is for *(a)* employing staff at the Health Control Unit at Heathrow and *(b)* other added burdens created by the airport; and what additional central moneys are provided to cover these costs. [156842]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Hillingdon primary care trust estimates the cost of employing the clinical staff at Heathrow airport Health Control Unit at around £750,000 in 2003–04. It is not possible to disaggregate accurately other costs associated with the airport. No additional central moneys are provided to cover these costs.

Immunisation

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has commissioned into *(a)* treatment of brain damage as a whole and *(b)* treatment of brain damage caused by immunisations. [166824]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department funds the national health service research and development programme, which aims to identify NHS needs for research and to commission research to meet those needs. Commissioning is undertaken through national programmes of research such as the health technology assessment (HTA) programme and new and emerging applications of technology (NEAT) programme.

The HTA programme published "General health status measures for people with cognitive impairment: learning disability and acquired brain injury" in April 2001 as a monograph on the HTA website at www.ncchta.org after a project of a similar name completed at the University of York. The project cost just over £35,000. The NEAT programme has six projects with some bearing on treatment for brain damage; two have just ended. The total cost of the six projects is just over £1 million.

There is no ongoing specific research into the treatment of brain damage caused by immunisations.

The Medical Research Council (MRC), the main agency through which the government supports medical and clinical research, spent £835,000 in 2001–02 on brain injury research. The MRC also has a large portfolio of research relevant to the workings of the brain in both its normal and damaged state. The MRC supports a large amount of basic underpinning work on how the brain responds to injury of all types (including stroke) and neural regeneration, which will inform research on rehabilitation after traumatic brain injury.

Inappropriate Prescribing

Dr. Iddon: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the doctors struck off by the General Medical Council's Professional Conduct Committee in each of the last 10 years for inappropriate prescribing of drugs to drug addicts, the year they were struck off, and the town or city in which their surgery or clinic was situated. [169293]

Mr. Hutton: This information is not collected centrally, but can be obtained from the General Medical Council, which is an independent statutory body.

Inventures

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the current status is of Inventures; when staff are to be transferred to a new company; and if he will make a statement. [169126]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The future of Inventures and its employees is still being considered. For the time being, Inventures retains its current status as the trading arm of NHS Estates, an Executive agency of the Department.

Mersey Regional Ambulance Service

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Health, (1) if he will place in the Library the conclusions of Pearl Brown's report into the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service; [165341]

(2) pursuant to his answer of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1606W, on NHS trust documents, what changes of policy took place between the date the Department obtained copies of the lone worker policy of the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service and the date it was asked to place a copy of Ms Pearl Brown's report in the Library; what his policy is on the documents and types of documents his Department is prepared to obtain at the request of honourable Members when those documents are not among those it routinely collects; why the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority has been able to obtain a copy of Pearl Brown's report; and what steps his Department is taking to ensure that recommendations made in Pearl Brown's report are implemented. [165479]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* There has been no change to the Department's policy on obtaining National Health Service documents. The Department would not generally seek to obtain copies of documents or information which it did not already hold. This approach is in line with the Open Government Code of Practice on Access to Government Information and is consistent with the relationship between the Department and NHS organisations following the Shifting the Balance of Power initiative.

The requested documents were provided because they were publicly available. The Pearl Brown report on the management of the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service is a confidential document. At the time of commissioning the report, Pearl Brown agreed that the Cheshire and Merseyside Strategic Health Authority (SHA) would receive a copy.

The report was commissioned solely by the trust, and neither the Department nor the Cheshire and Merseyside SHA had any input to it. The responsibility for implementing the recommendations of the report lies with the Mersey Regional Ambulance Service NHS Trust.

Musculoskeletal Disease

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to include the management of musculoskeletal pain within the terms of the new general practitioner contract; and if he will make a statement. [166205]

Mr. Hutton: Changes to the Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) of the new General Medical Services Contract will be negotiated between the NHS Confederation and the British Medical Association, following recommendations from an independent, United Kingdom wide review group. The independent review group will decide what disease areas to consider for addition to the QOF.

NHS Property Sales

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the cost to the Department was of the decision to terminate the sale of surplus NHS properties to Miller/HBOS, including costs borne by the potential acquirer, for which the Department will have to pay compensation; [168346]

(2) what discussions the Department has had with Miller/HBOS about the compensation for costs incurred on the aborted property transaction. [168347]

Mr. Hutton: Discussions about levels of compensation are continuing. Once concluded any sums agreed will be declared in the Department's accounts.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when Miller/HBOS were advised that the deal to sell them the surplus NHS sites would no longer go ahead. [168348]

Mr. Hutton: Miller/Halifax Bank of Scotland were formally informed by NHS Estates that they would not be proceeding with the proposed real estate partnership on 19 December 2003.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the proceeds of the sale of surplus NHS sites to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be; what they would have been under the aborted sale to Miller/HBOS; when the receipts will be received; when they would have been received from Miller/HBOS, and how many affordable houses *(a)* will be built and *(b)* would have been built on the site under the aborted sale to Miller/HBOS. [168349]

Mr. Hutton: Negotiations concerning the proposed real estate partnership with Miller/Halifax Bank of Scotland had not concluded when the decision was taken not to proceed and it is not possible to say what the final terms would have been, nor the timings of any payments.

Discussions are still underway with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) on the timing of any transfer and the market value of the sites.

The number of affordable homes to be built on those sites which are transferred will be determined by the ODPM and the planning process.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will list the current owners of each of the surplus NHS sites to be sold to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. [168352]

Mr. Hutton: All the properties are owned by the Secretary of State for Health, other than a small number where a leasehold interest is held.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy that the proceeds of the sale of each of the surplus NHS sites should be given to the relevant local primary care trust or other local NHS trusts. [168353]

Mr. Hutton: No. All of the sites to be transferred to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister have been identified as surplus for some time. The cost of managing surplus properties rests with central budgets and these are credited with the benefit of any receipts.

Cash surpluses are added to normal allocations and passed out to the benefit of the entire national health service.

Mr. Hoban: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what proportion of the proceeds of the sale of surplus NHS sites to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister will be *(a)* retained by the Department for use on (i) capital and (ii) revenue projects that it specifies and *(b)* allocated to the local NHS trust in the areas where land sales will take place. [168354]

Mr. Hutton: Proceeds from the sale of surplus land are treated as capital receipts. The net sale receipts, after holding and sale costs have been paid, is added to the overall capital allocations and passed out to the national health service. No funds are earmarked for use either locally or nationally.

NHS Usage Statistics

Laura Moffatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the percentage of people using the NHS in *(a)* 2005 and *(b)* 2010 who will be above retirement age. [165878]

Mr. Hutton: The Government Actuary's Department forecasts that in 2005 16 per cent. of the population will be aged 65 or over, and in 2010, 17 per cent.

Older people will typically make greater use of the national health service (NHS). In 2000–01 people aged 65 or over accounted for approximately 41 per cent. of total expenditure, despite accounting for only 16 per cent. of the population (Office for National Statistics). Assuming the same pattern of use, a similar proportion of NHS expenditure will be accounted for by patients aged over 65 in 2005, with perhaps a small rise by 2010. Derek Wanless, in his interim report on the long-term demographic and medical trends that will affect the health service, "Securing our future health: taking a long-term view", November 2001, commented that "the impact of ageing on future expenditure is likely to be comparatively small compared to other cost drivers".

Nursing Provision

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many *(a)* district nurses, *(b)* health visitors and *(c)* midwives there were in each Greater London NHS Trust in each year since 1997, broken down by (i) headcount and (ii) whole-time equivalent. [168941]

Mr. Hutton: The information requested has been placed in the Library.

Obesity

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of excess deaths linked to obesity in each of the last five years. [169048]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not available.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many different anti-obesity drugs are prescribed in the NHS; [169049]

(2) how many prescriptions for obesity drugs have been issued in each of the last five years. [169057]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2003, six different chemical entities of drugs used in the treatment of obesity were dispensed in the community in England. However, Orlistat and Sibutramine (the two National Institute for Clinical Excellence-appraised drugs) accounted for virtually all the items (99.96 per cent. of total items).

The table shows the number of prescriptions for obesity drugs issued in the last five years.

Thousand

	Number of prescription items (obesity drugs)
1999	148.1
2000	162.3
2001	470.3
2002	738.9
2003	690.0

Source:
Prescription Cost Analysis (PCA) data from the Prescription Pricing Authority.

Heart Disease and Cancer

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Stalybridge and Hyde in each of the last five years. [168770]

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the revenue expenditure figures for NHS *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Warrington South was in each of the last five years. [168687]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally.

Funding is allocated to primary care trusts (PCTs) on the basis of the relative needs of their populations. It is for PCTs, in partnership with strategic health authorities and other local stakeholders, to determine how best to use their funds to meet national and local priorities for improving health, tackling health inequalities and modernising services.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Heywood and Middleton in each of the last five years. [168489]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the response I gave to my hon. Friends the Members for Stalybridge and Hyde (James Purnell) and for Warrington South (Helen Southworth).

Radon Gas

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will estimate the number of cases of lung cancer in England caused by radon gas. [169712]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As with all types of cancer, it is not possible to attribute individual cases of lung cancer to a particular cause. However, from the known radiation risks, the National Radiological Protection Board has calculated that exposure to radon gas causes approximately 2,500 lung cancer deaths per year in the United Kingdom.

Residence Criteria

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what the NHS residence criteria are for entitlement to treatment; [169915]

(2) on what occasions NHS staff are required to ask patients to state their country of residence. [169917]

Mr. Hutton: Anyone who is ordinarily resident in the United Kingdom is entitled to receive free National Health Service treatment, subject to certain statutory charges, such as prescription charges.

General practices check details of an individual's ordinary residence or previous registration before deciding whether to accept the person as a registered patient, either on a permanent or temporary basis. This is set out in Regulations and Guidance. For hospital services, Regulations require the NHS trust providing treatment to establish whether a person is ordinarily resident or if not, whether they are exempt from charges under a number of categories of exemption or liable to be charged. Guidance issued in April 2004 makes clear that in order to establish ordinary residence all patients should be asked the same residence-based baseline questions whenever they begin a new course of hospital treatment.

Shared Service Centres

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the Answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report,* column 268W, on shared service centres, what assessment he has made of whether these services can be rolled out more quickly. [169654]

Mr. Hutton: An assessment of whether the rollout of shared service centres can be made more quickly is being undertaken at present. Whether this is practicable will depend on the anticipated level of demand from the national health service, the potential for new centres to be opened up and the timing of when existing accounting systems become obsolete. It is anticipated a decision will be made before a preferred bidder is appointed.

Smoking

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what progress is being made in encouraging smoking cessation; and how much was allocated to each health trust for such services in the last year for which figures are available. [167858]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We are making good progress in helping smokers to stop smoking. Latest figures show that, between April and September 2003, around 129,800 people set a quit date through the national health service stop smoking services, and over 68,600, or 53 per cent., had remained quit at four week follow up.

Health service circular 2002–012, issued on 18 December 2002, set out the financial allocation to NHS stop smoking services in primary care trusts for 2003–04, 2004–05 and 2005–06. A copy of the circular has been placed in the Library.

Solvent Abuse

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has commissioned into the extent of solvent abuse by children. [169029]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on volatile substance abuse (VSA) among young people aged 11–15 years is collected in an annual national survey of secondary school children commissioned by the Department. Latest information is given in the statistical release, "Drug use, smoking and drinking among young people in England in 2003: headline figures", which was published on 31 March 2004.

The Department funds the Department of Public Health Sciences at St. George's Hospital in south London to collect statistics on deaths associated with the abuse of gas fuels, aerosols, glues and other solvent based products. It produces an annual statistical summary of data. The sixteenth annual report highlighting mortality statistics for 2001 was published on 21 July 2003.

The Department also funds the National Children's Bureau, which is working with 'Childline' to analyse calls to the helpline on VSA. This work will provide qualitative data on issues relating to young people's misuse of volatile substances, which will also inform policy and practice on VSA.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of deaths of children caused by solvent abuse in each of the last 10 years. [169058]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Statistics, collected by St. George's Hospital Medical School on behalf of the Department, on the number of deaths of children by volatile substance abuse for the last available 10 years, are shown in the table.

Number of deaths of children under 18 years by volatile substance abuse

	Deaths
1992	39
1993	30
1994	21
1995	32
1996	35
1997	29
1998	16
1999	25
2000	17
2001	25

Source:

St. George's Hospital Medical School: 16th Annual Report on Trends in Death Associated with Abuse of Volatile Substance 1971–2001—Key findings for 2001

St. George's Hospital (Morpeth)

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much land at St. George's Hospital, Morpeth, is to be transferred to English Partnerships for housing development; and what the *(a)* housing capacity and *(b)* value of the transferred land is. [168698]

Mr. Hutton: Discussions are currently underway to finalise the value of the properties to be transferred to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister. The area of land in St. George's Hospital which is included in the transaction is approximately 95 hectares. The housing capacity will be for determination by the new owners.

Surgical Site Infections

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many surgical site infections there were in the NHS in *(a)* England, *(b)* each region and *(c)* each NHS trust in each year since 1997. [167431]

Mr. Hutton: These data are not available but aggregated data from the Health Protection Agency's voluntary surveillance system have been published in "Surveillance of surgical site infection in English Hospitals 1997–2002". Copies have been placed in the Library. This is also available at: http://www.hpa.org.uk/infections/topics_az/hai/SSIreport.pdf.

Surplus Property Sales

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the sale of surplus NHS properties and Inventures to the Miller/Bank of Scotland Partnership. [169122]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* Following a decision by the Department not to pursue a real estate partnership with Miller /Halifax Bank of Scotland, an agreement in principle was given to transfer the surplus land to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM). It was considered that a transfer of the property portfolio to ODPM would enable a greater emphasis to be given to addressing Government policy priorities for sustainable communities.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the *(a)* transfer value and *(b)* size by hectare is of each of the surplus NHS properties to be transferred to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister outlined in his news release of 7 April. [169123]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and the Department have agreed in principle to the transfer of the portfolio but the details of the transaction and the price to be paid have still to be settled. The land is currently being independently valued.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what valuations were used in determining the value of surplus NHS sites to be transferred to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and from what date. [169124]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* The terms of the transfer will be informed by the market value of the sites involved. An independent valuation is underway to determine an overall value for the portfolio of sites. Sites will be physically transferred as and when they become vacant.

Thimerosal

Dr. Tonge: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what vaccines used in the UK contain Thimerosal; [162711]

(2) when the use of Thimerosal as a preservative in vaccines was discontinued in the UK. [162712]

Mr. Burns: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) when the Government gave a commitment to phase out the use of thimerosal in whooping cough vaccine; [162205]

(2) for what reason whooping cough vaccine containing thimerosal is still being used in the United Kingdom; [162206]

(3) whether his Department has consulted *(a)* the US, *(b)* Japan, *(c)* Sweden, *(d)* Australia and *(e)* Spain as to the reasons why they have ceased using whooping cough vaccines containing thimerosal; [162207]

(4) when the Government plan to phase out thimerosal in whooping cough vaccine. [162208]

Miss Melanie Johnson *[holding answer 18 March 2004]:* The Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) has written to manufacturers of vaccines used in the United Kingdom to alert them to the need to phase out the use of thiomersal in vaccines where possible. This follows advice from the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products (EMEA), endorsed by the Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM), to phase out use of thiomersal, wherever possible, as a precautionary recommendation aimed at limiting avoidable exposure to mercury compounds.

Manufacturers are actively developing research programmes to eliminate, substitute or reduce thiomersal in vaccines, and to develop new thiomersal-free vaccines. This may take time, because manufacturers need to ensure that thiomersal-free vaccines are safe and effective.

The UK currently uses a wholecell containing whooping cough vaccine (which contains thiomersal) because this vaccine offers the best protection against the disease. Whooping cough is a serious disease in young babies that can lead to death. Also, there is strong evidence that thiomersal in vaccines does not cause neurological damage to children and the CSM continues to advise that the balance of benefits and risks of thiomersal-containing vaccines is overwhelmingly positive. The UK will move to thiomersal-free vaccines when an equally effective alternative becomes available.

Other countries have moved to acellular whooping cough vaccines because they cause lower levels of adverse reactions, such as a sore arm, in older infants than wholecell vaccines. In the UK, this is not an issue, as babies receive the vaccine when they are young.

Miss Melanie Johnson: Thiomersal (also known as thimerosal) is present in the following childhood vaccines: the combined diptheria-tetanus-wholecell pertussis and Haemophilus Influenzae vaccine for

primary immunisation and the combined diptheria/tetanus vaccine used for boosting teenagers. Details of the vaccines used in the childhood immunisation programme can be found in the national health service Factsheet, Thiomersal and vaccines.

Other vaccines that contain thiomersal are: Anthrax vaccine, some hepatitis A vaccines, some hepatitis B vaccines, some influenza vaccines and the diptheria-tetanus-wholecell pertussis vaccine.

The use of thiomersal in vaccines has not been discontinued in the United Kingdom. The European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products (EMEA) recommended in 1999 that vaccine manufacturers phase out use of thiomersal wherever possible. This was a purely precautionary recommendation aimed at limiting avoidable exposure to mercury compounds. EMEA acknowledged that there was no evidence of harm caused by thiomersal in vaccines. The Committee on Safety of Medicines (CSM) endorsed this recommendation in 1999 and the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation also supports the EMEA statement. There is strong evidence that thiomersal in vaccines does not cause neurological damage to children and the CSM continues to advise that the balance of benefits and risks of thiomersal-containing vaccines is overwhelmingly positive.

In line with the EMEA recommendation, manufacturers are actively developing research programmes to eliminate, substitute or reduce thiomersal in vaccines. This may take time because manufacturers are required to ensure that the replacement or elimination of thiomersal does not affect the safety or efficacy of the final vaccine.

Treatment Facilities (Manchester)

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in Manchester, Gorton. [167390]

Miss Melanie Johnson: A rapid access chest clinic is located at Manchester Royal Infirmary, part of the Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals National Health Service Trust.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether there is a diagnostic and treatment centre in Manchester, Gorton. [167391]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There is no treatment centre in Gorton. A treatment centre is located at Withington Hospital, part of South Manchester University Hospitals National Health Service Trust.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Manchester Gorton are receiving drug treatment. [167465]

Miss Melanie Johnson: In 2000–01, there were 3,652 people receiving drug treatment in Manchester. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 are currently being finalised.

Tuberculosis

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 12 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1700W, on tuberculosis, when the review of imported infections and immigration will be published. [169138]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I refer the hon. Member to the reply I gave to my hon. Friend the Member for Birmingham, Selly Oak (Lynne Jones) on 8 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1334W.

Waiting Lists

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Heywood and Middleton with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in each of the last five years. [168490]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. The following table shows how many and the percentage of suspected breast cancer patients, seen within two weeks of urgent referral by a general practitioner, at the Pennine Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust and its predecessor organisations for each quarter since the first quarter of 1999–2000. Earlier figures are not available.

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

Quarter	*NHS Trust*	*Percentage*	*Number*
1999–2000			
1	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	8
1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	39.6	19
1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	81.8	45
1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	85.0	34
2	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	n/a
2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	64.1	25
2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	90.6	29
2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	97.1	66
3	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	n/a
3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	70.6	24
3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	75.0	30
3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	58
4	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	22
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	88.69	32
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	94.5	52
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	64
2000–01			
1	Oldham NHS Trust	88.9	32
1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	84.1	37
1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	98.7	74
1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	98.7	74
2	Oldham NHS Trust	97.5	77
2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	72
2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	89.9	71
2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	77
3	Oldham NHS Trust	93.8	76
3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	77
3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	93.9	77
3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	93
4	Oldham NHS Trust	97.1	68
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	71
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	98.6	70
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	88
2001–02			
1	Oldham NHS Trust	98.7	76
1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	85
1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	98.6	68

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected breast cancer following urgent GP referral

Quarter	NHS Trust	Percentage	Number
1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	105
2	Oldham NHS Trust	98.7	75
2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	95.9	71
2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	91.3	94
2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	93
3	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	106
3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	93
3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	79
3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	108
4	Oldham NHS Trust	100.0	84
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	54
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	66
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	107
2002–03			
1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.4	357
2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.7	357
3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.0	383
4	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	97.7	334
2003–04			
1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.0	389
2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.1	366
3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.6	449

Note:
Where patient numbers are below six the Department of Health does not publish figures in order to avoid patients being identifiable due to low numbers. Where this would apply, the table above reads n/a.

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of women in Warrington South with suspected breast cancer saw a specialist within two weeks in the last year. [168688]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. The table shows the number and percentage of suspected cancer patients, seen within two weeks of urgent referral by a general practitioner, at the North Cheshire Hospital national health service trust and its predecessor organisations for each quarter since 1999–2000. Earlier figures are not available.

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral

Quarter	NHS trust	Percentage	Number
1999–2000			
1	Halton general hospital	89.3	25
1	Warrington hospital	96.3	105
2	Halton general hospital	80.0	8
2	Warrington hospital	91.2	103
3	Halton general hospital	97.4	37
3	Warrington hospital	86.2	81
4	Halton general hospital	100.0	30
4	Warrington hospital	96.9	94
2001–01			
1	Halton general hospital	100.0	30
1	Warrington hospital	92.8	77
2	Halton general hospital	100.0	26
2	Warrington hospital	93.3	98
3	Halton general hospital	100.0	25
3	Warrington hospital	94.7	126
4	Halton general hospital	100.0	37
4	Warrington hospital	100.0	113
2001–02			
1	North Cheshire hospital	95.2	159
2	North Cheshire hospital	89.0	195
3	North Cheshire hospital	95.8	137
4	North Cheshire hospital	92.6	162
2002–03			
1	North Cheshire hospital	74.7	145
2	North Cheshire hospital	90.0	243
3	North Cheshire hospital	100.0	181
4	North Cheshire hospital	100.0	155
2003–04			
1	North Cheshire hospital	100.0	184
2	North Cheshire hospital	100.0	141
3	North Cheshire hospital	100.0	169

Source:
Department of Health form QMCW.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for the residents of Manchester, Gorton. [167385]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

Month-end		Total number of patients waiting for admission	Patients waiting for admission by months waiting: Less than 3 months	3–5 months	6–8 months	9–11 months	12–14 months	15–17 months	18 + months
March 1997	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	12,313	5,778	2,622	1,920	1,223	616	133	21
March 1997	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	2,801	952	728	528	510	79	4	—
March 1998	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	12,531	5,813	2,454	1,676	1,217	885	486	—
March 1998	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	3,260	985	908	617	666	74	10	—
March 1999	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	11,266	5,654	2,191	1,614	975	622	210	—
March 1999	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	2,742	849	753	542	472	118	8	—
March 2000	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	11,040	5,026	2,489	1,703	1,039	533	250	—
March 2000	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	2,639	801	687	523	370	218	40	—

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

Month-end		*Total number of patients waiting for admission*	*Patients waiting for admission by months waiting*						
			Less than 3 months	*3–5 months*	*6–8 months*	*9–11 months*	*12–14 months*	*15–17 months*	*18 + months*
March 2001	Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	10,742	5,056	2,432	1,451	826	606	371	—
March 2001	Manchester Children's Hospitals NHS Trust	2,634	831	603	552	373	231	44	—
March 2002	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	13,213	6,028	3,333	2,136	1,216	500	—	—
March 2003	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	10,822	5,605	2,832	1,701	684	0	0	0
February 2004	Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	9,176	6,487	2,316	373	—	—	—	—

Source:
DH form KH07 and Monthly Monitoring

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Manchester, Gorton awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [167388]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not collected centrally.

Waiting Lists/Times

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make it his policy to record and publish waiting times for both diagnostics and treatment for all types of conditions. [169714]

Mr. Hutton: Data are not collected specifically on waiting times for diagnostic tests. However, depending on the setting in which the procedure takes place, patients waiting for diagnostic procedures may be included within the central waiting list returns.

This is because waiting time data are collected on the consultant's main specialty, not by procedure. Diagnostic procedures may be included as part of the official returns as either an in-patient/day case, or as an out-patient—if it was the patient's first appointment with a consultant.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Loan Repayments

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make the provision of an analysis of a customer's ability to repay a loan an obligation on the lender; and if she will make a statement. [170640]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Our proposed reforms to the current law on extortionate credit bargains (which we will introduce when parliamentary time permits) will include a new test relating to unfair credit transactions. This new test will enable agreements to be more effectively challenged, and creditors who do not want to expose themselves to such challenges must ensure that the loans they make are not unfair. Responsible lending is a key part of this, and while the Government do not propose a 'one size fits all' regime for all credit providers, lenders will be expected to undertake enquiries that are proportionate in the circumstances.

Bankrupt Businesses

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what research her Department has undertaken into the number of UK businesses that have gone bankrupt as a result of being unable to meet their pensions obligations. [168891]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department does not hold any statistical data which would enable it to undertake any research into whether any UK businesses have entered a formal insolvency procedure as a result of being unable to meet their pension obligations.

Banned Products

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what consumer products have been banned from sale in the United Kingdom since 1994, stating in each case *(a)* the product, *(b)* the manufacturer or retailer and *(c)* the reason for the action taken. [168976]

Mr. Sutcliffe: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member for Orkney and Shetland (Mr. Carmichael) on 11 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1685W.

Businesses (Sittingbourne and Sheppey)

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Sittingbourne and Sheppey have taken 26 weeks' maternity leave since 1997. [170294]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). Figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis, but nationally around 300,000 women receive SMP each year.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some

who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effects on residents of Sittingbourne and Sheppey of new rights for night-shift workers. [170296]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working night and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Sittingbourne and Sheppey.

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Sittingbourne and Sheppey qualify for paid leave entitlements. [170297]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Sittingbourne and Sheppey qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Sittingbourne and Sheppey who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Sittingbourne and Sheppey have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [170298]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Sittingbourne and Sheppey are not available, however it has been estimated that around 400,000 workers resident in the South East stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Christmas Day Working

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what action she has taken to ensure that employers allow workers to celebrate Christmas Day with their families. [170283]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Christmas Day is one of eight bank holidays in the UK each year. Employers are not obliged to give their workers time off on Christmas Day in addition to their paid annual leave, but many do so. Those workers not receiving bank holidays in addition to paid annual leave, can use some of their annual leave entitlement to cover bank holiday periods. The Working Time Regulations provide all workers with four weeks paid annual leave pro rata.

However, the Government always tries to encourage employers to give their workers time off to celebrate Christmas Day and is especially keen for major retailers not to open on this day. The Government supports the Christmas Day (Trading) Bill, which would prevent major retailers opening on this day.

Construction Industry

Mr. Bellingham: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will request the Insolvency Service and Small Business Service to carry out a study into the operation of insolvency law and practice in the construction industry to determine whether measures should be taken to protect small businesses from insolvencies among their creditors and customers. [168916]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There are no plans for the DTI to carry out a study of this kind but the Specialist Engineering Contractors' Group has consulted the Department about the possible form of a study it is proposing to carry out in this area. We are yet to hear whether the study is under way but will assist as appropriate.

Consumer Credit Applications

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what new measures will be introduced by the Office of Fair Trading for improving the fitness checking of consumer credit licence applicants through access to criminal records. [170520]

Mr. Sutcliffe: New procedures for checking criminal records are due to be introduced by the OFT this year. The OFT is currently finalising arrangements for the introduction of these new measures which will be announced later this year.

Consumer Safety

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many people have *(a)* died and *(b)* been injured due to faulty or dangerous consumer goods in each year since 1994, stating the (i) product and (ii) manufacturer or retailer in each instance and (iii) the action taken by her Department. [169167]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 28 April 2004]:* Home accident data do not distinguish unsafe products as such, nor the manufacturer or retailer of the products involved. However, research commissioned by the Department on a sample of 11,998 accidents in four

separate years during the 1990s which included follow-up interviews with accident victims found that only 1.6 per cent. of fatal home accidents, 0.4 per cent. of serious injuries and 0.6 per cent. of minor injuries could be attributed solely to a fault with a product, including older products that had not been maintained or serviced properly or which had been used in a damaged condition. This represents approximately 60–70 home accidental deaths and 15,000.

Employment Rights Advice Booklets

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry pursuant to the answer of 25 March 2004, *Official Report*, columns 962–63W, to the hon. Member for Birmingham, Selly Oak (Lynne Jones), on employment rights booklets, at which of the three meetings of the practitioner group in June, July and October 2002 the members of the group were asked for their views on reducing the number of departmental employment rights advice booklets and leaflets in hard copy. [167281]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The practitioner group met on a number of other occasions. They discussed DTI reducing the number of publications available in hard copy on 19 June 2003.

Estate Agents

Claire Ward: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to regulate estate agents. [170369]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department is currently considering the Office of Fair Trading report on estate agents, which includes recommendations about the future regulation of the industry. We aim to publish a response by 18 June 2004.

EU Enlargement

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the likely effectiveness of the new competition system in Europe after enlargement. [168971]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The new EC Regulation on Competition was drafted with the specific objective of ensuring effective application of competition law across the EU after enlargement. The Commission is committed to reporting on the effectiveness of the new regulation five years after it comes into effect. Both the Commission and the European Competition Network will be monitoring the effectiveness of the new competition system on an on-going basis.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how consistency in compliance with new competition rules in Europe will be ensured across the EU after enlargement. [168972]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The National Competition Authorities of all member states are represented on the new European Competition Network which is working to ensure that the new EC Regulation on Competition is applied consistently. The Commission always has the option of taking up any case in which it feels that the ECN are not operating appropriately.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the new competition system in Europe is doing to protect small businesses in local communities from being forced to close as a result of competition from larger businesses. [168973]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There are prohibitions on anti-competitive agreements and the abuse of dominance in competition law at both the EC and UK level. Through these prohibitions, competition law provides remedies to protect all businesses, including small businesses in local communities, from anti-competitive trading practices.

EU Social Chapter

Mr. Wyatt: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effects of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Sittingbourne and Sheppey. [170295]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Sittingbourne and Sheppey have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to Parental Leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

In addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Export Licences

Sir Menzies Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list the UK arms export licences to Indonesia approved in 2004. [169153]

Nigel Griffiths: Since 1997 the Government has published an Annual Report on Strategic Export Controls containing details of all UK export licences by destination.

Details of export licensing decisions taken in 2004 will be recorded in the 2004 Report.

Family Friendly Employment Laws

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the impact of family friendly employment laws in the past 12 months. [170286]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The DTI has collected evidence from a number of sources to help in assessing the impact of the new employment laws which came into force in April 2003.

Between December 2002 and April 2003 fieldwork was carried out for two DTI Work-Life Balance studies. Data was collected from employers and employees to provide a baseline for future evaluation of the impact of the new flexible working law. Details of the results can be found at www.dti.gov.uk/er/emar.

In the first six months after implementation, CIPD and Lovells conducted research into flexible working which indicated that over a quarter (28 per cent) of employers had seen an increase in the total number of requests since April 2003. Seven in ten of the employers surveyed said they were willing to consider flexible working requests from all staff—not just those with children under six. 68 per cent. of employers believed that the opportunity to work flexibly had a positive effect on employee attitudes and morale. Full results are at www.cipd.co.uk.

The Department commissioned questions on flexible working over a number of months in the Office of National Statistics Omnibus survey. The data was collected between September 2003 and February 2004. The results demonstrated that in the last year, around 900,000 parents have asked for a change in their working hours, equating to a quarter of all parents with children under six.

Eight out ten often (77 per cent.) of those requests were granted in full, with a further one in ten (nine per cent.) partly accepted, or a compromise reached.

Since April 2003, the proportion of flexible working requests being declined has nearly halved—from 20 per cent. before April 2003 to 11 per cent. after, which suggests that the regulations have increased employers' willingness to consider requests seriously. The full report is available at www.dti.gov.uk/er/inform.htm.

Data on the impact of the changes to maternity pay and leave, as well as paternity and adoption pay and leave will become available in the summer, extracted from PAYE returns to Inland Revenue due in May.

The Department continues to work with key intermediaries, such as Working Families and Maternity Alliance, to gather evidence through member/supporter surveys. It has also organised a series of roundtable events, currently being held around the country, which are engaging with parents and employers directly. The findings from this ongoing work will feed into the evidence base for a review of the impact of the legislation in 2006.

Holiday Misdescribing

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints were made to the Director General of Fair Trading concerning the misdescribing of holidays by tour operators or travel agents in each year since 1997; how many such complaints were investigated by the Director General of Fair Trading in each year; and how many were upheld in each year. [168869]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The OFT has not kept statistics of the numbers of complaints made to it about misdescriptions of holidays by tour operators or travel agents. In most such cases consumers are in dispute with the operator or agent and will be seeking redress for breach of contract and disappointment. In general they seek advice from their local trading standards service. They can also seek help from the Association of British Travel Agents which offers conciliation and arbitration services to help resolve disputes with its members.

The numbers of consumer complaints made to trading standards departments about misleading claims, lack of availability, or lack of information relating to holidays in the UK and abroad, and, more specifically, about such claims made by travel agents, to 31 December 2002, is as follows:

	Holidays in UK and overseas	*Travel agents*	*Total*
1997	7,244	1,022	8,266
1998	7,234	939	8,173
1999	6,980	1,824	8,804
2000	6,818	1,321	8,139
2001	[1]19,129	1,374	20,503
2002	7,820	1,262	9,082

[1] Complaints in 2001 include a large number of consumer complaints about a single company that was operating a nationwide scam. The company's activities have ceased.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many complaints have been made to the Director General of Fair Trading concerning the conduct of travel agents and travel operators in each year since 1997; how many such complaints were investigated by the Director General of Fair Trading in each year; how many were upheld in each year; and how many, and which, travel agents and travel operators have been banned as unfit to practice by the Director of Fair Trading since 1997. [168870]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The OFT has not kept statistics of the number of complaints made to it about the conduct of travel agents and tour operators. Generally consumers complain to their local trading standards services. While not specifically about the "conduct" of travel agents and tour operators, the total numbers of consumer complaints about holidays in the UK and abroad, and complaints about travel agents, made to trading standards from 1997 until 31 December 2002, are presented in the following table:

	Holidays in UK and overseas	*Travel agents*	*Total*
1997	18,387	2,211	20,598
1998	18,805	1,984	20,789
1999	16,523	3,445	19,968
2000	16,463	3,192	19,655
2001	33,531	3,304	36,835
2002	17,812	2,887	20,699

Members of the Association of British Travel Agents whose conduct is in question are subject to its disciplinary code. The OFT has powers under the Enterprise Act 2002 to prevent conduct, such as breaches of contract or breach of the law, which harms the collective interests of consumers.

The OFT does not have the power to ban travel agents and tour operators. However travel agents or tour operators that offer credit agreements must apply to the OFT for a licence. The OFT considers whether a trader is a fit person to hold a licence and can remove a licence if it regards a trader as no longer fit. Worldscape.Net Limited, an internet package holiday company, was refused a consumer credit licence in 2003.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many *(a)* complaints have been received, *(b)* complaints have been investigated and *(c)* prosecutions have been made under the (i) Package Travel Regulations and (ii) Timeshare Act 1992 in each year since 1992. [169374]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department has no enforcement powers in respect of either the Package Travel, Package Holiday and Package Tour Regulations 1992 or the Timeshare Act 1992. We do not investigate individual complaints under either statute.

Generally, consumers complain to their local trading standards service who do have the powers to enforce elements of these Acts. The trading standards service collates statistics of complaints made to them. They are unable to provide figures from this sector which reflect action under specific pieces of legislation.

The Office of Fair Trading maintains a register of returns of convictions under consumer protection legislation. Regrettably, however, the register is currently being upgraded and is incapable of producing accurate figures of the type requested at present. The Office of Fair Trading will write to the hon. Member when this information is accessible.

Maternity Leave

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Preston have taken 26 weeks maternity leave since 1997. [169669]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). Figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis, but nationally around 300,000 women receive SMP each year.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many and what percentage of women in Wigan have taken 26 weeks maternity leave since 1997. [169319]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Take-up of maternity leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of women taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (since 2003 this has covered the first 26 weeks of leave). Figures for the take-up of SMP are not available on a regional basis, but nationally around 300,000 women receive SMP each year.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

Miners' Pension Fund

Tony Wright: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government is taking to ensure that the Trustees of the Miners' Pension Fund protect *(a)* the pension and *(b)* the bonuses paid from inflation. [168566]

Nigel Griffiths: Members of the Mineworks' Pension Scheme and the British Coal Staff Superannuation Scheme should receive inflation linked increases to both their basic pensions and their bonuses to September 2006 and January 2008 respectively.

National Minimum Wage

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Preston have benefited from the national minimum wage. [169671]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Preston. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the National Minimum Wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the National Minimum Wage.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many workers in Wigan have benefited from the national minimum wage. [169318]

Mr. Sutcliffe: It is not possible to provide estimates specifically for the constituency of Wigan. However, based on the Office for National Statistics' Low Pay data released in 2003, the DTI estimates that around 140,000 people in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the national minimum wage in April 1999. Between 130,000 and 160,000 people were expected to have benefited from the October 2003 uprating of the national minimum wage.

Night-shift Work

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits to residents of Preston of new rights for night-shift workers. [169668]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than 6 hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working night and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Preston.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits to residents of Wigan of new rights for night shift workers. [169321]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working night and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night, should as far as practicable be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Wigan.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits to the residents of Oldham West and Royton of new rights for night-shift workers. [170940]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations came into force on 1 October 1998. The regulations limit working time to 48 hours per week averaged over a 17-week reference period. For night workers the limit is eight hours per day on average, including overtime where it is part of a night worker's normal hours of work. There is no opt-out from the night working time limit.

Night workers are entitled to 11 hours rest between working days, one day's rest per week, and a 20-minute in work rest break if the working period is longer than six hours.

All night workers should be offered a free health assessment before they start working nights and thereafter at regular intervals for as long as they are working nights. The health assessments should take account of the nature of the work and the restrictions on a worker's working time under the regulations. Workers who suffer from problems as a result of working at night should, as far as practicable, be offered alternative day work.

All workers are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave. There is no specific data available for night shift workers in Oldham West and Royton.

Paid Leave Entitlement

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Wigan qualify for paid leave entitlements. [169322]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Wigan qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least four weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Wigan who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Preston qualify for paid leave entitlement. [169667]

Mr. Sutcliffe: All workers resident in Preston qualify for paid annual leave entitlements; at least 4 weeks as set out in the Working Time Regulations. While all women are entitled to 26 weeks ordinary maternity leave, only those who meet the eligibility criteria will be able to claim statutory maternity pay for that period.

All employees in Preston who are eligible will be entitled to take statutory paternity leave with pay and statutory adoption leave with pay.

Parental Leave

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many men have *(a)* requested and *(b)* received paternity leave in connection with the birth or adoption of a child born, matched or placed after 6 April 2003; and if she will make a statement on the success of the take-up of this entitlement; [169298]

(2) how many women have *(a)* requested and *(b)* received maternity leave in connection with the birth or adoption of a child born after 6 April 2003; and if she will make a statement on the success of the take-up of this entitlement. [169300]

Mr. Sutcliffe *[holding answer 29 April 2004]:* Take-up of paternity, maternity and adoption leave is not recorded centrally. It is possible to make an estimate of the numbers of mothers taking maternity leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Maternity Pay (SMP) which show that around 300,000 women receive SMP each year.

In addition, there will be some women who will qualify for maternity leave but not SMP (because they do not meet the earnings criteria) and similarly some who qualify for SMP but not leave (because they are employed earners for the purposes of SMP but not employees in order to qualify for leave).

It will similarly be possible to estimate the numbers of parents taking paternity or adoption leave based on employer returns to Inland Revenue for payment of Statutory Paternity Pay (SPP) and Statutory Adoption Pay (SAP). Those returns are not due until 19 May 2004 and until the Inland Revenue complete processing them later in the year it will not be possible to provide the figures requested.

Postal Vote

Mr. Coleman: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans she has to introduce measures to ensure that postal vote ballot forms are efficiently despatched and returned to electoral returning officers in Inner London for the European, Mayoral and Greater London Assembly elections on 10 June; and if she will make a statement. [170271]

Phil Hope: I have been asked to reply.

Under the applicable election rules and regulations, the Greater London Returning Officer has overall responsibility for organising and running the GLA elections (which include the Mayoral election) and, in 2004, the European Parliament elections in the London region, and Constituency Returning Officers in London have responsibility for the issue and receipt of postal ballot papers for both the GLA and European Parliament polls.

The rules stipulate that instructions to the voter should be included on the back of the Declaration of Identity form accompanying each ballot paper sent to postal voters in the GLA and European Parliament elections. Voters will receive a postage paid envelope for the return of their ballot papers by post. They are instructed to return ballot papers to the returning officer without delay by no later than the close of the poll, and have the option of delivering them instead to certain polling stations on polling day.

Product Recalls/Safety

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) how many consumer product recalls there were in each year since 1994, broken down by *(a)* item, *(b)* manufacturer or retailer, *(c)* product category, *(d)* cause of recall and *(e)* cost of product; [168977]

(2) how many product recalls in each year since 1994 were a result of *(a)* customer complaints to (i) manufacturers, (ii) trading standards and (iii) other, *(b)* accidents to consumers, *(c)* manufacturers' or retailers' decisions other than in the circumstances of *(a)* and *(b)* and *(d)* other circumstances; [168978]

(3) what estimate she has made of *(a)* the number of companies with recall policies and *(b)* the cost to business of recalling a product. [168979]

Mr. Sutcliffe: This information has not been collected on a regular basis. However research commissioned by my Department into product recall (URN 99/125) estimated that in the period 1990 to 1996 there was an average of 42 consumer product recalls per annum. Over the period electrical goods accounted for 47 per cent. of recalls, non-electrical toys 17 per cent, childcare articles seven per cent., clothing seven per cent., houseware four per cent., furniture four per cent., gas appliances three per cent., personal care products three per cent. and others nine per cent. The main hazards for which recalls were made were electrical 25per cent, choking 15 per cent., fire/overheating 15 per cent., loosening or collapse 13 per cent., fracture nine per cent., electric shock six per cent., sharp object four per cent. and others 14 per cent. There is no corresponding information available about the names of the manufacturers or retailers involved or on the cost of the product.

Customer complaints were the main trigger for 71 per cent. of product recalls, while eight per cent. resulted from contacts made by trading standards officers following complaints made to them by consumers.

The research also shows that two thirds of the companies interviewed had recall policies.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on *(a)* the effectiveness of product recalls and *(b)* what her Department is doing to increase that effectiveness. [168980]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The effectiveness of a product recall depends on a number of factors including the type of product, its value and the way in which the recall is communicated to consumers. In November 1999 the Department, in conjunction with the Confederation of British Industry and the British Retail Consortium, published a guide ("Consumer Product Recall—A Good Practice Guide" URN 99/1172) aimed at helping businesses take prompt action to recall unsafe products from consumers.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many companies have been *(a)* investigated for manufacturing or selling unsafe products and *(b)* prosecuted since 1994; if she will state the (i) manufacturer or retailer and (ii) product in each instance; and how many companies have been prosecuted for failing to withdraw a product, stating the (A) manufacturer or retailer and (B) product in each instance, since 1994. [169148]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The number of prosecutions for breaches of consumer product safety legislation in the period 1 April 1993 to 31 March 2003 totalled 2,184[1].

Further information could only be obtained at a disproportionate cost by polling each of the 220 individual local authority trading standards departments.

[1] *Source:*

Consumer Safety Reports laid under S42 of the Consumer Protection Act 1987.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on implementation of the General Product Safety Directive. [169150]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Department is in the process of transposing the General Product Safety Directive 2001. This is a difficult process, which we need to get right. It is taking time because of the complexity of some of the new provisions, especially the wording of the last resort power to order product recall. Here we are seeking to ensure that the provision is implemented in a way that is responsive to the needs of consumers while remaining balanced and proportionate to the risk. There have also been delays at the European Commission in providing guidance to support some important practical aspects of the Directive.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on how many occasions since 1994 a manufacturer has appealed against a decision to recall a product; and in each instance if she will state the *(a)* outcome and *(b)* costs to her Department. [169151]

Mr. Sutcliffe: Recalls in the UK are currently undertaken on a voluntary basis, so the decision whether to recall a product is one for the manufacturer or distributor. The legislation that transposes the revised General Product Safety Directive (2001/95/EC) will introduce a mandatory recall power in the UK for the first time. Following transposition producers will continue to be encouraged to act voluntarily where necessary. There are already powers for enforcement authorities to require companies to withdraw unsafe products from sale.

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry on what occasions her Department has *(a)* given information to other countries regarding a product being recalled in the UK, stating the (i) product, (ii) manufacturer or retailer and (iii) the countries notified and *(b)* received information from other countries regarding a product recall, stating the (A) product, (B) manufacturer or retailer and (C) action taken by her Department. [169152]

Mr. Sutcliffe: There are no historic records available on when and whether the UK has notified other countries of a voluntary recall undertaken by producers here or of recalls undertaken overseas and notified to us. However since January 2004 when the revised GPSD (2001/95) requires notification of both voluntary and compulsory measures the UK has received one notification from Germany about a voluntary recall. This concerned a children's jigsaw puzzle presenting a choking hazard. The Department has circulated the alert to the local authority trading standards departments.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will estimate the cost of maintaining an up-to-date schedule of regulatory impact assessments, with working lists to the relevant documents. [166453]

Nigel Griffiths: It is estimated that it would cost £1,000 to establish the page and add the Department's current and most recent Regulatory Impact Assessments. Maintenance costs are estimated as £1,200 per annum. The Department's Better Regulation Team has put work in train to create such a schedule on the Departmental website.

Small Businesses

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government has taken to help small businesses in Preston since 1997. [169679]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for North and West Lancashire has provided assistance to 3,523 enterprises in the Preston Constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service (SBS) was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide Business Support to small and medium sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the Small Business Service does not have access to this data.

1,024 of the 3,523 were pre-starts up enterprises, and in addition have provided assistance regarding Investors in people, specialist Business Advice, International, and E-Commerce.

Seventeen companies have received and accepted offers of grant under the Research and Development Scheme (R & D) since 1997 to the value of £2,939,146.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what steps the Government have taken to help small businesses in Wigan since 1997. [169316]

Nigel Griffiths: The Business Link Operator for North Manchester has provided assistance to 1,981 enterprises in the Wigan constituency since 2001. The Small Business Service (SBS) was set up as an agency of the Department of Trade and Industry in April 2000. Contracts were exchanged with a national network of 45 Business Link Operators (seven in the North West) to provide business support to small and medium-sized enterprises from April 2001. Before this date Government support to businesses was provided through Training and Enterprise Councils and the Small Business Service does not have access to this data.

The type of assistance provided by the Business Link Operator to the 1,981 enterprises include business finance, environmental, workforce development, international, innovation technology and design, micro support, E-services, high growth, supply chain, and other account management assistance.

Ten companies have received and accepted offers of grant under the Research and Development Scheme (R&D) since 1997 to the value of £530,540.

Sixteen companies have received and accepted offers of grant under the Enterprise Grant Scheme since 1997 to the value of £689,500. The Enterprise Grant Scheme closed from the beginning of April 2004.

Social Chapter

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the benefits of the EU Social Chapter for the residents of Preston. [169670]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Preston have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to Parental Leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full-time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

In addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for workforce communication and involvement in large firms.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the effect of the EU Social Chapter on the residents of Wigan. [169320]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The residents of Wigan have benefited from the EU Social Chapter by having their employment rights extended to include:

the right to Parental Leave which gives parents the right to 13 weeks unpaid leave at the birth or adoption of a child;

the entitlement of part-time workers to the same pro-rata terms and conditions of employment as full time workers, thereby removing any discrimination and improving the quality of part-time jobs;

the provision that once a prima facie case has been made in an employment tribunal claim, the burden of proof is placed on the defendant (usually the employer), who will need to demonstrate that sex discrimination has not occurred;

rights under the Fixed Term Work Directive that provide equal treatment and prevent abuse of fixed term contracts;

rights under the European Works Council Directive which requires companies with at least 1,000 employees in total and at least 150 workers in each of the two member states, to establish structures for consulting workers on issues that affect them and;

in addition, the Information and Consultation of Employees Directive to be implemented in the UK by March 2005, establishes a right to new minimum standards for work force communication and involvement in large firms.

Thin Film Technology

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the levy is for thin film technology monitors and televisions imported to the UK; and whether the levy is standardised throughout the EU. [170039]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The import duty on imports into the EU on thin film technology monitors and televisions is 14 per cent. The Levy is standardised throughout the EU.

Working Time Directive

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of the Huntingdon constituency have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [170848]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Huntingdon are not available, however it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the Eastern region stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Oldham West and Royton have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [170942]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Oldham West and Royton are not available, however it has been estimated that around 100,000 workers resident in Greater Manchester stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents in Preston have benefited from a reduction of the maximum working week to 48 hours. [169666]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Preston are not available, however it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry how many residents of Wigan have benefited from a reduction of the working week to 48 hours. [169323]

Mr. Sutcliffe: The Working Time Regulations provide workers with the right to refuse to work more than 48 hours on average, if they do not want to. Numbers for Wigan are not available, however it has been estimated that around 300,000 workers resident in the North West stood to benefit from the introduction of the weekly working time limits in 1998.

Written Answers to Questions

Thursday 6 May 2004

ENVIRONMENT, FOOD AND RURAL AFFAIRS

Animal and Plant Disease

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many outbreaks of each notifiable *(a)* animal and *(b)* plant disease there have been in each of the last 10 years. [165201]

Mr. Bradshaw: The two tables placed in the Library of the House summarise details of outbreaks of each *(a)* notifiable animal and *(b)* plant disease/notifiable pests of plants in each of the last 10 years.

The first table details animal diseases in Great Britain as notifiable under the Animal Health Act 1981.

The second table details outbreaks in England and Wales, as Defra's Plant Health and Seeds Inspectorate are responsible for dealing with outbreaks both in England, and in Wales under a specific plant health concordat.

Animal Fodder

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 129W, on animal fodder, if she will list the developing countries which exported animal feeding stuffs and cereals into the *(a)* UK and *(b)* EU in 2002. [168796]

Alun Michael: Tables placed in the Library of the House provide details of exports of cereals and feeding stuff for animals to the UK and the EU from developing countries in 2002 as recorded in the UK Overseas Trade Statistics and the equivalent systems of other member states.

Overseas Trade Statistics (and the equivalent systems of other member states are subject to a degree of error. Although the overall level of errors is low, small values are affected disproportionately. Care should therefore be taken when interpreting such data.

Batteries

Rob Marris: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of small, domestic-type batteries were recycled in *(a)* 2001, *(b)* 2002 and *(c)* 2003. [164533]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 26 April 2004]:* As far as we know, all collected batteries are recycled, but the collection rate is very low. We understand that the UK sold 25,100 tonnes of consumer batteries in 2002 and 125 tonnes were collected separately. This equates to a low collection rate of only 1 per cent.

In 2003, Britannia Zinc recycled 5 tonnes as part of the Bristol Battery Recycling Campaign. All other collected consumer batteries are sent abroad for recycling.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what steps she is taking to encourage those using disposable batteries to switch to rechargeable ones. [167748]

Mr. Morley: The environmental case for switching to rechargeable batteries is not straightforward as not all applications are appropriate for rechargeable batteries. The Government are therefore not taking any steps on this matter.

Bovine TB

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research is being undertaken by or on behalf of her Department on bovine TB. [169744]

Mr. Bradshaw: The following table shows the TB research projects currently being funded by Defra (April 2004):

Code	*Research Project*	*Contractor*
SE3004	Multivariate analysis of risk factors affecting tuberculosis incidence in cattle herds—phase 1	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3008	Detection and enumeration of Mycobacterium bovis from clinical and enviromental samples	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3013	Pathogenesis and diagnosis of tuberculosis in cattle—complementary field studies	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3017	Development and evaluation of strain typing methods for Mycobacterium bovis	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3024	Low dose TB infection in cattle: disease dynamics and diagnostic strategies	Queens University Belfast/Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3026	Bovine TB transmission in restocked herds: risk factors and dynamics	Warwick University
SE3027	Pathogenesis and immunology of Mycobacterium bovis infection in cattle	Institute of Animal Health
SE3028	The development of improved tests for the diagnosis of Mycobacterium bovis infection in cattle	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3029	An investigation of potential badger/cattle interactions and how cattle husbandry methods may limit these	Central Science Laboratory
SE3030	Application of postgenomics to reveal the basis of virulence, pathogenesis and transmissability of Mycobacterium bovis	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3032	The long term intensive ecological and epidemiological investigation of a badger population	Central Science Laboratory
SE3033	Housing of naturally infected cattle (field reactors) at VLA for immunological and bacteriological analysis	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3107	Develop innovative methods to estimate badger population density	Central Science Laboratory

Code	*Research Project*	*Contractor*
SE3110	A molecular genetic analysis of badger social structure and bovine TB	Central Science Laboratory
SE3116	The economic value in changes in badger populations	Reading University
SE3206	Genome sequence analysis of Mycobacterium bovis	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3208	Generation of vaccine candidates against Mycobacterium bovis	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3209	Testing of vaccine candidates for Bovine Tuberculosis using a low dose aerosol challenge guinea pig model	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3212	Testing TB vaccines in cattle	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3215	Development of immunological assays for the detection of Mycobacterium bovis infection in badgers	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3216	Development and testing of vaccines against badger tuberculosis	Veterinary Laboratories Agency
SE3217	Kinetics of skin test response in bovine TB	Institute of Animal Health
ZF0531	The ecological consequences of removing badgers from an ecosystem	Central Science Laboratory

A full list of Defra's research projects can be found online at: http://www2.defra.gov.uk/research/project_data/Default.asp

Defra is also funding the Randomised Badger Culling Trial and associated research (the Road Traffic Accident Survey in seven English counties and the TB99 Epidemiological Questionnaire), as well as a Gamma Interferon Policy Pilot.

A limited survey of wildlife (badgers, and deer with suspicious lesions) killed on the roads in the Furness Peninsula, Cumbria is also underway.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when she will respond to the Godfrey Report on the Government's tuberculosis strategy. [170134]

Mr. Bradshaw: On 6 April, Defra announced the publication of a report from an independent scientific panel reviewing the progress of the Randomised Badger Culling Trial and associated Defra research, as part of a wider review of Defra's science. The audit panel was chaired by Professor Charles Godfray FRS, director of the Natural Environment Research Council's Centre for Population Biology at Imperial College London, and comprised experts from the fields of veterinary and wildlife population epidemiology, applied statistics and population biology.

The Government will give careful consideration to the complex recommendations of the report. The review's conclusions will inform Defra's wider review of TB strategy. Defra has extended the deadline for the public consultation on the TB Strategy review until 4 June, to allow sufficient time for the assimilation of, and comment on, this report.

BSE

Mr. Waterson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when it is proposed that the over-30-month scheme for beef will end; and if she will make a statement. [170625]

Alun Michael: The Food Standards Agency (FSA) review of the Over-30-Month rule was completed in July 2003 and recommended that it would be acceptable on public health grounds to replace the rule with BSE testing of cattle in two stages. Cattle born after August 1996 could be allowed into the food chain, after being tested for BSE, with the possibility of complete replacement of the rule from July 2005. Health Ministers are still considering the FSA advice, but it has already been decided that, for practical reasons, cattle born before August 1996 will be permanently excluded from the food chain. We are now unlikely to see any changes to the OTMS before January 2005, due to the legislative process that must take place once a decision has been reached by Ministers.

Carbon Dioxide Emissions

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures she *(a)* has in place and *(b)* is proposing further to reduce UK emissions of carbon dioxide between 2002 and 2010. [169590]

Mr. Morley: The Climate Change Programme, published in 2000, sets out an integrated package of policies and measures to reduce the UK's emissions of carbon dioxide from all sectors of the economy. Policies in the programme include the Climate Change Levy which is helping to fund measures to promote better energy efficiency in business and the public sector; the UK emissions trading scheme; targets to provide 10 per cent. of the UK's electricity from renewable sources of energy by 2010; the Energy Efficiency Commitment requiring electricity and gas suppliers to help domestic customers to save energy and cut fuel bills and; reforms to vehicle excise duty and company car taxation to support the aims of the European Union (EU) voluntary agreements with car manufacturers to improve fuel efficiency by at least 25 per cent. on 1995 levels by 2008–09.

The Climate Change Programme will be reviewed later this year, which will provide an opportunity to introduce new policies, or strengthen existing ones, if the conclusion is that more needs to be done to keep us on track towards our domestic goal to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by 20 per cent. below 1990 levels by 2010.

The 2003 Energy White Paper set out an ambitious long-term strategy for UK energy policy and real progress has been made towards implementation of the White Paper's commitments. "Creating a Low Carbon Economy—First Annual Report on Implementation of the Energy White Paper", published on 26 April, sets out the progress made to date and summarises the practical steps already taken in pursuit of the long-term goals.

On 26 April, the Government also published its Energy Efficiency Action Plan which details action to meet the energy efficiency commitments set out in the Energy White Paper. The Action Plan sets out a package of policies and measures that are expected to save around 12 million tonnes of carbon by 2010; a 20 per cent. increase on the Energy White Paper's commitment of 10 million tonnes.

Key new measures in the Action Plan include, increasing the activity levels for the Energy Efficiency Commitment (EEC) over the period 2005–08 to be roughly double those under the current EEC, and the EEC to continue to 2011 with a review in 2007; a new commitment by central Government to procure only high standard (top quartile) buildings and; a commitment to consider ways to better communicate about climate change, raising awareness of the links between climate change, energy policy and the choices we make as individuals, businesses and public sector organisations.

Our combined heat and power (CHP) Strategy, published on 26 April, confirmed our belief that CHP has an important role to play in achieving our Energy White Paper aims and our continued aim towards our target of 10 gigawatts of Good Quality CHP capacity in the UK by 2010.

Policies and measures are also being developed at an EU level under the European Climate Change Programme (ECCP). These measures, which include the EU Emissions Trading Scheme, will complement measures being taken at a national level, and reduce emissions across all member states.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what changes she has made to the carbon dioxide reduction target relative to 1990 levels within the National Allocation Plan to implement the EU Emissions Trading Directive following discussions with the DTI. [167753]

Mr. Morley: Government are committed to the key principles for setting the total level of allowances to UK installations as set out in the draft National Allocation Plan (NAP) in January. The key principle of the UK allocation methodology is that the total level of allowances for the first phase will be less than the projected emissions of the UK installations covered by the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. This reduction will be set on the basis that these installations would deliver a further 5.5 million tonnes CO_2 savings by 2010.

We have always said that there may be changes to the total level of allowances, published in the draft NAP in January, as a result of various factors including continued updating and refinements to the energy projections, reclassification of sectors, identification of additional installations and corrections to historical emissions data. The detail of these changes will be set out in the NAP to be published shortly.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assumptions have been made in respect of potential extra cuts in carbon emissions beyond those already anticipated in a business-as-usual scenario in setting the carbon dioxide reduction target relative to 1990 levels within the National Allocation Plan to implement the EU Emissions Trading Directive. [167754]

Mr. Morley: The energy projections used for calculating carbon dioxide emissions are driven by a number of key assumptions, which relate to economic growth, fossil fuel prices and population and industrial output. These assumptions incorporate the projected savings from the UK Climate Change Programme.

The total level of allowances set out in the National Allocation Plan also take into account an additional saving of 5.5 million tonnes of carbon dioxide which emissions trading was envisaged to deliver in the UK's Climate Change Programme by 2010.

In May, the Department for Trade and Industry intends to publish a working paper on the updated emissions projections, the energy and other assumptions underpinning them as they stood for use in the National Allocation Plan to be published shortly.

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what weight was given to *(a)* the desired environmental outcome and *(b)* expected energy trends in determining the carbon dioxide reduction target relative to 1990 levels under the EU Emissions Trading Directive. [167756]

Mr. Morley: The EU Emissions Trading Scheme is central to our work to move towards a low carbon economy. In the draft National Allocation Plan, published on 19 January, we demonstrated the UK's commitment to tackling climate change and signalled our plans for an ambitious approach to begin from phase one of the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. The draft plan committed us to reducing UK carbon dioxide emissions by 5.5 million tonnes beyond those measures already set out in the Climate Change Programme and we have no intention of going back on that commitment.

The expected energy trends were incorporated into the baseline for the EU Emissions Trading Scheme and are currently being updated. The total level of allowances to be published in the National Allocation Plan shortly will reflect the most recent energy projections and the UK's commitment to reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what proportion of the 20 per cent. cut in carbon dioxide emissions by 2010 she expects to be achieved through reductions in carbon dioxide emissions from the transport sector. [160880]

Mr. Morley: The UK Climate Change Programme, published in November 2000, seeks to reduce emissions from all sectors of the economy. The Programme was intended to be flexible and cost effective and did not set targets for individual sectors.

UK carbon dioxide emissions were around 165 million tonnes of carbon (MtC) in 1990. Reducing emissions by 20 per cent. will correspond to a reduction of around 33 MtC by 2010.

Policies in the Climate Change Programme to reduce emissions from transport include the EU voluntary agreements on carbon dioxide emissions from cars, backed up by changes to company car taxation and vehicle excise duty; the 10 year plan for transport and; sustainable distribution in Scotland and Wales. At the time the Programme was published, it was estimated that these policies could reduce transport emissions by a total of 5.7 MtC below the projected business as usual emissions for 2010 which would have reduced the projected increase in emissions from transport to around 2.5 per cent. above 1990 levels by 2010.

The Government are committed to reviewing the Climate Change Programme later this year, including the measures introduced to reduce transport emissions. The implications of the rolled forward strategy for transport, which the Government expects to publish in the summer after the conclusion of the spending review, will also feed into this review. The Department for Transport is currently consulting stakeholders on the UK's targets for the use of transport biofuels under the Biofuels Directive. Achieving 5 per cent. use of biofuels today would save around £1 million tonnes of carbon per annum—around three per cent. of overall road transport carbon dioxide emissions. To date indications are that the transport sector is not currently on course to deliver the level of carbon savings estimated in the UK Climate Change Programme. Details of this were outlined in the 10 Year Plan Progress Report.

Crop Spraying

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what the progress is of her Department's consultation on proposed crop spray buffer zones. [170010]

Alun Michael: The consultation on whether no-spray buffer zones should be introduced between agricultural spray operations and residential areas had a substantial response. I have seen initial papers from officials but all the evidence needs to be considered and the implications of any decision need to be thoroughly thought through. Our priority is to ensure that the right decision is made. It would be counter-productive to rush into making a decision and announce a conclusion as soon as there is something to say.

Disposable Nappies

Mr. Lepper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what research her Department has commissioned on the potential impact on household waste volumes of introducing charges based upon the volume or weight of domestic waste produced by each household, with particular reference to disposable nappy volumes; and if she will make a statement. [168778]

Mr. Morley: The Government have no plans for the introduction of a national tax, or charge, on household waste. The Strategy Unit Report, "Waste not, Want not", recommended that local authorities who wish to take forward household incentive schemes to help reduce waste amounts and increase recycling, should be allowed to do so. In response to this recommendation work has been carried out to examine the impact of household incentive schemes. This work has looked in particular at the practicalities of operating any such schemes and how potential disadvantages might be overcome.

"Waste Not Want Not" also recommended that the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) should take forward work supporting re-usable nappy schemes. The aim of this work, now under way, is to achieve an average diversion of 225 kg/year per participating household by 2006. The scheme seeks to reach 550,000 households, equivalent to 24 per cent. of households with children aged 0–3 years. This would reduce arisings by a total of 200,000 tonnes over three years.

Mr. Lepper: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what waste reduction targets have been set for the UK by European directives and regulations; what penalties could be incurred for failure to meet those targets; and what assessment has been made of the contribution of a reduction in the numbers of disposable nappies being sent to landfill to achieving those targets. [168790]

Mr. Morley: There are no European directives or regulations which set UK waste reduction targets.

The UK targets under the Landfill Directive are to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste sent to landfill to 75 per cent. of 1995 levels by 2010, 50 per cent. by 2013 and 35 per cent. by 2020 (using the four-year derogation period). Failure to reach these targets could result in the UK being fined up to £500,000 per day.

In its report "Waste not, Want not", the Strategy Unit estimated that in 2000–01 nappies comprised around 2 per cent. of household waste, equivalent to 350,000 tonnes.

The report recommended that the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) should take forward work supporting re-usable nappy schemes to aim to reach 550,000 households with the aim of reducing arisings by a total of 200,000 tonnes over three years. This work is currently under way and will help in reducing the amount of waste the UK produces.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs whether her Department has received a copy of the recent report from the Women's Environmental Network on the environmental and economic cost to the national health service of the use in and promotion through NHS facilities of disposable nappies; and if she will make a statement. [168920]

Mr. Morley: The Department has received a copy of the Women's Environmental Network report.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to develop co-ordinated strategies with officials from the Department of Health and the national health service for the reduction in the number of disposable nappies going to landfill; and if she will make a statement. [168935]

Mr. Morley: In its report, "Waste not, Want not", the Strategy Unit estimated that in 2000–01, nappies comprised around 2 per cent. of household waste, equivalent to 350,000 tonnes.

The report recommended that the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP) take forward work supporting re-usable nappy schemes to aim to reach 550,000 households with the aim of reducing arisings by a total of 200,000 tonnes over three years. This work is currently under way.

As well as supporting new re-usable nappy businesses, the WRAP programme will also undertake work with health trusts, hospitals and professionals on re-usable nappies. It is a matter for the individual maternity units and trusts, in consultation with women and their families using the services, to decide on the practicalities of adopting real nappy schemes.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs when officials of her Department last met representatives of the Nappy Alliance to discuss disposable nappies; what action suggestions arose from that meeting; and what progress has been made in implementing them. [168944]

Mr. Morley: Officials from the Department has not met representatives of the Nappy Alliance to discuss disposable nappies.

Energy Efficiency

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much money was spent on grants to aid energy efficiency in *(a)* Lancashire, *(b)* Chorley and *(c)* the North West in each of the last three years. [161243]

Mr. Morley: Defra currently provides grant funding for energy efficiency through four main routes. These organisations or programmes undertake work at a national or UK level often demand led and with no specific levels of funding attributed to particular regions.

The Carbon Trust—to support and promote energy efficiency and low carbon innovation for business and public sector.

The Energy Saving Trust—to support and promote energy efficiency in the domestic sector.

The Community Energy programme—capital and development funding to refurbish existing and install new community heating schemes.

The Warm Front programme—to provide energy efficiency measures to the vulnerable.

The funding made available by my Department to support and promote efficiency measures in each of the last three years is of the scale set out as follows:

	£ million
2001–02	256
2002–03	225
2003–04	[1]243

[1] Budget

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reason she has not met the commitment given in paragraph 3.49 of the Energy White Paper of February 2003 to publish an implementation plan on energy efficiency within one year. [165277]

Mr. Morley: The principal reason for the delay in publication of the Energy Efficiency Implementation Plan was to allow it to be published alongside the First Annual Report of the Energy White Paper.

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what studies she has undertaken on the numbers of new jobs which implementing in full the energy efficiency targets contained within the Energy White Paper would provide by 2020. [165278]

Mr. Morley: No specific studies have been undertaken by the Department on the numbers of new jobs that might be created through the implementation of the energy efficiency goals set out in the Energy White Paper. However, in order for the White Paper goals to be met, a significant expansion of energy efficiency industry capacity would be required.

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Wirral, South have benefited from the Warm Front and Home Energy Efficiency schemes. [170272]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 1,600 households in Wirral, South received assistance from the scheme.

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what measures her Department is undertaking to reduce the level of domestic energy consumption in the United Kingdom. [169771]

Mr. Morley: 'Energy Efficiency: The Government's Plan for Action' published on 26 April 2004, sets out how the Government aims to cut carbon emissions by an 12 million tonnes through energy efficiency measures across all sectors by 2010.

In UK households, we have announced a new aim to deliver annual savings of 4.2 million tonnes of carbon by 2010. Measures to achieve this include:

The Energy Efficiency Commitment (EEC)—we intend the activity levels for EEC over the period 2005–08 to be roughly double those under the current EEC, and the EEC to continue to 2011, possibly with changes in the way in which it is delivered. We anticipate that the EEC will continue at the same higher level to 2011, subject to its continuing cost effectiveness in relation to other carbon abatement options and value for money for end consumers;

Updating the Building Regulations in 2005, thus raising standards of all new and refurbished buildings, not just households. Provisions for higher boiler standards will come into force in April 2005. Energy surveys and certification of all buildings, will be among the measures introduced to implement the Energy Performance of Buildings Directive;

A major new training scheme for heating installers, is to precede the revision of the boiler provisions in the Building Regulations in 2005;

In the social sector, social landlords will continue to carry out improvements to the heating and insulation of their housing through the Decent Homes programme. The Warm Front grant programme will continue to tackle fuel poverty by installing heating and other energy efficiency measures;

Fiscal incentives already reduce the cost of professionally installed insulation. Budget 2004 announced additional economic incentives for energy efficiency, including tax relief for landlords installing insulation, and a reduced rate of VAT on ground-source heat pumps;

Negotiating rising standards for energy using appliances via EU-wide agreements and policy instruments. Also, improving product standards, with negotiations underway on the Eco-design of Energy Using Products Directive;

Grants to support community heating (the Community Energy Programme) and small-scale renewable generation (Clear Skies and the major photovoltaic demonstration programme);

The Energy Saving Trust's information and advice programmes for households and local authorities;

There will also be enhanced emphasis on communicating the links between climate change and energy efficiency and a stronger emphasis on communicating the reality of climate change, raising public awareness of the links between climate change and energy.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Wigan have benefited from the home energy efficiency scheme, Warm Front. [169366]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 2,400 households in Wigan received assistance from the Scheme.

Mr. Hendrick: : To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Preston have benefited from the home energy efficiency scheme, Warm Front. [169684]

Mr. Morley: Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 4,000 households in Preston received assistance from the scheme.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Heywood and Middleton have benefited from the home energy efficiency scheme, Warm Front. [168436]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 2,400 households in Heywood and Middleton received assistance from the scheme.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Warrington South have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency and Warm Front Schemes. [168705]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 1,600 households in Warrington South received assistance from the Scheme.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how many homes in Stalybridge and Hyde have benefited from the Home Energy Efficiency and Warm Front Schemes. [168768]

Mr. Morley: The Home Energy Efficiency Scheme is now marketed as Warm Front. Between the launch of the scheme in June 2000 and the end of March 2004, approximately 2,000 households in Stalybridge and Hyde received assistance from the Scheme.

Environmental Protection

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the contribution the Are you doing your bit campaign has made to the Government's efforts to achieve its target of a 20 per cent.reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2008 to 2012. [168807]

Mr. Morley: The Are you doing your bit campaign was a successful stage in the Government's effort to raise the general level of public awareness of environmental issues. Research in 1998 showed initial campaign activity had proved effective. Further research in 1999 showed that 9 out of 10 people recognised the campaign and 7 out of 10 understood that everyone should do their bit. A further 9 out of 10 people said they already carried out the simple actions promulgated by the campaign.

It did not, nor was it designed to, radically change behaviour or business practice across society and in any case it would not be possible to positively link the impact of any one information source with levels of carbon dioxide emissions for the UK as a whole.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much Government funding was available in each of the past three years to the *(a)* Energy Saving Trust and *(b)* Going for Green charity. [168811]

Mr. Morley: The information requested is in the tables.

(a) Energy Saving Trust funding made available by the department over the last three years is as follows.

	£ million
2001–02	24.3
2002–03	23.4
2003–04	24.6 (Budget)

Figures for 2002–03 and 2003–04 include funding for the Housing Energy Efficiency Best Practice programme.

(b) Government funding is provided to the environmental charity ENCAMS annually. The funding supports ENCAMS' work on a range of local environmental quality issues, including the Tidy Britain Group and Going for Green.

Funding over the last three years is as follows:

	£
2001–02	3,762,000
2002–03	[1]4,597,000
2003–04	3,574,000

[1] Defra allocated an additional £1 million to local authorities through ENCAMS for the Local Environmental Quality Pathfinder Programme that forged partnerships between local authorities and the local community. Some of the projects developed reduced fast food litter, railway land litter and schools litter.

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the decision not to renew the Government's Are you doing your bit campaign; and what funding was provided for the www.doingyourbit.org.uk website, since the campaign began. [168812]

Mr. Morley: The Secretary of State will not be making a statement on the Are you doing your bit campaign.

Detailed consideration is being given to the options for future communications activity in this area. Thinking will be informed by the current sustainable development consultation, 'Taking it on', launched 21 April 2004.

The campaign website was funded from within the overall campaign budget. No specific records were kept for the website element of the campaign.

Farming

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the farm income levels for farmers in Preston in the past five years. [169685]

Alun Michael: Due to the small number of farms in Preston, there is no robust data available on farm incomes for farmers in that area over the last five years. Net farm income for farms in the EU north region and for England over the last five years are show in the following table.

Net Farm Income

	EU north region	*England*
1998–99	8,272	10,359
1999–2000	8,659	7,981
2000–01	12,456	9,886
2001–02	16,457	13,558
2002–03	18,512	16,435

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business.

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on farm income for farmers in South Ribble in the past five years. [171286]

Alun Michael: Due to the small number of farms in South Ribble, there is no robust data available on farm incomes for farmers in that area. Net farm income for farms in the EU North Region and for England over the last five years are show in the following table.

Net farm income

	EU North Region	*England*
1998–99	8,272	10,359
1999–2000	8,659	7,981
2000–01	12,456	9,886
2001–02	16,457	13,558
2002–03	18,512	16,435

Source:
Farm Business Survey

Net farm income is the return to the principal farmer and spouse for their manual and managerial labour and to the tenant-type capital of the business

David Maclean: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs how much the average *(a)* severely disadvantaged area (SDA) and *(b)* non-SDA payment will be in Cumbria in each year from 2005 to 2013. [169096]

Alun Michael: No estimates are available for the allocation of historic subsides to Single Farm Payment regions at county level. So it is not possible to determine the historic element of the payment during the transition period.

Fertilisers

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to the answer of 28 April 2004 reference 166842, what assessment she has made of the alternative fertilisers used in countries that have banned ammonium nitrate fertilisers. [170585]

Mr. Morley: The soil and climatic conditions in the countries that have banned ammonium nitrate (AN) fertilisers—China, Colombia, Algeria and the Philippines—are very different from those experienced in the UK. One of the principal alternative fertilisers used in these countries is urea. Urea-based fertilisers give rise to greater ammonia emissions than AN. A switch to urea could, therefore, put at risk the UK's ability to meet internationally-agreed ammonia reduction targets. Crops cannot use urea directly. It must first be converted to ammonium and to nitrate nitrogen in the soil before being taken up by plants. As a result, urea can, in cold conditions, be slower acting than AN. The loss of ammonia from urea can also reduce crop yields, thus adding to the cost of crop production. As mentioned in my previous answer, we have an ongoing dialogue with industry to compare how well other nitrogen fertilisers perform in our soil and climatic conditions and their potential environmental impacts.

Flooding

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her written statement of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*,

columns 7–8WS, on flood defences, what options she is assessing for further reforms to improve accountability and effectiveness. [169850]

Mr. Morley: Implementation of the conclusions of the Flood and Coastal Defence Funding Review represents a significant reorganisation and streamlining of the service. Following the introduction of Flood Defence grant-in-aid to the Environment Agency on 1 April 2004, we are developing output and performance measures to monitor the efficiency and effectiveness of the Agency in reducing flood risk and to ensure optimal allocation of funding. In addition, the Agency are developing targets for reducing overheads associated with processing flood defence projects, which will be included in the Agency's Corporate Plan. We are also developing new procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of Internal Drainage Boards.

As announced in March 2003, we will be undertaking a formal review of the effectiveness of the funding review conclusions after three years effective operation. We intend to commence this review in 2007, at which time we will consider whether any further reforms to the service should be considered. We will keep stakeholders fully involved in this work.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to meet hon. Members representing areas where properties or agricultural land are or might become at risk from flooding from the sea or from tidal inland waterways to discuss the Government's policy on global warming. [169583]

Mr. Morley: The recently published Foresight Report on flood and coastal defence will provide guidance for policy development in relation to managing increasing flood risk in the longer term, including the impact of climate change. I held briefing for hon. Members on the 22 April for this purpose. I will also be meeting the All Party Parliamentary Flood Prevention Group on 26 May. The Foresight Report is on the agenda.

Since the 1980s the Department has provided guidance to operating authorities to make allowance for climate change in the planning and appraisal of new and replacement flood and coastal defence works. This guidance has been regularly reviewed in the light of the latest research findings and supplementary guidance was most recently issued in 2003. The aim is to take a suitably precautionary approach whilst not diverting funds unnecessarily from the solution of problems that affect people today. The approach and guidance will be further reviewed for the new Strategy for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management which is expected to be completed by early next year.

Fuel Poverty

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs if she will make a statement on the progress of the Government's commitment to end fuel poverty by 2010. [167769]

Mr. Morley: The UK Fuel Poverty Strategy Second Annual Progress Report was published recently, providing an update of progress during the last year. The most recent estimates show a fall in the number of households in fuel poverty in the UK to 2.25 million in 2002, from around 3 million in 2001. The number of fuel poor households in England in 2002 is estimated to have fallen to around 1.4 million.

The Fuel Poverty Implementation Plan, due to be published in the summer, will set out proposals for achieving our target to eradicate fuel poverty, as far as reasonably practicable, by 2010 for all vulnerable households in England and 2016 for all households in England.

Global Warming

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what evaluation she has made of experiments to use oceans to absorb more carbon dioxide by spraying them with iron filings and the impact this will have on global warming. [169239]

Mr. Morley: Experimental studies of iron fertilisation have so far been carried out on a relatively small scale, and computer models are needed to estimate the consequences of large scale fertilisation. Modelling studies of iron fertilisation are currently performed as part of Defra's Climate Prediction Programme at the Hadley Centre.

Iron fertilisation encourages extra growth of phytoplankton, which increases the uptake of carbon dioxide from the water and subsequently the atmosphere. Preliminary studies have indicated that even wide spread and continuous iron fertilisation would reduce levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide by only a small fraction, making it unlikely that there would be a significant impact on global warming. In addition, the consequences of such fertilisation on marine ecosystems could be severe.

Local Authority Smallholdings

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans the Department has to propose amendments to the law with regard to the reference by a county council of its decision to dispose of all or part of its smallholdings. [170137]

Alun Michael: The operation and management of county council smallholdings estates by local authorities is regulated by the Agriculture Act 1970. I can confirm that we have no plans to amend this Act.

National Allocation Plan

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to what extent the requirements of the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive with regard to energy efficiency have been taken into account in the design of the UK's National Allocation Plan. [167761]

Mr. Morley: The energy projections, used as the basis for calculating the allocation of allowances under the National Allocation Plan, take into account carbon dioxide emission reductions resulting from the Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control Directive. Therefore the allocation methodology used reflects the reductions in carbon dioxide emissions resulting from

the requirements of the directive. A working paper on the updated energy projections will be published by the Department for Trade and Industry in May.

Under the directive, member states may choose not to impose Integrated Pollution Prevention and Control energy efficiency provisions on installations covered by the EU Emissions Trading Scheme. We are currently deciding how we intend to use this provision in the UK.

Orchards

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what assessment she has made of the number of *(a)* animal and *(b)* plant species that will be affected by the loss of traditional orchards. [168158]

Alun Michael: Defra regards traditional orchards as an important habitat for a wide range of species including wild flowers, lichens, insects and birds, and funds their conservation through the Countryside Stewardship Scheme.

Quality Parish Councils

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which *(a)* parish and *(b)* town councils have achieved the status of Quality Parish Councils, in the last year broken down by area. [170579]

Alun Michael: *(a)* There are 17 parish councils that have achieved Quality Status in the last year. By area they are:

Name of council	*Area*
Holywell-cum-Needingworth Parish Council	Cambridgeshire
Poynton Parish Council	Cheshire
Upton by Chester Parish Council	Cheshire
Winsford Parish Council	Cheshire
Stokenham Parish Council	Devon
St. Osyth Parish Council	Essex
Hamble-le-Rice Parish Council	Hampshire
Headley Parish Council	Hampshire
Wootton Bridge Parish Council	Isle of Wight
Asfordby Parish Council	Leicestershire and Rutland
Braunstone Parish Council	Leicestershire and Rutland
Lawley and Overdale Parish Council	Shropshire
Selattyn and Gobowen Parish Council	Shropshire
Hurstpierpoint Sayers Common Parish Council	Sussex
Ruckfield Parish Council	Sussex
Curdworth Parish Council	Warwickshire and West Midlands
Melksham without Parish Council	Wiltshire

(b) There are 28 town councils that have achieved Quality Status in the last year. By area are:

Name of council	*Area*
Weston-super-Mare Town Council	Avon
Keynsham Town Council	Avon
Leighton Linslade Town Council	Bedfordshire
Newbury Town Council	Berkshire
Buckingham Town Council	Buckinghamshire
Huntingdon Town Council	Cambridgeshire
Lvybridge Town Council	Devon
Cullompton Town Council	Devon
Tavistock Town Council	Devon
Exmouth Town Council	Devon
Kingsbridge Town Council	Devon
Sedgefield Town Council	Durham
Great Baddow Town Council	Essex
Witham Town Council	Essex
Loughton Town Council	Essex
Maldon Town Council	Essex
Wivenhoe Town Council	Essex
Brading Town Council	Isle of Wight
Edenbridge Town Council	Kent
Halewood Town Council	Merseyside
Cartenton Town Council	Oxfordshire
Oswestry Town Council	Shropshire
Sudbury Town Council	Suffolk
Seaford Town Council	Sussex
Burgess Hill Town Council	Sussex
East Grinstead Town Council	Sussex
Crowborough Town Council	Sussex
Whitnash Town Council	Warwickshire and West Midlands
Caine Town Council	Wiltshire

Pesticides

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what plans she has to make a statement on the effectiveness of the Pesticides Voluntary Initiative. [169487]

Alun Michael: The Government regularly reviews progress with the Voluntary Initiative on pesticides and reports its broad conclusions in the Budget and Pre-Budget Report. In Budget 2004 the Government confirmed the view that the Initiative will achieve the most effective way of reducing the environmental impacts of pesticide use provided it is fully implemented. However, to cover the potential case that the Initiative might fail to deliver the required environmental benefits within a reasonable time scale, the Government continues to keep the options for a tax or economic instrument under review. This remains the Government's position.

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what regulation of sprayers her Department undertakes under the Pesticides Voluntary Initiative. [170135]

Alun Michael: The Voluntary Initiative on Pesticides includes a National Sprayer Testing Scheme. This tests spray equipment to ensure that it can be used safely and effectively. The Scheme had a target to test 5,000 sprayers by 31 March 2004 and, while final figures are not yet in, appears to have achieved that level of uptake.

The Initiative also includes projects to develop and promote best practice in the use of spray equipment. In particular, the National Register of Sprayer Operators helps pesticide users to keep up to date with good practice.

As its name suggests, the Voluntary Initiative is not part of pesticide regulation as such but the Government wishes to see the Initiative succeed and has urged pesticide users to take part.

Pharmaceutical Crops

Gregory Barker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) how many licences for the planting of pharmaceutical crops have been applied for in the United Kingdom in each of the last 10 years; [167832]

(2) what measures have been taken to prevent contamination of other crops from pharmaceutical crops being tested in the UK. [167834]

Mr. Morley: Consent under the deliberate release legislation would be required for the planting of genetically modified crops producing pharmaceuticals, but no applications have been received, and therefore no consents have been issued. As a result, there has been no requirement to take measures to prevent contamination of other crops.

Public Sewers

Sue Doughty: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs pursuant to her answer of 10 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1538W, what assessment her Department has made of the adequacy of provision of the data maintained by the Environment Agency on the volume of hazardous liquid waste disposed directly to public sewers. [168369]

Mr. Morley: The data collected and made available by the Environment Agency are designed to allow it to regulate effectively such discharges of liquid waste to public sewers in order to protect the aquatic environment from adverse impacts, and to comply with relevant EU Directives and other relevant legislation.

The Department continues to work closely with the Environment Agency and the sewerage industry on the adequacy of data relating to sewers. A new Direction to Sewerage Undertakers has recently been issued requiring the sewerage industry to report to the EA information on emissions from sewage treatment works, for the purposes of the Pollution Inventory, against a revised list of substances.

Raptors

Mr. Gray: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what consultation she has with *(a)* farmers and *(b)* landowners prior to the release of raptors on their land. [169456]

Mr. Bradshaw *[holding answer 6 May 2004]:* I have had no direct consultations with farmers or landowners about the release of raptors on their land. Re-introduction projects for conservation reasons have been carried out in England for red kite, osprey and barn owl. These projects have involved English Nature (the Government's statutory conservation advisor), voluntary conservation bodies and private individuals. In all cases, those involved have obtained the permission of farmers and landowners before any birds were released. English Nature supports only those re-introduction projects that conform to internationally agreed guidelines produced by the World Conservation Union (IUCN). This includes the requirement that 'the programme should be fully understood, accepted and supported by local communities'.

Refrigerator Decommissioning

Mr. Page: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what percentage of decommissioning work on refrigerators is being carried out in the UK; and which counties are carrying out this work in the UK. [165868]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 19 April 2004]:* Approximately 72 per cent. of refrigerators were treated in England and Wales in 2003; the remainder were exported for treatment in Germany, the Netherlands and Denmark.

Decommissioning of refrigerators through recovery and collection of ODS took place in the following counties and metropolitan areas in England and Wales: Shropshire, Greater Manchester, Derbyshire, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, Wiltshire, Gwent, Norfolk, Powys, Essex, East Sussex, West Midlands, Dyfed, County Durham.

Sea Defences

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (1) if she will make a statement on her policy for maintaining sea defences in the Blackwater and Crouch estuaries; [168037]

(3) what her policy is on the payment of compensation to landowners affected by managed realignment; [168039]

(2) what estimate she has made of the cost of maintaining sea walls in *(a)* the Blackwater and Crouch estuaries and *(b)* Essex; [168038]

(4) if she will list the consents necessary to allow landowners to maintain sea walls; [168040]

(5) what assessment she has made of the state of repair of sea walls in the Maldon and East Chelmsford constituency; [168041]

(6) if she will list the length of sea defence in *(a)* the Maldon and East Chelmsford constituency and *(b)* Essex which falls into each of the four categories assigned by the Environment Agency for assessing the economic case for continued maintenance; [168042]

(7) if she will make a statement on the exit strategy for withdrawing from maintenance of uneconomic sea walls; [168043]

(8) if she will make a statement on the division of responsibility for maintenance of sea defences between land-owners, local authorities and the Environment Agency; [168044]

(9) if she will make a statement on the division of responsibility for maintenance of main drainage ditches between land-owners, local authorities and the Environment Agency. [168045]

Mr. Morley: Flood defence works funded by the taxpayer are supported on the basis of a full analysis of economic, environmental and social considerations and a full appraisal of benefits and costs. Doing nothing, maintaining the current line of defence and managed realignment are among the strategic options that Defra's guidance indicates should be considered before establishing a preferred flood management policy for any particular length of defence.

The Environment Agency (EA), with Defra's backing, is now promoting a comprehensive series of Essex estuary strategies that will provide a better understanding of how future flood risk can be reduced in the face of pressures such as sea level rise. The

strategies are being developed over a number of years. The Roach and Crouch Estuary Flood Management Strategy should be launched later this summer, while Blackwater and Colne Estuary Flood Management Strategy is due to go to public consultation later this year. A strategic study on the Stour and Orwell tidal estuaries has just been started.

Where there is insufficient justification for the continued maintenance of an uneconomic sea wall, the EA will pursue a process to withdraw from publicly funded maintenance, as soon as possible. To ensure that the EA act in a reasonable way, they must pay due regard to my Department's policy guidance, and the Human Rights Act.

The EA estimates that the overall cost of maintaining sea walls in the area covered by the Essex Local Flood Defence Committee in 2004–05 is £1.266 million. Approximately 24 per cent. of this is for maintenance works in the Maldon and East Chelmsford constituency.

The EA's assessment of the state of repair of the sea walls in Maldon and East Chelmsford is limited to the Dengie Peninsula from Bradwell to Burnham. Data for the estuary sea walls has not yet been collected. However, visual inspections of these walls are undertaken on a regular basis and areas requiring repair are included in the annual maintenance programme.

The EA will, over the coming years, be categorising its defences into the four categories to which the hon. Member refers in line with the Shoreline Management Plan, and the Estuary Strategies when these are complete. Although the primary responsibility for the maintenance of both sea defences and land drainage watercourses rests with the riparian landowner, the EA has permissive powers to maintain sea defences and has taken responsibility for the majority of them. Local authorities have similar permissive powers and maintain sea defences as part of their coast protection activities.

To maintain sea walls landowners need the formal consent of the EA, in accordance with the Environment Agency Land Drainage and Sea Defence Byelaws, made under Schedule 25 (5) of the Water Resources Act 1991. Local authority consent may also be required depending on the nature and extent of the maintenance work to be carried out. Other consents such as assent from English Nature under the Wildlife and Countryside Act may also be necessary. Individuals should contact the EA in the first instance to establish what consents might be needed. Consent or permission from the owner of the sea wall will be required, where the person wishing to carry out maintenance is not already the owner of the specific sea wall to be maintained.

Where there is no legal requirement to provide flood defence there is similarly no provision for compensation to offset the disadvantage suffered by any landowners that may be flooded as a result of a change in flood management practices. However, if a landowner were refused consent to maintain their own defence on the grounds that allowing them to protect their land would be contrary to the public interest, for example for nature conservation reasons, a case for compensation might arise. There is no general provision for compensation to landowners in cases where an operating authority stops maintaining a seawall and the EA's Exit Strategy should ensure that interested parties are fully aware of their options. Landowners and occupiers must be given enough notice to enable them to make business decisions for the future.

Sustainable Development

Norman Baker: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs for what reason she did not make her announcement of 21 April 2004 on sustainable development by means of a oral statement to the House. [169859]

Mr. Morley *[holding answer 30 April 2004]:* The Secretary of State announced the consultation 'Taking it on—developing UK sustainable development strategy together', on 21 April, to the House by means of a written statement.

On the same day both the Secretary of State and I spoke at the launch event for the consultation. We were delighted to be joined by ministerial colleagues: Charles Clarke, the Secretary of State for Education and Skills; Hilary Benn, the Secretary of State for International Development; Bill Rammell of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, Angela Smith of the Northern Ireland Office, Yvette Cooper of the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister and Carwyn Jones from the Welsh Assembly Government; as well as Jonathon Porritt, the Chair of the Sustainable Development Commission and Klaus Topfer, the Executive Director of the UN Environmental Programme.

We are greatly looking forward to considering the responses we receive to the consultation. The consultation closes on 31 July 2004.

EU Directives

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what discussions she has had recently with the industries concerned in the implications of the introduction of the *(a)* Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment and *(b)* End of Life Vehicles directives. [167890]

Mr. Morley: The Government has been in ongoing talks with affected stakeholders on both of these Directives.

The second consultation on implementation of the WEEE Directive concluded in March. 219 responses were received, and a summary of these can be found at www.dti.gov.uk/sustainability. Further, the Government recently completed a series of large workshops, in eight UK regions, to raise awareness amongst stakeholders. The Government is continuing discussions with all stakeholders in frequent meetings with industry.

The last of 4 public consultations on the ELV Directive closed on 30 March. The Consultation Document set out the Government's proposals for a system, drawn up after extensive discussions with the industry sectors involved, to meet the "free take-back" and recycling requirements of the Directive. 65 responses to the consultation were received. These are now being assessed with a view to finalising the Regulations before presentation to Parliament.

Water Companies

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs which water companies have been found to have been providing water not fit for human consumption in each year since 1997; and what action was taken against them. [168876]

Mr. Morley: It is an offence under section 70 of the Water Industry Act 1991 for a water company to supply water unfit for human consumption, subject to a due diligence defence. The meaning of water "unfit for human consumption" is not defined in the Act and is a matter for the courts to decide on a case-by-case basis. It is usually taken to mean that the water has caused ill health or is rejected for drinking by consumers on the grounds of taste, smell or appearance.

All incidents affecting drinking water quality are investigated by the Drinking Water Inspectorate and proceedings are instituted as appropriate. Since 1997 10 companies have been prosecuted for supplying water unfit for human consumption in respect of 29 separate incidents, with six further incidents taken into consideration. Eight companies have also been cautioned in respect of 16 incidents.

Date of incident	*Date of court case*	*Company*	*Offence*
20 February 1997	20 March 1998	Yorkshire Water	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
6 May 1997	5 November 1998	North West	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
16 May 1997	1 April 1998	Dwr Cymru	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
12 June 1997	10 June 1998	Dwr Cymru	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
24 July 1997	26 January 2000	Thames Water	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
25 July 1997	15 July 1998	Dwr Cymru	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (low pH & discoloured)
31 July 1997	19 October 1998	Severn Trent	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
1 October 1997	5 October 1998	Northumbrian Water	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
22 October 1997	17 May 1999	South West	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
31 October 1997	6 April 1999	South West	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
14 November 1997	15 November 1999	North West	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
15 December 1997	23 April 1999	Severn Trent	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
16 December 1997	5 January 1999	Anglian	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (discoloured)
18 December 1997	3 November 1999	North West	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
19 December 1997	11 January 1999	Anglian	Section 70 Supply of water unfit (untreated river water)
29 January 1998	16 August 1999	South East	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
6 March 1998	5 November 1999	South East	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
21 April 1998	6 October 2000	North West	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
8 May 1998 1 June 1998 2 July 1998 5 November 1998	10 December 2000	Yorkshire Water	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured) (Four separate incidents)
June/July 1998	12 March 2001	Mid Kent Water	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
13 December 1998	25 January 2000	North West	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
13 January 1999	13 October 2000	North West	Section 70 supply of water unfit (taste and odour)
February 1999	11 January 2002	Yorkshire	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
July 2000	18 June 2001	Dwr Cymru Cyf	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
28 August 2000	5 September 2001	Anglian	Section 70 supply of water unfit (discoloured)
3 April 2002	26 March 2004	Anglian	Section 70 supply of water unfit (taste)

Mr. Hepburn: To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs what checks are made to ensure that the water companies provide water that is fit for human consumption; and how often they are made. [168877]

Mr. Morley: Water companies in England and Wales have a duty to supply wholesome water. The Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2000, or in Wales the Water Supply (Water Quality) Regulations 2001 set out the numbers and types of samples that water companies must take to fulfil this duty. One of the roles of the Drinking Water Inspectorate is to ensure that water companies carry out the requisite checks. During 2002 more than 2,973,500 regulatory tests were carried out, of which 99.87 per cent. demonstrated compliance with the relevant water quality standards. The Drinking Water Inspectorate investigates all incidents affecting water quality which includes an assessment of additional samples taken to determine water quality.

HOUSE OF COMMONS COMMISSION

Big Ben

Norman Baker: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission on which dates Big Ben has *(a)* shown an incorrect time and *(b)* failed to sound since 1 May 1994. [170086]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: Big Ben is the name of the hour bell of the Great Clock rather than of the clock itself. Accuracy adjustments, usually within one or two seconds, are undertaken three times a week. Variations of this nature are caused by changes in temperature. The clock has been stopped for repair purposes for four periods since 1994 and work on the quarter chimes has taken place on seven occasions. In the latter cases the clock was not stopped.

The most recent failure of the quarter chimes took place on 29 April and was caused by an internal stress fracture affecting the brake release shaft. It is intended to install the new shaft during the evening of 8 May, when the hour strike brake release shaft, fly fan and other components will be examined for any similar problem by a specialist company.

Official Report

Mr. Dismore: To ask the hon. Member for Roxburgh and Berwickshire, representing the House of Commons Commission if he will make arrangements to permit hon. Members to proof read the *Hansard* report of their speeches made in Westminster Hall in the *Hansard* office above the Chamber; and if he will make a statement. [170194]

Sir Archy Kirkwood: The Editor of the *Official Report* appreciates that some hon. Members may have been inconvenienced by the need to move staff who report Westminster Hall proceedings to offices at 7 Millbank. He will make arrangements as soon as possible for Members to read Westminster Hall speeches in the *Hansard* offices in the Palace of Westminster before publication.

SOLICITOR-GENERAL

Iraq

Llew Smith: To ask the Solicitor-General whether she discussed with other ministerial colleagues a draft of the Attorney General's legal opinion on the legality of military action against Iraq prior to his presentation of the opinion to the Cabinet. [168729]

The Solicitor-General: It is the established practice not to disclose details of internal discussions between Ministers. This information is withheld in accordance with exemption 2 of Part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Unexplained Infant Deaths

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Solicitor General what steps the Government has taken since the statement on 20 January, *Official Report*, column 1215, on unexplained infant deaths, to *(a)* identify civil cases and *(b)* learn from these cases; and if she will make a statement. [167812]

The Solicitor-General: The process of identifying prosecutions which may be affected by the Appeal Court's judgment in the appeal against conviction of Angela Cannings has been completed. Since the Appeal Court's judgment on 19 January the 300 relevant cases have been identified, of which 86 involve defendants in custody. There are three stages to the review process. To date, 167 cases have been reviewed and I will be in a position to tell the House the outcome of those reviews very shortly.

Of the 16 ongoing prosecutions which may have been affected by the Cannings judgment, all have been reviewed and two have been discontinued. A Hampshire case was discontinued before trial and a Coventry case was discontinued before a retrial.

Any lessons to be learnt from the review will be considered at the conclusion of the review process.

LEADER OF THE HOUSE

Sub Judice Rule

Mr. Andrew Dismore: To ask the Leader of the House if he will bring forward proposals for amendment of the House's resolution on matters sub judice to permit parliamentary questions and early day motions to be tabled concerning cases before the Special Immigration Appeals Commission concerning withdrawal of UK nationality in circumstances where the case has become substantially delayed and is unlikely to be heard in the immediate future; and if he will make a statement. [169802]

Mr. Hain: I have no plans to do so, though I am willing to consider suggestions for change on this, as on other matters. I understand that the particular issue to which the hon. Member refers has been resolved.

CULTURE, MEDIA AND SPORT

Free Television Licence

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what estimate she has made of how many eligible senior citizens over the age of 75 in Northern Ireland did not avail themselves of the free television licence in 2003. [170485]

Estelle Morris: These figures are unavailable. However, I understand that for the year to 31 March 2004, 86,493 free licences for people over 75 were issued in Northern Ireland. Also, the BBC runs regular publicity campaigns in Northern Ireland, which receive widespread press coverage, to encourage people to take up the concession.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much the production of her Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171138]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is as follows.

1. The design, typesetting, production and printing of this year's annual report was £57,000

2. 1,500 copies were printed.

3. 700 copies are to be sold at cover price of £26

4. Remaining copies for media, NDPBs, visitors to DCMS and DCMS staff (two copies for each of 28 Divisions)

Libraries (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how much money has been spent on the digitisation of content in libraries in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997. [170944]

Estelle Morris: This information is not held centrally.

The New Opportunities Fund £50 million Digitisation of Learning Materials Programme has delivered 150 projects across the UK to enable resources which support learning of all kinds held in libraries as well as museums, archives and other public-sector institutions, to be made available online through the People's Network and the National Grid for Learning. This initiative has created a body of material containing over 2 million images, tens of thousands of sound and video clips and documents and over 1,000 learning packages. All projects can be accessed via the EnrichUK portal at http://www.enrichuk.net

Information on grants awarded to individual local authorities and their expenditure can be obtained from the relevant authority.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport how many *(a)* Ordinary Written and *(b)* Named Day Questions her Department received in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170778]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is as follows:

2002–03 Session

	Named day	*Ordinary written*
November 2002	39	112
December 2002	28	52
January 2003	24	114
February 2003	11	105
March 2003	14	116
April 2003	10	110
May 2003	16	153
June 2003	18	150
July 2003	6	104
August 2003	0	0
September 2003	8	68
October 2003	6	69
November 2003	22	63
Total	202	1,216

2003–04 Session

	Named day	*Ordinary written*
November 2003	1	37
December 2003	12	105
January 2004	23	84
February 2004	9	106
March 2004	20	160
April 2004	13	65
Total	78	557

These figures exclude those questions either withdrawn by the Member or transferred to another Department.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport what proportion of *(a)* Ordinary Written Questions to her Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling and *(b)* Questions for a Named Day received a substantive answer on that day in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170779]

Mr. Caborn: The information requested is as follows:

2002–03 Session

	Named Day		*Ordinary Written*	
	Number answered on time	*Percentage*	*Number answered within 5 sitting days*	*Percentage*
November 2002	25	64.10	50	43.86
December 2002	9	32.14	20	40.82
January 2003	11	45.83	89	74.79
February 2003	9	69.23	58	56.31
March 2003	9	69.23	79	65.29
April 2003	3	30.00	37	32.17
May 2003	9	60.00	39	27.86
June 2003	8	44.44	96	61.15
July 2003	3	50.00	50	51.02
August 2003	0	0	0	0
September 2003	3	37.50	25	37.31
October 2003	5	83.33	47	56.63
November 2003	18	81.82	52	89.66

2003–04 Session

	Named Day		*Ordinary Written*	
	Number answered on time	*Percentage*	*Number answered within 5 sitting days*	*Percentage*
November 2003	1	25.00	28	75.68
December 2003	6	66.67	73	69.52
January 2004	16	69.57	61	70.93
February 2004	6	66.67	71	61.74
March 2004	14	63.64	131	80.37
April 2004	11	84.62	32	52.46

Sporting Contacts (Ban)

Mr. Don Foster: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport pursuant to the answer of 24 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 876W, on sporting contacts (ban), whether, on 28 October 1997, Ministers had the power to invoke a ban on sporting contact with other countries taking place outside the UK. [168598]

Mr. Caborn: In October 1997, as now, Ministers did not have specific powers to prevent sports teams travelling abroad.

Tourism

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport if she will make a statement on the work of regional development agencies in developing tourism in Oldham, West and Royton. [170945]

Mr. Caborn: The North West Development Agency (NWDA) is working closely with 'Marketing Manchester', the nominated Destination Management Organisation (DMO) for Manchester. The new DMOs are, in effect, smaller versions of tourist boards. They aim to ensure a strong visitor and market focus to all that is done within the region and strengthen the connection between businesses and other organisations in the tourism sector.

TRANSPORT

A13

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what plans he has to *(a)* improve and *(b)* fund improvements to the A13 Sadlers Farm Junction in Benfleet, Essex. [171086]

Mr. Jamieson: The junction at Sadlers Farm between the A13 and the A130 (neither of which is a trunk road at that point) is in the form of a ring roundabout.

Following a review of the transport problems in the South Essex area, Essex county council consider that the junction now requires upgrading to allow for the greater volume of traffic that is using the junction since it was built in 1988.

It is up to Essex county council to submit, through the Local Transport Plan process, details of a new design which has been appraised in accordance with Government guidelines and which will deal with forecast levels of traffic. This assessment will then be used by the Department for Transport to consider whether there is a case for funding the scheme.

Explosives (Detection)

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent by his Department and its predecessors on research into new methods of detecting explosives on board ships before they dock in the UK. [170060]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department funds a £1.4 million research and development programme into technologies and methods used in Transport Security. It would not be appropriate to provide details, but much of this budget goes towards explosives detection technologies.

Foreign Registered Vehicles

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what estimate he has made of the number of foreign registered *(a)* cars and *(b)* other vehicles in the UK on (i) permanent and (ii) temporary import; and how many he estimates have exceeded the maximum stay period. [170865]

Mr. Jamieson: Since January 2003, 116,000 new vehicles and 167,000 used vehicles have been permanently imported into the UK and registered at DVLA. A breakdown by type of vehicle is not available.

Vehicles brought into the UK on a temporary basis are exempt from UK licensing and registration requirements if they are here for less than six months in any 12. No record is maintained of these vehicles and consequently no figures are available on the numbers of temporary imports.

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what measures are taken to ensure that vehicles on temporary import are unable to exceed their maximum stay period; and what measures are taken against those vehicles that have exceeded this period. [170866]

Mr. Jamieson: Vehicles on temporary import are exempt from UK licensing and registration requirements, providing they are in this country for less than six months in any 12 and are registered and licensed in their country of origin. If at any time a vehicle used here on foreign plates is stopped by the police, the driver is responsible for demonstrating that he/she is entitled to use it in the UK.

Keepers of foreign registered vehicles who fail to observe these requirements are subject to the same enforcement and prosecution procedures as UK motorists.

DVLA is currently working with the police and local authorities to gather information on temporary imports to clarify the extent of the evasion problem and to introduce effective counter measures.

Potters Bar Accident

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on recent developments in the inquiries into the Potters Bar railway accident. [168091]

Mr. Darling: Both the British Transport Police (BTP) and the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) continue to be involved in the investigation. On 18 March 2004 the lead role in the joint investigation transferred from the BTP to the HSE because of HSE's expertise in the areas in which the investigation is now concentrating. However because the investigation has not yet concluded, the prosecuting authorities have not yet come to a decision on prosecutions.

Rail Projects

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rail projects have been cancelled as being without a sound business case; and how many have been re-scoped since publication of the Strategic Rail Authority's Strategic Plan 2003. [170265]

Mr. Darling: No major rail projects have been cancelled or re-scoped since the publication of the Strategic Rail Authority's Strategic Plan 2003 because they are without a sound business case. Some changes have been made to the West Coast Route Modernisation Scheme and to the scheme to upgrade the power supplies in the south-east. These are intended to provide substantially the same level of outputs at less cost.

Road Noise

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much his Department has spent on research into quieter road surfaces in each of the last 10 years. [170166]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency has undertaken research into various aspects of quieter surfaces in the past 10 years, including the measurement of noise characteristics and durability of proprietary surfacing materials within their overall programme of research into improved road construction techniques. Annual expenditure on the development of quieter road surfaces is not available because most of the projects last for more than one year. However, total expenditure on research projects related to road surface noise characteristics completed since 1993 is around £3 million.

Road Safety

Simon Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many *(a)* pedestrians, *(b)* cyclists, *(c)* drivers and *(d)* car occupants have been (i) injured and (ii) killed in each of the last six years for which figures are available in each Greater London borough. [168880]

Mr. Jamieson *[holding answer 27 April 2004]:* A table showing the information requested for the years 1997 to 2002, which is the latest year for which data are available, has been placed in the Libraries of the House.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what *(a)* percentage and *(b)* number of reported motorway traffic incidents involved a heavy goods vehicle with left hand drive in each of the last three years; and what percentage of those incidents were attributed to poor visibility or blind spots on such vehicles. [170207]

Mr. Jamieson: The information is not available. From January 2005 data relating to heavy goods vehicles with left-hand drive will be collected separately using the STATS19 accident report format. This means the information will be available from June 2006 onwards.

Sea Stores

Mr. Webb: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport what his Department's responsibility is for the Sea Stores building at Yate, South Gloucestershire; for what purpose the building is used; and if he will make a statement on its future use and ownership. [169240]

Mr. Jamieson: The Highways Agency owns the land and the on site storage facilities on Kennedy Way at Yate (the "Sea Stores" site). The site is the central facility for the co-ordination of the bulk purchase and storage of the agency's motorway communications equipment, which serves the national motorway and trunk road network.

As part of the agency's sound business practice, the future use and ownership of the site and its operation remains under continual review.

Transport Energy Best Practice Programme

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how much has been spent on advertising the activities of the Transport Energy Best Practice programme, broken down by *(a)* year and *(b)* activity. [170019]

Mr. Jamieson: The Department, through the Energy Saving Trust, spent £2.0 million in 2003–04 marketing the range of Transport Energy programmes, rising to £2.6 million in 2004–05. These activities include media events, magazine advertising, newsletters and guides, event and award sponsorship and presentations at exhibitions and seminars. It also maintains a dedicated website, www.transportenergy.org.uk and a central call centre.

The Best Practice programme is promoted as part of these activities but it is not possible to apportion specific marketing costs.

Transport Statistics (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of new cycle lanes have been provided using public funds in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997. [170960]

Dr. Howells: A total of 3.8 miles of new cycle lanes has been provided using public funds in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many rural bus services in Oldham, West and Royton are supported by rural bus grants. [170961]

Dr. Howells: Rural Bus Subsidy Grant (RBSG) is paid to local transport authorities; in the case of Oldham West and Royton this is the Greater Manchester Passenger Transport Executive (PTE). It is for the authority to decide which services should be supported with the grant. We understand from the PTE that no bus services in Oldham, West and Royton are provided by RBSG as this area is predominantly urban.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport how many miles of priority bus lanes have been created in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997. [170962]

Dr. Howells: There have been 1.65 miles of priority bus lanes introduced in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the effect of investment in railway improvements over the next 10 years upon residents of Oldham, West and Royton. [170963]

Dr. Howells: Residents of Oldham, West and Royton will benefit from the new TransPennine Express franchise, which commenced in February. The franchise secures investment of around £260 million, which will include the introduction of a new fleet of 100 mph diesel trains leading to increased capacity, improved service quality and performance across the region. A new Northern franchise, which will include local and regional services through Oldham, is out for tender. Work continues on the West Coast Main Line upgrade, which will see reduction in journey times along the route and increases in service frequency.

Tyres

Mr. Paul Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Transport if he will make a statement on the availability of energy efficient tyres and the number *(a)* produced at present and *(b)* likely to be produced in the future. [170020]

Mr. Jamieson: The major tyre manufacturers all produce tyres that offer energy savings compared to other tyres in their ranges. But, the Government does not have detailed data relating to the production and availability of these more energy efficient tyres.

DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER

Council Housing (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on how the change in the level of council funding for housing has affected the residents of South Ribble since 1997. [171283]

Mr. Raynsford: Since 1997 allocations of capital funding to local authorities for housing purposes have risen consistently by about 15 per cent. per annum on average. This includes the Major Repairs Allowance we introduced in 2001–02 specifically for the improvement of local authority stock alongside the Decent Homes standard which sets out minimum standards to be met by 2010. South Ribble transferred its housing stock to New Progress Housing Association in 1994 for £32.3 million. South Ribble's allocation for 2003–04 totalled £1.8 million.

Council Tax (Greater London)

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the percentage council tax change, including all precepts, has been in Greater London, broken down by borough, in each of the last five years. [170503]

Mr. Raynsford: The information requested is tabled as follows.

Percentage change in average (Band D 2 adults) council tax area

	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04	2004–05
London area	6.4	8.1	6.4	18.2	5.8
City of London	3.9	4.1	7.0	19.6	4.3
Inner London					
Camden	1.1	4.8	5.9	15.0	3.7
Greenwich	0.0	3.2	4.7	14.1	4.8
Hackney	6.6	9.7	10.9	13.2	5.4
Hammersmith and Fulham	6.2	5.1	2.5	13.4	5.5
Islington	-2.7	-1.1	-1.1	21.0	5.5
Kensington and Chelsea	7.3	11.9	10.6	17.3	5.4
Lambeth	2.2	13.0	9.3	22.8	5.6
Lewisham	9.7	9.8	9.2	13.0	5.5
Southwark	4.6	6.4	5.6	8.9	3.5
Tower Hamlets	7.8	7.4	4.6	17.2	5.4
Wandsworth	7.4	13.6	-11.7	45.1	2.9
Westminster	7.1	9.3	8.5	28.1	6.1
Outer London					
Barking and Dagenham	6.3	8.2	7.4	15.0	5.9
Barnet	7.1	7.3	4.7	23.9	7.0
Bexley	6.9	9.9	6.3	17.5	7.5
Brent	9.0	8.1	9.8	22.5	6.1
Bromley	9.8	12.3	6.5	10.6	6.9
Croydon	6.5	2.0	3.6	27.3	7.3
Ealing	7.5	8.9	7.5	25.9	7.0
Enfield	8.8	11.0	7.9	17.6	6.3
Haringey	3.8	3.0	2.4	19.4	7.3
Harrow	8.3	10.1	7.5	21.4	4.1
Havering	8.0	12.4	8.1	17.3	5.6
Hillingdon	7.9	10.6	8.9	16.2	5.4
Hounslow	8.1	11.0	7.0	15.5	7.0
Kingston-upon-Thames	8.8	9.7	11.9	15.3	7.1
Merton	10.2	9.8	6.9	12.3	5.8
Newham	9.0	7.7	6.9	13.6	5.4
Redbridge	8.1	7.3	6.9	16.0	5.9
Richmond-upon-Thames	8.9	9.9	9.9	15.6	5.6
Sutton	6.3	9.7	9.4	15.0	7.4
Waltham Forest	4.4	5.8	5.5	19.6	6.3

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what the level of council tax receipts collected by local authorities was in Greater London, irrespective of the financial year to which they relate, broken down by borough, in each year from 1996–97 to 2002–03; and what the population of each authority was in each year. [170504]

Mr. Raynsford: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given on 26 March 2004, *Official Report*, column. 1112–3W for information on the amounts of council tax received by each London borough in each financial year, irrespective of the financial year to which they relate, from 1996–97 to 2002–03.

The latest population estimates for years 1996 to 2002 are in the following table. Population estimates for 1992 to 2000 are subject to revision, and revised estimates are due to be published later in the spring.

Estimated mid-year resident population 1996 to 2002 for Greater London and each London borough

£000

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Greater London (including City of London)	6,901.3	6,927.7	6,968.8	7,041.3	7,104.4	7,307.9	7,355.4
Greater London (excluding City of London)	6,895.7	6,922.1	6,962.7	7,034.8	7,097.5	7,300.5	7,347.5
City of London	5.5	5.6	6.1	6.5	6.9	7.4	7.8
Barking and Dagenham	157.0	157.8	158.9	161.7	162.8	165.9	167.3
Barnet	299.4	300.9	304.6	309.2	310.9	320.1	320.4
Bexley	217.4	215.4	216.6	217.1	218.4	218.8	218.8
Brent	249.5	252.3	255.2	255.8	259.2	270.4	272.4
Bromley	290.0	291.5	290.5	293.9	294.6	296.2	296.8
Camden	182.6	182.0	182.3	185.6	191.4	203.0	207.0
Croydon	326.6	327.9	329.9	328.6	330.3	335.7	336.6
Ealing	289.6	290.3	292.1	297.3	298.4	308.1	308.4
Enfield	262.8	266.0	267.9	270.0	272.0	277.7	281.8
Greenwich	208.1	209.1	209.4	209.7	211.9	217.8	221.4
Hackney	190.6	188.3	190.7	195.2	199.1	207.8	210.2
Hammersmith and Fulham	153.2	152.9	153.3	157.6	160.6	169.9	173.3
Haringey	209.3	212.5	212.1	215.1	215.5	221.9	225.1
Harrow	205.8	205.4	206.4	206.1	206.9	210.5	211.6
Havering	227.0	225.9	225.1	225.6	225.0	224.7	224.2
Hillingdon	239.4	240.1	240.7	242.1	242.9	245.9	246.5
Hounslow	204.1	208.0	209.8	211.5	211.4	216.4	216.6
Islington	173.6	174.1	173.5	173.2	174.7	179.8	181.0
Kensington and Chelsea	136.0	136.8	139.0	143.4	150.4	162.6	165.1

Estimated mid-year resident population 1996 to 2002 for Greater London and each London borough

£000

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
Kingston upon Thames	137.5	139.4	141.6	144.1	145.5	149.3	150.2
Lambeth	258.6	257.9	259.2	262.5	264.2	274.2	271.9
Lewisham	241.7	242.1	245.3	247.1	247.8	254.9	253.8
Merton	179.4	180.1	180.9	183.0	185.5	191.5	192.3
Newham	228.2	228.5	231.6	236.7	240.7	250.1	254.0
Redbridge	231.4	233.4	236.1	235.9	237.5	242.3	244.0
Richmond upon Thames	166.2	167.4	167.9	170.5	170.8	174.5	174.4
Southwark	232.1	233.2	236.4	239.3	242.4	251.1	251.3
Sutton	175.0	176.1	177.2	178.4	179.3	181.6	180.9
Tower Hamlets	180.3	184.4	187.1	191.4	193.9	201.6	206.8
Waltham Forest	219.5	218.9	219.2	219.2	218.7	222.5	223.2
Wandsworth	257.7	256.1	254.5	256.7	258.3	267.5	269.3
Westminster	166.3	167.1	167.5	171.2	176.3	186.4	190.6

Note:
Figures may not add due to rounding.
Source:
Office for National Statistics.

Simon Hughes: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what percentage of council tax was collected within Greater London, broken down by borough, in each year since 1997; and what the total cost of administering council tax collection was in each year. [170505]

Mr. Raynsford: Tabled as follows are the reported in-year council tax collection rates for each London borough and the City of London for each year from 1997–98 to 2002–03. Figures for 2003–04 are not yet available. The collection of council tax continues after the end of the financial year to which it relates. This means that the percentage of council tax ultimately collected for any financial year is greater than that shown in the table.

In-year council tax collection rates[1]

Percentage

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03
Inner London						
City of London	97.5	97.4	98.2	98.3	98.4	97.6
Camden	88.5	91.1	92.3	92.7	93.5	92.7
Greenwich	92.2	92.2	91.3	92.2	92.0	92.8
Hackney	78.1	74.5	67.9	67.8	74.0	79.5
Hammersmith and Fulham	89.1	92.3	93.2	93.8	94.5	95.1
Islington	88.3	88.9	90.2	90.0	91.5	88.4
Kensington and Chelsea	94.9	95.2	95.6	96.0	95.6	95.6
Lambeth	80.3	80.3	84.4	82.0	86.5	90.1
Lewisham	90.6	90.6	92.0	93.3	93.7	93.7
Southwark	81.9	81.3	80.2	87.1	90.2	92.0
Tower Hamlets	86.7	88.1	88.3	89.3	90.7	91.8
Wandsworth	90.9	91.4	92.8	94.0	94.5	94.8
Westminster	92.6	93.7	92.9	91.8	93.0	93.5
Average Inner London	88.0	88.5	88.7	89.6	91.1	91.9
Outer London						
Barking and Dagenham	95.0	95.3	94.7	94.0	94.5	91.8
Barnet	95.1	95.6	95.8	96.2	96.2	96.2
Bexley	94.5	94.2	94.9	95.4	95.7	96.0
Brent	89.5	91.4	90.4	92.0	91.1	89.5
Bromley	97.4	97.0	96.3	96.6	96.5	96.4
Croydon	92.4	92.8	91.7	91.9	93.9	94.7
Ealing	94.8	94.9	94.4	93.4	94.1	94.6
Enfield	91.8	93.5	93.7	94.4	94.6	94.6
Haringey	82.3	85.0	85.1	88.8	90.1	92.5
Harrow	96.9	96.8	96.2	98.2	986.	97.2
Havering	97.7	96.8	95.6	96.4	96.1	95.9
Hillingdon	95.0	95.7	95.0	95.6	96.5	95.2
Hounslow	91.9	91.4	93.4	94.0	93.9	93.8
Kingston upon Thames	93.9	91.9	93.7	94.0	95.9	96.5
Merton	95.5	95.1	95.2	95.7	95.6	96.5

In-year council tax collection rates[1]

Percentage

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Newham	82.0	83.1	83.3	84.9	86.8	90.0
Redbridge	96.1	96.1	95.7	95.5	95.7	95.7
Richmond upon Thames	97.3	96.2	96.7	97.0	97.6	97.6
Sutton	97.4	97.0	97.3	97.3	97.3	97.3
Waltham Forest	91.8	87.8	87.7	88.0	90.6	93.0
Average Outer London	93.8	93.9	93.7	94.3	94.9	95.0
Average Greater London	91.8	92.1	92.1	92.8	93.7	94.1

[1] Amount of council tax due received by the end of the financial year as a percentage of the net collectable debit for the year.

Source:
QRC4 returns

Tabled as follows are the reported council tax collection costs for each London borough and the City of London for each year from 1997–98 to 2003–04.

Council tax collection costs

£000

	1997–98 Outturn	*1998–99 Outturn*	*1999–2000 Outturn*	*2000–01 Outturn*	*2001–02 Outturn*	*2002–03 Outturn*	*2003–04 Budgets*
Inner London							
City of London	301	286	281	270	257	326	481
Camden	2,143	2,052	1,737	2,116	2,170	2,323	2,904
Greenwich	2,460	2,365	2,284	2,330	2,330	2,366	2,541
Hackney	2,434	1,999	2,180	2,292	4,964	3,984	2,364
Hammersmith and Fulham	2,009	1,610	1,537	997	1,503	1,348	1,243
Islington	1,822	1,786	1,442	156	1,662	2,117	2,375
Kensington and Chelsea	1,795	1,762	1,839	1,996	1,831	1,719	1,962
Lambeth	3,932	3,299	3,396	3,245	2,122	2,859	2,276
Lewisham	2,439	2,543	2,356	2,518	2,522	2,685	5,118
Southwark	3,276	3,324	3,647	3,482	3,792	4,010	4,280
Tower Hamlets	2,069	2,435	2,150	2,037	1,951	1,904	1,956
Wandsworth	1,662	1,685	1,658	1,461	1,771	2,004	2,007
Westminster	2,265	2,205	2,455	2,190	2,066	2,543	2,584
Total Inner London	28,306	27,065	26,681	24,820	28,684	29,862	31,610
Outer London							
Barking and Dagenham	887	820	869	810	809	861	1,018
Barnet	1,597	1,711	1,977	1,822	2,040	2,177	2,489
Bexley	625	548	536	475	515	452	718
Brent	2,315	2,199	2,291	3,083	390	291	3,170
Bromley	1,459	1,465	1,213	1,180	1,221	937	784
Croydon	2,509	2,622	2,688	2,933	3,032	2,772	3,683
Ealing	2,651	2,520	2,635	2,888	3,089	3,370	4,293
Enfield	2,132	1,697	1,709	1,709	1,789	1,940	1,037
Haringey	2,571	2,843	2,666	2,534	2,460	2,464	2,888
Harrow	1,126	1,124	876	860	811	709	673
Havering	1,731	2,052	2,627	2,554	1,555	1,965	2,514
Hillingdon	1,830	1,891	1,865	2,053	2,221	1,737	2,242
Hounslow	1,717	1,833	1,790	1,678	2,183	2,245	2,338
Kingston upon Thames	681	741	801	963	985	1,198	1,131
Merton	1,662	1,707	1,677	1,856	1,429	1,913	2,213
Newham	1,622	1,911	1,620	1,398	1,749	1,817	1,705
Redbridge	2,041	1,994	1,868	1,725	1,800	1,832	1,827
Richmond upon Thames	1,251	1,170	1,082	1,146	1,001	1,426	1,525
Sutton	792	681	658	728	860	883	902
Waltham Forest	2,367	2,522	2,169	1,879	2,478	3,178	2,968
Total Outer London	33,566	34,051	33,617	34,274	32,417	34,167	40,118
Total Greater London	61,872	61,116	60,298	59,094	61,101	64,029	71,728

Source:
RO6 returns (1997–98 to 2002–03) and RA returns (2003–04)

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on official entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169010]

Yvette Cooper: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister was created following the machinery of Government changes on 29 May 2002. The figures in the following table show how much the Office spent on official entertainment in 2002–3 and 2003–4. Details of the planned expenditure for 2004–5 are not yet available, but are expected to be on similar lines to earlier years.

Entertainment

	£000
2002–03	3,350
2003–04	1,869

All expenditure on official entertainment is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety, based on the principles set out in "Government Accounting".

The expenditure figures for the Government Offices and the Office's executive agencies for official entertainment are not held centrally and could only be provided at disproportionate cost

Elected Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will give the *(a)* total and *(b)* individual costs of the public hearings on elected regional assemblies held in (i) Sheffield, (ii) Newcastle, (iii) Hull, (iv) Liverpool, (v) Kendal, (vi) Halifax and (vii) Middlesbrough. [170097]

Mr. Raynsford: The total cost of the seven hearings mentioned is £66,800. The latest costs of the individual hearings are in the following table:

Location	*£000*
Sheffield	11,600
Newcastle	10,900
Hull	7,600
Liverpool	13,800
Kendal	6,500
Halifax	5,100
Middlesbrough	11,300

Energy Efficiency Grants

Mr. Wiggin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much was spent on grants to aid energy efficiency in each year since 1997. [160875]

Mr. Morley: I have been asked to reply.

Defra currently provides grants to aid energy efficiency through four main routes:

The Carbon Trust—to support and promote energy efficiency and low carbon innovation for business and public sector;

The Energy Saving Trust—to support and promote energy efficiency in the domestic sector;

The Community Energy programme—capital and development funding to refurbish existing and install new community heating schemes;

The Warm Front programme—to provide energy efficiency measures to the vulnerable.

The funding made available by my Department and its predecessors to support and promote efficiency measures in each year since 1997 (including the Energy Saving Trust and the Carbon Trust) is of the scale set out in the following table.

	£ million
1997–98	110.5
1998–99	109.0
1999–2000	112.0
2000–01	119.0
2001–02	256
2002–03	225
2003–04	[1]243

[1] Budget.

These figures include the Energy Efficiency Best Practice programme, support for the Energy Saving Trust (from 1996), Fuel Poverty and for the Carbon Trust (from 1 April 2001). Energy Saving Trust funding for Scotland was devolved from 1 July 1999. The new Home Energy Efficiency Scheme (now marketed as the Warm Front Team) was launched in England in June 2000. Between 1991–1999, the Home Energy Efficiency Scheme covered the whole of Great Britain. Funding was devolved to Scotland in July 1999 and to Wales in April 2000.

Houses in Multiple Occupation

Jon Trickett: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what estimate he has made of the percentage of houses in multiple occupation in England and Wales which will fall within the scope of the mandatory licensing scheme in the Housing Bill. [171220]

Keith Hill: The 1996 English House Condition Survey estimates that there were approximately 543,000 Houses in Multiple Occupation in England and the National Assembly for Wales estimates that there are approximately 20,000 HMOs in Wales. It is estimated that about 120,000 HMOs in England and 5,000 in Wales will be subject to licensing under the mandatory scheme proposed in the Housing Bill. This will represent approximately 22.2 per cent. of the total HMO stock in England and Wales.

Local Authority Funding

Ann Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much central funding was provided to local authorities in the *(a)* North West, *(b)* North East and *(c)* Yorkshire and the Humber regions in 2002–03. [171497]

Mr. Raynsford: Central Government grant *(a)* provided to local authorities in the North West, North East and Yorkshire and the Humber regions in 2002–03 is tabled as follows:

	Amount (£ million)
North West	7,237
North East	2,765
Yorkshire and the Humber	5,031

Source:
2002–03 RS forms.

(a) Includes Specific and special grants inside 'Aggregate External Finance', Police grant, Revenue support grant, Redistributed non-domestic rates.

Planning

Bob Russell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister whether there is a time period after which a temporary structure is deemed to be permanent in respect of *(a)* planning legislation and *(b)* commencement of enforcement proceedings; and if he will make a statement. [171737]

Keith Hill: The rules governing temporary structures provided in connection with temporary uses of land are set out in Part 4 of Schedule 2 to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. If such a structure were to remain on site after the temporary use had ended, it would be unlawful and could be the subject of enforcement action.

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how much the planning inspectorate has spent on external consultants, not including consultant inspectors, since 2002. [170043]

Keith Hill: Information is provided for financial years 2002–03 and 2003–04.

£

	2002–03	*2003–04*
Consultants—non IT	477,206.65	541,424.91
IT consultants	512,586.01	375,231.00
E-business consultants	2,785,132.94	1,720,815.83
Total	3,774,925.60	2,637,471.74

Mrs. Helen Clark: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what mechanisms are in place to assess the effectiveness of the contribution made by external consultants, not including consultant inspectors, to the planning inspectorate. [170044]

Keith Hill: External consultants are engaged by The Planning Inspectorate when it is not possible to provide the required expertise from in-house resources. All consultants are contracted to undertake tasks relevant to the particular requirement and to deliver specific products.

The effectiveness of the contribution made by external consultants is assessed through an ongoing process of performance measurement and sound contract management. This seeks to ensure that contractual obligations are met as efficiently and effectively as possible, quality products delivered to time, business objectives met and benefits realised.

All projects are subject to Office of Government Commerce gateway Reviews.

Regional Assemblies

Mr. Jenkin: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister how many copies of *(a)* Your Say: A New Opportunity for the North East, *(b)* "Your Say: a New Opportunity for the North West", *(c)* "Your Say: A New Opportunity for Yorkshire and the Humber", *(d)* "Your Say: Business and Jobs", *(e)* "Your Say: Assembly Powers and Responsibilities" and *(f)* "Your Say: Housing, Planning and Transport" have been requested by members of the public in (i) the North East, (ii) the North West and (iii) Yorkshire and the Humber. [169258]

Mr. Raynsford: The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's free leaflet distributor has issued 6201 "A New Opportunity for the North East" leaflet, 6603 "A New Opportunity for the North West" and 2132 "A New Opportunity for Yorkshire and the Humber" to members of the public and organisations who have requested them.

620 copies of "A New Opportunity for the North East" leaflet and of each individual fact sheet were given to attendees of the regional hearings in the North East.

628 copies of "A New Opportunity for the North West" leaflet and of each individual fact sheet were given to attendees of the regional hearings in the North West.

605 copies of "A New Opportunity for Yorkshire and the Humber" leaflet and of each individual fact sheet were given to attendees of the regional hearings in Yorkshire and the Humber.

Copies of all this literature are also available upon request from the three northern Government Offices. However, requests for leaflets are not logged by Government Offices on an individual basis.

Scottish Power

Ann Winterton: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister when he last met representatives of Scottish Power Plc; who was present; and what was on the agenda for discussion. [167338]

Yvette Cooper: I refer the hon. Member to the answer given to the hon. Member on 5 May 2004.

Starter Homes Initiative (South Ribble)

Mr. Borrow: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister if he will make a statement on how the Starter Homes Initiative has affected the residents of South Ribble. [171284]

Keith Hill: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Bootle (Mr. Benton) on 29 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1228W.

Sustainable Communities Plan (Milton Keynes/South Midlands)

Mr. Boswell: To ask the Deputy Prime Minister what studies he has commissioned in connection with the Milton Keynes/South Midlands sustainable communities plan

concerning *(a)* impacts on (i) stocks of aggregates, (ii) flooding and (iii) water supply and *(b)* other environmental impacts. [170098]

Keith Hill: In July 2001 the Government, along with the three Regional Assemblies covering the Milton Keynes-South Midlands sub-region: East of England, East Midlands and South East, commissioned the Milton Keynes-South Midlands Study. This study considered in detail a range of issues, including the impact of growth on natural resources and the environment. Supporting the sub-regional study are more detailed local area assessments and further environmental assessments will be carried out as part of the Local Development Framework process. In addition work on these issues is being taken forward through the Inter-Regional board for Milton Keynes-South Midlands, where a Utilities sub-group and an Environment and Quality of Life sub-group have been established.

HOME DEPARTMENT

Community Events

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department (1) what assessment he has made of *(a)* the impact of changes in the cost of public liability insurance on community events and *(b)* the ability of community organisations to pay for public liability insurance; [169898]

(2) what representations his Department has received from community organisations about changes in the cost of public liability insurance. [169900]

Fiona Mactaggart: I am aware of the problems being experienced by those in the voluntary and community sector, as a result of the volatility in the insurance market since 11 September 2001. It is deeply worrying that small groups of volunteers who are making a real contribution to their communities are being faced with such difficulty.

The Active Community Unit in my Department set up the "Insurance Cover Working Group (ICWG)" to look into the situation and advise on practical solutions. A study was undertaken into the current position regarding the provision of insurance for the voluntary and community sector, including public indemnity liability, which made suggestions as to possible solutions.

A response to these possible solutions will be made in May following close working with other Government Departments, as a number of initiatives are already being taken forward by the Government to understand better and tackle the difficulties being experienced. In that context, the Government welcomes the current study being undertaken by the Better Regulation Task Force on litigation and compensation. This work will contribute to the analysis of pressures in this area, as other studies have already, for example; The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) undertook a review of the operation of Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance (ELCI), and published a first stage report on 3 June 2003, and the second stage and final report on 4 December 2003. Following that initiative the DWP is at present holding a review of the requirement for Employers' Liability Compulsory Insurance for Limited Companies that employ only their owner. Also, the Office of Fair Trading conducted a fact-finding study into the UK Liability Insurance reporting in June 2003, and the Department for Constitutional Affairs (DCA), is working to ensure that legal costs are proportionate and that meritorious claims are resolved quickly and at minimum cost.

I am very much aware that the increasing costs for the provision of liability insurance have impacted on the ability of voluntary and community groups to deliver services and community events. Therefore the outcomes of the work across Government will have important implications for the Voluntary and Community Section (VCS) as practical solutions are being sought in partnership with the voluntary and community sector, the insurance industry, local authorities and government departments.

Animal Experiments

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps the Government take to tackle intimidation of workers and firms providing services to companies and universities carrying out research on animals. [167400]

Caroline Flint: We have made a number of changes to strengthen the law to deal with extremists. The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 strengthened police powers to deal with smaller, intimidatory protests and office occupations by extremists. The police are using these new powers effectively. A new police unit has been set up with Government funding to provide tactical guidance on policing extremists. The new unit complements work already going on in local forces and nationally.

A National Forum on policing and prosecution of animal rights cases has been established in order to pull together individual areas of expertise within the police, Crown Prosecution Service and the courts to create a national strategic approach to dealing with animal rights extremists.

We have produced guidance for security managers of companies who might be targeted by extremists, to help ensure their employees' personal safety. A ministerial committee is meeting regularly to look at the problem of animal rights extremism.

Animal Rights Activists

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what steps his Department is taking to limit the activities of animal rights activists. [168981]

Caroline Flint: The Government are determined to ensure that business activities in this area are not prevented by the unlawful activities of a small number of people. A ministerial committee is meeting regularly to look at the problem of animal rights extremism.

There are extensive powers available to the police in the general law. In addition we have made a number of changes to strengthen the law to deal with extremists. The Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003 strengthened police powers to deal with smaller, intimidatory protests and

office occupations by extremists. A new police unit has been set up with Government funding to provide tactical guidance on policing extremists. The new unit complements work going on in local forces and nationally.

A National Forum on policing and prosecution of animal rights cases has been established in order to pull together individual areas of expertise within the police, Crown Prosecution Service and the courts to create a national strategic approach to dealing with animal rights extremists.

We have produced guidance for security managers of companies who might be targeted by extremists, to help ensure their employees' personal safety.

Antisocial Behaviour Orders

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many persons have been subject to antisocial behaviour orders in Wandsworth since 1 January 2002; and how many breaches of anti-social behaviour orders have resulted in court action in the London borough of Wandsworth since 1 January 2002. [169769]

Ms Blears: Three Anti-social Behaviour Orders (ASBOs) have been issued within the London borough of Wandsworth, as notified to the Home Office, from 1 January 2002 up to 31 December 2003 (latest available).

Data on breaches of ASBOs are currently available up to December 2002. The Home Office Court Proceedings Database, from 1 January 2002 up to 31 December 2002, does not show any court proceedings for breaches of ASBOs in the London borough of Wandsworth.

Asylum Seekers

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what assessment he has made of the impact of section 55 of the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002 on female asylum seekers; and what assessment he has made of the number that are forced into prostitution. [171041]

Mr. Browne: Assessment of the impact of section 55 on female asylum seekers is integral to the close monitoring of the operation of the policy since implementation on 8 January 2003. As part of these arrangements the National Asylum Support Service maintains an open dialogue with the voluntary sector agencies, local government and other stakeholders. The Government have reviewed section 55 in the light of experience of its operation, the changing pattern of asylum applications since implementation and concerns raised about the impact of the policy.

The Government believes that these arrangements for monitoring and reviewing the operation of section 55 and working with stakeholders, together with the statutory safeguards and the adjustments that have been made to section 55 processes, provide a balanced but firm policy that discourages economic migration, while continuing to offer refuge to those seeking asylum, and providing support for those who qualify or who are vulnerable.

No evidence has been produced to indicate that female asylum seekers have been forced into prostitution as a result of section 55.

Dangerous Driving

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people have been prosecuted in each of the last 10 years for causing the death of a child whilst driving. [169073]

Caroline Flint: It is not possible to identify deaths involving children in the statistics collected centrally on prosecutions for causing death by dangerous driving etc as the details collected do not include the ages of the victims of such offences.

Drugs (Stalybridge and Hyde)

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many people in Stalybridge and Hyde are receiving drug treatment; and what public funds were spent on tackling drugs misuse in Stalybridge and Hyde in *(a)* 1997–98 and *(b)* 2003–04. [168734]

Caroline Flint: Stalybridge and Hyde is part of Tameside Drug Action Team. There were 733 people receiving drug treatment in Tameside in 2000–01. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by Drug Action Team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 have not yet been finalised and published.

Breakdown of financial allocation to local constituencies is not available in the form requested as funding is allocated to Drug Action Team (DAT) area.

The figure spent on tackling drug misuse in 1997–98 in West Pennine, which covered Oldham and Tameside, was £279,000. This was prior to the formation of the National Drugs Strategy, and this figure has been provided from locally held information.

In 2003–04 the figures for Tameside as a whole were:

	£
Pooled Treatment	921,000
Young People	169,000
Building Safer Communities[1]	267,000
DAT CAD	31,000
DAT Development	40,000
Throughcare and Aftercare	35,000
Total	1,463,000

[1] Please note that the Building Safer Communities Fund is only partly spent on tackling drugs.

In order to ensure consistency figures supplied are based on funding streams associated with the National Drug Strategy and are readily verifiable. These funding streams are specifically targeted at tackling the harm caused to individuals, families and communities by the misuse of drugs. Other mainstream funding is made available at a local level, this varies and both in amount and origin as a result it is not possible to provide robust financial information.

Emergency Services

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on how many occasions in each of the last 12 months police vehicles on emergency calls have contravened speed cameras, broken down by police authority area. [170738]

Ms Blears: The information is not collected centrally.

Extradition

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether district judges are monitored to ensure that they ascertain whether individuals who consent to extradition have had access to legal advice. [165890]

Caroline Flint: Section 45(5) and section 127(6) of the Extradition Act 2003 require that a person may not give his consent to extradition before the appropriate judge unless he is legally represented at the time he gives consent. If he is not legally represented then he must have been advised of the right to apply for legal aid and has either refused to do so, had his legal aid application refused or legal aid has been withdrawn.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the *(a)* 1989 and *(b)* 1965 Extradition Acts have been repealed. [165888]

Caroline Flint: Except for requests that were received on or before 31 December 2003, the Extradition Act 1989 was repealed by the Extradition Act 2003, which came into force on 1 January 2004.

Prior to the coming into force of the new extradition legislation, the UK's extradition relations with the Republic of Ireland were governed by the Backing of Warrants (Republic of Ireland) Act 1965 which has also been repealed by the Extradition Act 2003. The Republic of Ireland has been designated as a Category 1 territory and, as such, is a partner in the European Arrest Warrant. As with the 1989 Act, any cases received from the Republic of Ireland on or before 31 December 2003 will be considered under the Backing of Warrants Act 1965.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether countries which allow the death penalty as a form of punishment are prohibited from designation for the purposes of part 1 of the Extradition Bill. [165889]

Caroline Flint: Section 1(3) of the Extradition Act 2003 states that a territory may not be designated for the purposes of part 1 of the Extradition Act 2003 if a person found guilty in the territory of a criminal offence may be sentenced to death for the offence under the general criminal law of the territory.

Identity Cards

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what penalty he proposes will apply to an individual who discloses information from the National Identity Register. [170325]

Mr. Browne: The criminal offences and civil penalties that will be used to ensure that an identity card scheme operates effectively are set out in "Legislation: A Consultation" (Cm 6178) published on 26 April.

Clause 29 of the draft Bill includes an offence for any person to disclose information from the National Identity Register without lawful authority, which will be punishable by a maximum penalty of two years imprisonment or a fine, or both.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what penalties will be applicable to hackers attempting to access the National Identity Register. [170326]

Mr. Browne: Clause 31 of the draft Identity Cards Bill published by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 26 April (Cm 6178) deals with cases where someone modifies information held on the Register to falsify it. This includes hacking into the Register. Such an act would be an offence under the Computer Misuse Act 1990, however it would attract only a maximum penalty of five years.

The draft Identity Cards Bill includes a provision to increase the maximum penalty in cases involving the National Identity Register to 10 years to ensure consistency with the false identity documents offences in the draft Bill.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department who will have access to the information recorded on the National Identity Register; and under what circumstances. [170345]

Mr. Browne: Proposals to permit information held on the National Identity Register to be disclosed with and without an individual's consent are set out in "Legislation on Identity Cards: A Consultation" (Cm 6178) published on 26 April.

It is incorrect to say that any body or person will have "access" to the Register, rather the legislation will permit the Secretary of Sate to disclose information where a person consents or, where a person does not consent, only for specified purposes to specified persons.

Clause 14 provides for the provision of an identity verification service with the consent of the registered individual.

Clause 16 provides a power to enable checks to be made of information recorded in the Register by a person providing a public service for the purposes of ascertaining or verifying information of an individual applying for the public service. Clause 17 (1) sets out who may make regulations under Clause 16.

There will be a general power to disclose information to the security and intelligence agencies for their statutory purposes under clause 20.

In addition, law enforcement agencies will be able to seek disclosure of information from the National Identity Register for the prevention or investigation of crime under clause 20 (3). For these groups, disclosure of "audit trails" of card usage would be permitted only in cases of serious crime under clause 20 (8). The police in Scotland will have similar powers but will only be permitted to apply for disclosure in relation to matters that arereserved under clause 20 (7)*(b)*.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what use will be made of data-sharing powers in background checks of applicants for identity cards. [170346]

Mr. Browne: "Identity Cards: The Next Steps" (Cm 6020) published in November 2003 made it clear that applications for one of the family of identity cards will require checks to be made against other databases, held by the public or private sector, in order to help establish that an application for a card is genuine. This followed recommendations on identity verification included in the Cabinet Office study on Identity Fraud, published in July 2002.

Clause 11 of the draft Bill includes a power to require organisations to provide information which will help to ensure that a person who applies to register is the person he or she claims to be. This power will only be used where there is no existing legal basis for this information to be obtained and will only apply for the purposes of processing applications for an identity card or for related purposes (for example, issuing a replacement). These powers do not confer any general right to share data for wider purposes.

Under clause 11 (6) Parliament would have to approve each "gateway" via an affirmative order.

Checks such as these could, for example, confirm that a person had been known by a certain identity and lived at known addresses for a number of years. This information is more difficult to know, to change, or to fabricate and will guard against registration of bogus identities and avoids relying solely on documents that can be stolen or forged, such as birth certificates.

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information will be required to be provided by an applicant for an identity card. [170347]

Mr. Browne: When applying for an identity card, it will be necessary to make an application in person so that biometric information can be recorded. Applicants will also be asked to bring along existing identity documentation, which will be checked for authenticity and validity.

The precise arrangements for what information will be necessary for making an application will be decided as the identity cards programme progresses following further preparatory work and testing of different options. It may also be necessary to make changes to the application process over time. These arrangements are therefore not spelt out on the face of the draft Identity Cards Bill. Rather provision is included for the detailed arrangements to be set out in Regulations. Clause 5(3) of the draft Bill makes clear that an application for registration and thus the issue of an ID card must be accompanied by information to be prescribed and Clause 5(4) enables further information to be required in order to verify the information the applicant has already provided. These arrangements must be approved by Parliament and no information may be required unless it is required for the statutory purposes of the scheme as set out in the primary legislation.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department on what grounds it will be permitted for members of the public to be stopped and asked to produce their identity card; and what safeguards will be put in place to ensure that people are not asked to produce their identity cards for other reasons. [170647]

Mr. Browne: The introduction of identity cards will make it much easier and simpler for people to prove their identity when they wish to do so. However, the draft Identity Cards Bill has made clear that it will not be a requirement to carry an identity card and there are no new police powers to stop people and require them to produce a card.

The draft Bill does allow for Regulations to be made for identity checks, including production of a card, to access public services. Regulations for each service would need to be approved by Parliament. Before regulations are laid, the Government must explain why its existing powers in relation to a particular service are not sufficient (Clause 17(4)) and steps must be taken to ensure that members of the public are informed and consulted about the proposal. Clause 17(5) requires there to be consultation with interested parties if there is an equivalent requirement in other legislation to consult these interested parties.

Until it became compulsory to register, the ID card could not be the only way of proving identity to access social security benefits or free public services. In addition the intention of Clause 19 is to prohibit a private sector service provider making production of an ID card the only way of accessing its services before there is compulsion to register.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the exceptional circumstances will be under which disclosure of information from the National Identity Register is allowed without an individual's consent. [170648]

Mr. Browne: Proposals to permit information held on the National Identity Register to be disclosed with and without an individual's consent are set out in "Legislation on Identity Cards: A Consultation" (Cm 6178) published on 26 April.

There will be an exception to the general bar on disclosing information without consent, but disclosure will only be allowed to specified persons for specified purposes approved by Parliament and will be subject to an internal authorisation and independent oversight procedure.

There will be a general power to disclose information to the security and intelligence agencies for their statutory purposes under clause 20.

In addition, law enforcement agencies will be able to seek disclosure of information from the National Identity Register for the prevention or investigation of crime under clause 20 (3). For these groups, disclosure of "audit trails" of card usage would be permitted only in cases of serious crime under clause 20 (8). The police in Scotland will have similar powers but will only be permitted to apply for disclosure in relation to matters that are reserved under clause 20 (7)*(b)*.

Madrid Bombing

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether he has received requests from *(a)* Spain and *(b)* Morocco for the extradition of persons in connection with the Madrid train bombing; and if he will make a statement. [167172]

Caroline Flint: Before an arrest has been made, it is long-standing Home Office policy and practice not to confirm or deny whether any extradition requests for certain individuals have been made to, or received by, the UK for obvious reasons.

Ministerial Meetings

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he last met the Lord Chief Justice. [169887]

Mr. Blunkett: I have regular bilateral meetings with the Lord Chief Justice.

National Identity Register

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information that pertains to public services for which the devolved administrations have responsibility he plans will be held by the National Identity Register. [171294]

Mr. Browne: The information which may be held in the National Identity Register is specified in Clause 1 and Schedule 1 of the draft Identity Cards Bill which was published on 26 April. The Register's function is to verify identity and residential status and it therefore has no need to hold information which is specific to a particular public service.

NCIS

Mr. Brady: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the budget of the National Criminal Intelligence Service was in each of the last five years. [166460]

Paul Goggins: The information is as follows:

	£ million
2000–01	47.5
2001–02	49.5
2002–03	68.5
2003–04	72.2
2004–05	83.3

The year-on-year position may not be directly comparable because the figures shown exclude cost of capital and depreciation charges that were introduced in 2002–03 under Resource Accounting and Budgeting. In addition, the figures shown also exclude funding for specific projects. It should also be noted that during 2002–03, the funding of the National Criminal Intelligence Service changed from police levy funding to core Home Office grant under the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001.

Policing/Crime Statistics

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Oldham, West and Royton has been since 1997. [170953]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Oldham, West and Royton are part of the Oldham BCU. Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Oldham BCU increased by 3.5 per cent. (from 423 to 438). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Michael Todd) and within the Oldham BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* vehicle thefts in Preston has been since 1997. [169694]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally.

Preston is a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level has only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the percentage change in full-time police officers in Preston has been since 1997. [169698]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

Preston is part of Lancashire Constabulary's Central BCU. Between March 2002 and March 2003 police strength for the Central BCU increased by 1.1 per cent. (from 381.4 to 385.7). The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Paul Stephenson) and within the Central BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many police officers were employed in Wigan in *(a)* 1997 and *(b)* 2003. [169334]

Ms Blears: Information on strength at Basic Command Unit (BCU) level is collected annually and reflects the position at the end of March. Information on BCU strength is only available from 2002.

In March 2002 there were 442.5 officers and in March 2003 there were 473.0 full time equivalent officers employed in the Wigan Basic Command Unit. The deployment of officers to BCUs is a matter for the Chief Constable (Michael Todd) and within the Wigan BCU deployment of officers is a matter for the Divisional Commander.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what percentage change in *(a)* overall recorded crime, *(b)* recorded violent crime, *(c)* burglaries and *(d)* thefts in Wigan there has been since 1997. [169335]

Ms Blears: The information requested is not available centrally. Wigan is a Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) area. Data at CDRP level have only been published from 1999–2000 onwards. Detailed statistics at CDRP level are available for 2002–03 on the new Home Office website: http://www.crimestatistics.org.uk.

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many community safety officers are allocated by Greater Manchester Police to Wigan 'L' Division. [169340]

Ms Blears: As of 1 April 2004 there were 32 community safety officers working in the Wigan 'L' Division of Greater Manchester Police.

Prisons

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how value for money will be shown to have been achieved if in-house bids for the running of existing establishments are not permitted under the current performance testing programme in the Prison Service. [168398]

Paul Goggins: The public sector are given the opportunity to demonstrate their ability to provide a value for money service in their proposals for improvement. Only if they failed to do so, or if they subsequently failed to deliver the necessary improvements, would the management of the prison be put to tender to the private sector only. As is the case in all competitions for the management of prisons, the bid which offered the best combination of cost and quality of service would be selected.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the total cost was to the Prison Service for each prison constructed under the Private Finance Initiative in each year of operation. [167360]

Paul Goggins: The requested information, extrapolated from Prison Service Annual Reports and Accounts, is shown in the table for the years up to 2002–03. The final outturn for 2004–05 will be available shortly.

£

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*
Altcourse	[1]—	29,962,583	33,113,688	35,036,594	35,261,148	32,154,593
Ashfield	—	—	[1]—	15,834,762	14,426,845	9,820,999
Dovegate	—	—	—	—	[1]—	24,511,442
Forest Bank	—	—	[1]—	22,480,153	22,040,504	20,821,813
Lowdham Grange	[1]—	15,942,120	15,450,822	15,975,509	14,893,288	13,159,649
Parc	[1]—	27,888,480	29,766,258	31,676,362	32,386,551	31,322,995
Rye Hill	—	—	—	[1]—	15,344,851	14,103,266

[1] Represent the year in which the prison opened. Part years are excluded from the accounts.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what the construction costs were for each prison built under the Private Finance Initiative. [167361]

Paul Goggins: The construction costs for each prison built under the Private Finance Initiative, derived from the original financial model on which payment to the contractor is based, are:

	£ million
Altcourse	68
Ashfield	26
Dovegate	64
Forest Bank	45
Lowdham Grange	25
Parc	47
Rye Hill	37

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what estimate he has made of the saving that has been made by the Prison Service through building prisons through the Private Finance Initiative compared to alternative methods of financing such construction; and if he will make a statement. [167362]

Paul Goggins: Savings achieved through the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) in respect of prisons are calculated on the basis of comparing the total cost of the contract, including construction, finance and operating costs, against the public sector comparator. On that basis, the PFI process has delivered savings in the range of 10 per cent. to 15 per cent. compared with conventional procurement.

Mr. Gerrard: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when the most recent assessment was made of the cost of a privately built, publicly run prison; what the outcome was; and if he will make a statement. [167364]

Paul Goggins: The latest assessments of a privately built, publicly run prison were the public sector comparators (PSCs) used in evaluating the bids for the contracts for Bonzefield and Peterborough prisons. The PSC for Bronzefield was 11 per cent. higher and the PSC for Peterborough 8.2 per cent. higher than the Net Present Values of the winning bids.

Public Sector Workers (Assaults)

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department what information his Department collects on assaults on public sector workers during the course of their work. [169450]

Ms Blears: In January 2004, the Home Office published an on-line report entitled "Violence at Work: Findings from the 2002–2003 British Crime Survey". This report includes information regarding the occupation of victims of violence at work. It is

available on the Home Office Research and Statistics website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/rdsolr0404.pdf

Assaults on public sector workers which are recorded by the police are included in Home Office recorded crime statistics. However, the only assaults on public sector workers which are identified separately are 'Assaults on a constable' Statistics on these offences for England and Wales are given in Table 3.04 of HO Statistical Bulletin 7/03 'Crime in England and Wales 2002–03'. This is also available on the website at: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/pdfs2/703chap3.xls

Road Safety

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many prosecutions have been brought against people speaking on a mobile phone whilst driving. [171104]

Ms Blears: The specific offence of driving while using a hand held mobile phone came into effect on 1 December 2003.

Data on police action (written warnings, fixed penalty notices and court proceedings) for the new offence of driving while using a hand held mobile telephone will not be available until the Autumn of 2004. Use of a hands free mobile phone is not an offence.

Serious Organised Crime Agency

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department whether the Serious Organised Crime Agency will include in its remit the activities of animal rights activists; and if he will make a statement. [168933]

Caroline Flint: Proposals for the Serious Organised Crime Agency were set out in the White Paper 'One Step Ahead: A 21st century strategy to defeat organised crime' (CM6167), published on 29 March. We have invited comments on the proposals by 30 July and will consider those carefully before making decisions as to the full remit of the new agency.

Terrorism

Patrick Mercer: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department when he plans to make the results of the recent consultation questionnaire regarding the level of preparedness of each council known to individual councils and their emergency planning officers. [170070]

Mr. Raynsford: I have been asked to reply.

The Government Offices in the Regions are currently providing written reports on this exercise for the Regional Resilience Forums (on which local authorities are represented). If individual local authorities want to discuss the exercise, they should approach the relevant Government Office, who will be happy to brief them.

Traffic Police (Sussex)

Mr. Gibb: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department how many traffic police there are in Sussex Police. [169443]

Ms Blears: Published information on police strength by police force area is available for rank, gender and ethnicity but not function. Figures on police atrength for March 2003, were published in Home Office Statistical Bulletin 11/03, copies of which are available in the Library or on the internet site: http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/hosbpubs1.html.

UK/US Extradition

Mr. Russell Brown: To ask the Secretary of State for the Home Department if he will make a statement on progress with implementation of the UK-US Extradition Treaty set up in March 2003. [164220]

Caroline Flint: The new Treaty was signed by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary and the US Attorney General on 31 March 2003. It was approved by both Houses of Parliament on 16 and 17 December 2003 and it has already been given effect in the UK by the Extradition Act 2003,which came into force on 1 January 2004. The Treaty will be brought into force in the United States when it has been approved and ratified by the US Senate.

INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Bilateral Aid

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the top 20 countries in receipt of bi-lateral aid from his Department, and the amount of aid given to each, in *(a)* 1998–99 and *(b)* 2002–03. [170982]

Hilary Benn: The top 20 recipients of bilateral aid from the Department of International Development in each of the years in question were as follows:

DFID bilateral programme—Top 20 recipients

	£ million
1998–99	
India	82
Bangladesh	67
Ghana	53
Uganda	53
Tanzania	50
Malawi	47
China	39
Kenya	33
Montserrat	31
Russian Federation	31
South Africa	29
Mozambique	26
Indonesia	25
Pakistan	24
Sudan	24
Nepal	17
Zimbabwe	15
Zambia	15
Rwanda	14
Nigeria	11
Total	686

DFID bilateral programme—Top 20 recipients

	£ million
2002–03	
India	161
Tanzania	96
Bangladesh	77
Afghanistan	75
Ghana	56
Uganda	55
Malawi	52
Kenya	45
Ethiopia	43
China	42
Zambia	41
Pakistan	39
Mozambique	38
South Africa	36
Sierra Leone	32
Rwanda	32
Nigeria	31
Zimbabwe	30
Nepal	28
Russian Federation	27
Total	1036

HIV/AIDS

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what projects his Department funds to combat the spread of AIDS in Africa; how much expenditure is committed to each project; and what the time scale is of each project. [170596]

Hilary Benn: I have arranged for a copy of a table entitled 'Africa—Operational Projects/Programmes to combat HIV/AIDS' to be placed in the Library of the House. This identifies all those programmes or projects currently funded by the Department for International Development, which have a policy objective of "combating HIV/AIDS ". The total commitment is more than £1 billion. This figure includes expenditure already incurred against these ongoing activities as well as some future planned spending.

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what plans he has to increase expenditure levels for projects in Africa to combat the spread of AIDS over the next three years. [170597]

Hilary Benn: In December 2003, the UK Government's Call for Action on HIV/AIDS announced that DFID will make HIV/AIDS a priority for the additional funds that the UK will be devoting to Africa by 2006. Many of those African countries worst affected by HIV/AIDS are among the DFID's bilateral country partners, (over 80 per cent. of AIDS' deaths occur in DFID's 16 African partner countries). The new UK Strategy on HIV/AIDS, to be published this summer, will cover the level of the UK's future resource commitments for HIV/AIDS.

Several DFID African bilateral country programmes have recently stepped up expenditure in support of programmes to help combat HIV/AIDS; for example: a £25 million project for strengthening Nigeria's capacity to respond effectively to HIV/AIDS, and in Tanzania, DFID is working with the Tanzanian Government to set up an HIV/AIDS Fund of around £15 million per year over the next three years. In Malawi a programme is being designed that focuses on actions to help address the impact of HIV/AIDS on human resources in health and other sectors.

However, scaling-up the HIV/AIDS response will not only require additional expenditure for HIV/AIDS-specific programmes. The socio-economic impact of HIV/AIDS and the vulnerability of the poor people in developing countries to HIV/AIDS mean that DFID's overall development effort around support for country owned Poverty Reduction Strategies remain of central importance. DFID's continuing work in the area of capacity building, education, public and financial sector reform and strengthening of civil society will all contribute to combating HIV/AIDS.

DFID will make HIV/AIDS and Africa a centrepiece of the UK's Presidencies of the G8 and the EU in 2005. This creates an opportunity to work with the international community to increase the global HIV/AIDS response in Africa. If DFID is to succeed with our efforts we shall need to focus on four challenges that are seen as key to unlocking faster progress: Stronger political direction, better funding, better donor co-ordination and better HIV/AIDS programmes.

Mr. Bercow: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development (1) when the Department will report progress on its targets *(a)* to reduce maternal mortality and *(b)* to tackle HIV/AIDS in Asia; [171682]

(2) if he will make a statement on progress on *(a)* the reduction of the under five mortality rate and *(b)* the TB treatment rates in Asia. [171684]

Hilary Benn: DFID's Departmental Report for 2004 (Reference code CM 6214), published on 5 May, reports on progress against the targets to reduce maternal mortality and to tackle HIV/AIDS and also to increase TB treatment rates in Asia. Copies of this report have been placed in the Library of the House.

International Plan of Action on Ageing

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what action his Department *(a)* has taken and *(b)* intends to take in relation to the findings of the International Plan of Action on Ageing 2002. [170984]

Hilary Benn: DFID was closely involved in the preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, held in Madrid in 2002. For example DFID supported the UN secretariat for the Assembly and also provided funding for the African Union's leadership and for the non-governmental organisation HelpAge International (HAI) to participate in the policy development process. DFID's support helped to ensure that poverty reduction and other development issues were fully reflected in the International Plan of Action, so that it provides a good basis for further action by the international community.

The eradication of poverty is a fundamental aim of the International Plan of Action. DFID's aim is also the elimination of poverty in poorer countries. Older people are often among the poorest. The problems faced by many older people are therefore included in the policy

analyses currently being carried out by DFID on chronic poverty and on social exclusion. DFID is also funding research at the Centre for Chronic Poverty and Development Policy at Manchester, in partnership with HelpAge International, into elderly people living in poverty. Other recently completed research projects looked at the migration of older people from South Asia and at non-contributory pensions and poverty prevention.

The Action Plan advocates the active participation of older people in society and development. DFID's approach recognises the human rights of poor people, including older people and seeks to ensure that they are consulted on policies and decisions that affect them. DFID encourages their participation in research and in the development of policies that affect them. This increases understanding of how they perceive their rights and of the obstacles they face in obtaining their entitlements.

DFID has had a strategic Programme Partnership Agreement with HelpAge International (HAI) since 2002. The purpose is to influence the development of policies and practices that promote rights and opportunities for older people and to maximise their contribution to society. DFID has provided funding of £2.46 million under this Agreement over the financial years 2002–03 to 2004–05. Funding for future years has still to be negotiated.

HAI's work includes support for setting up effective groups of older citizens in developing countries. This includes strengthening them to monitor how their governments carry out their commitments to reduce the poverty of older people, including the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. This project also encourages dialogue between governments, civil society and older people to ensure that effective policies and programmes are developed to reduce poverty among older people. A major objective of HAI is to raise awareness of the impact of HIV/AIDS on older people. They also support work to inform older people of their rights—for example a programme in South Africa to train older people to give affordable legal advice at village level on issues such as widowhood and inheritance.

Examples of projects funded by DFID country programmes include support for the development of services for older people in the Kemerovo region of Russia and projects in the Overseas Territories of Montserrat and St. Helena to provide sheltered housing and other support for elderly people to live in the community.

Primary Schools (Developing Countries)

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development if he will list the projects being funded by his Department which will lead to more primary school places being made available in developing countries in the current financial year. [169373]

Mr. Gareth Thomas: The UK Government are working in the poorest countries in the world and with the international community to help governments provide education for millions of children who are out-of-school. Total investment in education from 1997–2002 was around £820 million. During the last financial year of 2003–04 DFID has spent over £170 million on education in developing countries, providing books and equipment, building new schools, paying teacher salaries and providing training for teachers. This figure is set to rise to over £250 million per year for the next four years.

Progress has already been made in many countries; global enrolment in primary education increased from £596 million in 1990 to £648 million children in 2000.

There are projects supporting primary education in several countries including Bangladesh, China, Democratic Republic of Congo, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Kenya, Malawi, Nigeria (with the World Bank), Pakistan, Rwanda, South Africa, Sudan, Tanzania, Vietnam and Zambia. Projects in Nepal are also under development. In addition, DFID supports education in Mozambique and Uganda through budget support.

In Vietnam, DFID supports the implementation of the Governments recently approved National Education for All action plan. This includes support for a range of actions to ensure sufficient primary school places of reasonable quality for all children in educationally disadvantaged districts.

In India for example, the UK Government are providing funds to the Indian Government to help children from four of the poorest states attend and complete a full cycle of basic schooling. In Kenya, the Government recently stopped school fees at primary school. Making education free has brought a dramatic rise in the number of children going to school—over one million extra children. DFID is supporting the Kenyan Government to provide enough school places to keep up with demand and to ensure that quality is sustained. Finally, in Ethiopia the Government has prioritized primary education. Although enrolment is among the lowest in sub-Saharan Africa, progress is on track and the Gross Enrolment Rate has doubled over the last 10 years to 65 per cent.

Uganda

Tom Brake: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development which consultants are retained by his Department to provide the Government of Uganda with advice on delivery of public services; what the value of the contracts with the consultants is; and what the nature of the consultants' brief is. [171207]

Hilary Benn: The requested information is shown as follows.

Consultant name	*Contract purpose*	*Contract value (£)*
Marine Resources Assessment Group (MRAG)	Integrated lake management project	4,527,051
Agrisystems Ltd.	Improving rural livelihoods in north and east Uganda through innovative systems for client led agriculture	4,428,843
Maxwell Stamp plc	Uganda Revenue Authority phase 2—Uganda	2,483,210

Consultant name	Contract purpose	Contract value (£)
The Media Company	Radio for Gulu and Kitgum	771,135
Local Government International Bureau	City-Community Challenge Fund pilot project number 1	500,000
International Book Development Ltd.	Instructional Materials Reform Programme	864,190
Maxwell Stamp plc	Support to Privatisation and Utility reform (SPUR) Project	585,840
LTS International Ltd.	Uganda Forest Sector Policy and Strategy Framework Project	1,730,153
KPMG	Results oriented management adviser, Uganda	323,980
International Book Development Ltd.	Instructional Materials Reform Programme (phase 2)	331,010
EASP Ltd.	Financial management systems and technical support	93,170
Water Engineering and Development Centre (WEDC)	Development of performance measurement for the Uganda water and sanitation sector	118,136
HTS Development Ltd.	DFID support for development of Uganda Bureau of Statistics	88,909
John Snow International	HIV mainstreaming follow up and PEAP revision visit	45,857
The Law and Development Partnership Ltd.	A study on remuneration and pay policies for public service institutions and other Government agencies	139,821
University of Sussex	Social Protection phase 2 and 3: Uganda	54,548

Water Supplies

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for International Development what assistance he is giving to projects which improve access to clean water in the developing world. [171017]

Hilary Benn: DFID is committed to supporting implementation of the Millennium Development Goals on access to safe water and provision of basic sanitation, and to the commitments made at the World Summit on Sustainable Development for better management of water resources. DFID's goal in the water sector is to enable poor people to lead healthier and more productive lives by helping to increase and sustain their access to safe drinking water supply and appropriate sanitation. DFID supports an integrated approach to sustainable water resource management, water supply, sanitation and hygiene promotion.

DFID currently has bilateral programmes in many countries and supports several major multilateral initiatives to improve access to clean water and sanitation. DFID is also working with other bilateral and multilateral agencies to develop more effective ways of attracting financing at a global level that are linked to the development of effective national water sector strategies and policies.

DFID's recent Water Action Plan sets out how DFID will contribute to meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), through ongoing commitments to water supply, sanitation and water resource management.

DEFENCE

Army Air Corps (Medical Care)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the standard of medical care available to personnel serving at Army Air Corps stations. [169986]

Mr. Caplin: The Defence Medical Services provide the Armed Forces with a comprehensive medical service in peace, war and operations other than war to standards at least equal to the National Health Service (NHS). Military Personnel serving at Army Air Corps stations will receive primary health care, including specialist aviation medicine advice, from their units; psychiatric care from their local Defence Community Mental Health Centre; and secondary care from the NHS, including those NHS Trusts which host Ministry of Defence Hospital Units.

The Defence Medical Services ensure and monitor the quality of care provided through robust Clinical Governance process. This includes the practice of evidence based medicine, clinical audit, supervision of clinicians performance, patient feedback, risk management, complaints management and the development of clinical leadership skills.

Crash Investigation (Norway)

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the assistance being provided by the Royal Air Force and his Department to the inquiry into allegations that a Royal Air Force Harrier aircraft was involved in the crash of a civilian Twin Otter near Mehamn in Norway in 1982. [171052]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has undertaken to provide all possible assistance to the Norwegian Parliamentary Commissions inquiry into the Mehamn tragedy. However, owing to the passage of time since the accident, we are having difficulty in finding the records relevant to the questions posed to us by the Commission.

Defence Bills Agency

Angus Robertson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence pursuant to the answer of 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 46W, on Defence Bills Agency, how many of the bills processed by the Defence Bills Agency in 2002–03 related to procurement contracts; what the total value of those bills was; and what the figures were in *(a)* 2000–01 and *(b)* 2001–02. [170432]

Mr. Ingram: The information is not held centrally and could be provided only at disproportionate costs.

Defence Housing (Rubbish Disposal)

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the standard of the household rubbish collections services at defence housing associated with *(a)* RAF Leeming, *(b)* RAF Linton on Ouse, *(c)* AAC Dishforth and *(d)* Alanbrooke Barracks; and if he will make a statement. [169997]

Mr. Caplin: No assessment has been made by the Ministry of Defence of the standard of household rubbish collection services in the areas named, other than that Service families in those locations receive the same service as civilian residents and, like other contributors to council tax revenue, are entitled to present any concerns to the council, either as individuals or residents' groups.

Defence Medical Personnel

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether the civilian medical practitioners based at *(a)* RAF Leeming, *(b)* RAF Linton on Ouse, *(c)* AAC Dishforth and *(d)* Alanbrooke Barracks are stationed at these bases on a full-time basis. [170005]

Mr. Caplin: Civilian medical practitioners at RAF Leeming and RAF Linton on Ouse are employed on a full-time basis. At AAC Dishforth and Alanbrooke Barracks medical cover is provided through civilian GPs working part-time on a job share arrangement or through arrangements with local NHS practitioners.

Defence Medical Services

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what provision his Department makes for access to private medical treatment or diagnosis for personnel who are unduly affected by delays in receiving such treatment and diagnosis from the Defence Medical Services. [170007]

Mr. Caplin: Limited use is made of private healthcare providers to enable Service personnel to be diagnosed or treated and returned to medical fitness. The Army Training and Recruitment Agency (ATRA) provide access to private medical care for recruits, and their instructors, who are injured during Phase 1 training in order that they may return to training more quickly. The Royal Navy run a limited scheme whereby essential personnel who are urgently required for operational deployment can be treated by a private healthcare provider in order to allow them deploy medically fit. Defence Medical Service (DMS) Regional Rehabilitation Units are able to obtain diagnostic Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) scans through local private providers, although any treatment identified by the scans would normally be carried out within the DMS system. RAF station commanders are able to use station funds to provide private treatment for individuals if they are urgently required for military operations.

Defence Scientific and Technology Laboratory

Mr. George Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence how the operations and financial transactions of the Defence Scientific and Technology Laboratory will be related to the Ministry of Defence's Top Level Budget for Corporate Science and Technology established on 1 April 2004. [169386]

Mr. Ingram: The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) will remain one of the single largest suppliers of research to the new Top Level Budget (TLB). Dstl is a Trading Fund of the Ministry of Defence and it will continue to carry out all such work which, for reasons of sensitivity or security, must be done within Government. Research tasking will continue to be managed through formal tasking orders placed by the Department on the Dstl Trading Fund in accordance with the established Terms of Business Agreement. The new TLB will maintain financial accounts as the customer and the Trading Fund will maintain separate accounts as supplier. The day-to-day operation of the Trading Fund will be a matter for the Chief Executive, directed at a strategic level by the Ministerial owner's board in the Ministry of Defence. The key change represented by the new TLB is a move towards an output based approach for research planning and delivery and this will impact progressively on all research suppliers including Dstl by bringing a sharper focus on the priority needs of key stakeholders in the defence and security area.

Equipment Costs

Mr. Gerald Howarth: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the forecast cost was on 31 March 2000 for the Extended Range Ordnance/Modular Charge System. [170363]

Mr. Ingram: The forecast cost of the Extended Range Ordnance/Modular Charge System programme at 31 March 2000 was £188 million.

HMS Trafalgar

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of allegations by crew members that major defects in HMS Trafalgar remain to be rectified. [170664]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* HMS Trafalgar returned to sea to test equipment and systems following a major period of maintenance and repair. Before a submarine undertakes such a period at sea it goes through a complex and exhaustive testing procedure by a number of authorities which is fully documented. HMS Trafalgar passed that inspection. If she had any major defects or failing systems she would not have been allowed to return to sea. The allegations made by members of her crew have been assessed by appropriately qualified engineering personnel. The allegations that HMS Trafalgar had major defects which should have prevented her return to sea are unfounded.

Harry Cohen: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence whether HMS Trafalgar is seaworthy; and if he will make a statement. [170720]

Mr. Ingram *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* HMS Trafalgar would not have returned to sea if she had not been seaworthy. Our nuclear submarines have been operating for over 40 years and have a safety record that is second to none. Before any submarine goes to sea, particularly as with HMS Trafalgar, after a period of maintenance and defect repair, it undergoes a rigorous series of safety checks and a number of authorities are involved in that process.

Mr. Hancock: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will make a statement on the safety concerns of the crew members who left HMS Trafalgar. [170739]

Mr. Ingram: The Royal Navy have been operating nuclear powered submarines for over 40 years and have a safety record that is second to none. We would not send a submarine to sea unless it was safe to do so.

Of the 124 crew members on board HMS Trafalgar, 12 expressed general reservations over the material state of the submarine following a period of maintenance and repair. These concerns centred on three areas. These being:

the release, as a result of human error, of diesel exhaust fumes into the submarine;

a leak into the submarine, resulting from faulty equipment not related to recent maintenance, during pressurisation of the Freon domestic refrigerant gas system; and concerns related to faults to the paint finish of the escape hatch docking seat which had been inspected and judged to be minor and insufficient to prevent successful docking of a rescue submersible if that extremely unlikely event should prove necessary.

Following these individual expressions of concern, made through the appropriate channels, and the levels of stress shown by 11 of these individuals, the Commanding Officer quite properly decided to remove these sailors from the submarine for medical assessment. In doing so, he acted in the best interests of those individuals and the Service. The twelfth member of the crew who discussed his concerns with the Commanding Officer elected to remain on board and sailed with Trafalgar.

Iraq

Mr. Evans: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what payments his Department has made to private military companies working in Iraq. [166132]

Mr. Ingram: The Ministry of Defence has not employed private military companies in Iraq. It has not, therefore, made any payments to such companies.

Nuclear Installations (Aircraft Incidents)

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence if he will list each near miss incident involving RAF aircraft and United Kingdom nuclear installations reported to his Department in each year since 2000; and if he will place copies of the report on each incident in the Library. [165158]

Mr. Ingram: [*Pursuant to his reply, 27 April 2004 Official Report, columns 873–74W*] Further work identified some inconsistencies in the recording of the alleged incidents. The table now reflects the year that the alleged incident occurred.

	Total number of alleged incidents	*Total confirmed breach*	*Under investigation*
2000	12	—	—
2001	20	1	—
2002	13	2	—
2003	13	2	—
2004 (up to 31 March 04)	1	—	1

Nuclear Safety

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what monitoring programmes are in place to assess the health of present and former Royal Naval and MoD contracted personnel who have worked on nuclear submarine refits. [170230]

Mr. Caplin: The Ministry of Defence and its contractors carry out medical surveillance of radiation workers as required by Ionising Radiation Regulations 1999, Regulation 24. These regulations lay down monitoring and medical surveillance requirements for personnel while occupationally exposed to ionising radiation. The main purpose of medical surveillance is to determine an individual's fitness or continuing fitness for the intended work with ionising radiation. There is no mandatory requirement for a health monitoring programme for former personnel who have worked on nuclear submarine refits and I refer the hon. Gentleman to the answer given by my hon. Friend the Under-Secretary of State for Health on 15 December 2003, *Official Report*, column 785W to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock).

MOD and its contractors at the Royal Dockyards however, provide an independent counselling service for radiation workers, former radiation workers and their families who have concerns about their health consequent of their work with radiation.

Individuals may request counselling by telephoning the Counselling Telephone line (02392 768098) and leaving their names and addresses or by writing to the MOD Counselling Registry at DSTL Radiological Protection Services, Crescent Road, Alverstoke, Gosport, Hants, PO12 2DL. Further details are available on the world wide web at: http://www.mod.uk/dsef/hp/rwc.htm.

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what estimates have recently been made of the safety of levels of radiation regarded as acceptable when early generations of nuclear submarines were being refitted; and if he will authorise a new assessment; [170231]

(2) what assessment his Department has made of the likelihood that individuals involved in past nuclear submarine refits have *(a)* been exposed to cancer-causing levels of radiation and *(b)* developed cancer as a result. [170229]

Mr. Ingram: Radiation exposure is kept as low as reasonably practicable and within the dose limits recommended by the International Commission on Radiation Protection (ICRP) and specified in the United Kingdom legislation. Both the ICRP and UK regulations are regularly reviewed and updated. Therefore, there is no need for the Ministry of Defence to make its own assessment.

Those workers most exposed to ionising radiation, known as classified persons, have their exposure assessed using radiation dosimeters issued by an Approved Dosimetry Service and entered into their radiation dose record. The Ministry of Defence contributes its data on classified persons to the National Registry of Radiation Workers (NRRW) managed by the National Radiological Protection Board (NRPB). The NRRW data are used in epidemiological studies. In an analysis of the data, published in July 1999, the NRPB concluded that overall death rates among radiation workers are below those in the general population. The analysis contained 124,743 workers, of which about one third were Ministry of Defence radiation workers or former radiation workers. The NRPB is intending to undertaker the next analysis in 2005–06.

RAF Medical Centres

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what assessment he has made of the standard of medical care available to aircrew manning Quick Reaction Alert aircraft at *(a)* RAF Leeming, *(b)* RAF Leuchars and *(c)* RAF Coningsby. [169993]

Mr. Caplin: All RAF medical centres are regularly inspected as part of the RAF's Formal Governance Visit programme. This programme involves a formal command level inspection of medical standards and working practices every two years, with self-assessment questionnaires being completed in the intervening years. All of the Quick Reaction Alert medical centres were assessed as satisfactory at their last inspections.

RAF Benson

Mr. Boris Johnson: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence (1) what representations he has received from members of the local community with regard to the future of RAF Benson; [169789]

(2) what assessment he has made of the economic costs to the local community were RAF Benson to close. [169791]

Mr. Caplin: I made clear to the House in my Written Statement of 23 March *Official Report*, columns 47WS-48WS, that the Ministry of Defence is continually examining ways of improving military capability and value for money for the taxpayer. As part of this approach, we therefore keep the size and location of our bases under constant review. No decisions have been made regarding the future of RAF Benson. No assessment on the economic costs to the local community of any closure has been made.

In addition to the two letters from the hon. Gentleman, the Ministry of Defence has received one letter from the hon. Member for Wantage (Mr. Jackson). RAF Benson has received a letter from the local Chamber of Commerce.

Royal Navy (Job Titles)

Dr. Julian Lewis: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence for what reason the title of engineering artificer is to be replaced by that of engineering technician in the Royal Navy; what consultations were undertaken with non-commissioned Royal Naval personnel before the decision was taken; and if he will make a statement on the future of engineering apprenticeships in the Royal Navy. [170227]

Mr. Caplin: The title artificer no longer adequately describes the professional role that those personnel undertake in the modern Navy. Replacing it with Engineering Technicians will align the Navy with the standards of competence published by the Engineering Council United Kingdom, and refresh the image of this key role against increasingly competitive recruitment market forces.

There has been wide consultation with Royal Navy Engineering Branch personnel of all ranks and rates during this review, covering all aspects of the proposals, including the title change.

It is expected that satisfactory completion of Technician training will be recognised by the award of a Foundation Degree, providing the opportunity, for those who wish, to study to Bachelor Degree level, thereby enabling them to aspire to accreditation as Incorporated Engineers. The quality of the skilled, technically trained men and women provided to support the Fleet will be undiminished.

Trident Nuclear Warhead

Mr. Keetch: To ask the Secretary of State for Defence what the *(a)* life of the current design of the Trident missile and *(b)* maximum life of the Trident missile system is; and if he will make a statement. [170350]

Mr. Hoon: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave on 11 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 1458W to the hon. Member for New Forest, East (Dr. Julian Lewis).

NORTHERN IRELAND

Arts Funding

Mr. Dodds: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much money was allocated by *(a)* the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, *(b)* the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure, *(c)* the Ultach Trust and *(d)* Foras na Gaeilge towards the arts in each year since 1999. [168559]

Angela Smith: Expenditure on the arts since 1999 by the Arts Council of Northern Ireland is as set out in the following tables:

	£ million
1999–2000	15,522,314
2000–01	11,699,055
2001–02	13,040,613
2002–03	14,997,581
2003–04 (Subject to audit)	16,074,500

Expenditure on the arts since 1999 by the Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure is as follows (excluding grant in aid to the Arts Council):

	£000
1999–2000	367,910
2000–01	469,500
2001–02	730,000
2002–03	756,672
2003–04	492,405

The Ultach Trust is a registered charitable trust. The Government are not responsible for the Trust's expenditure.

Expenditure on the arts since 1999 by Foras na Gaeilge is as follows:

	£000
1999	—
2000	150,000
2001	170,000
2002	200,000
2003	200,000

Bank Charges

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what action he is taking to bring about the reduction of charges to customers by banks operating in Northern Ireland; and if he will make a statement. [165784]

Mr. Gardiner: Banking is a reserved matter under Schedule 3 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Northern Ireland Departments have no powers in this area. The hon. Lady will, however, wish to note that the General Consumer Council for Northern Ireland (GCCNI) produced a report, "Short Changed", in 2002, which highlighted the need to make banking easy, affordable and accessible for all Northern Ireland's consumers. In subsequent press releases, GCCNI has advised consumers to shop around and has called on local banks to scrap unnecessary charges and advertise the existence of their low-cost basic bank accounts. It is also promoting financial education initiatives. Powers in relation to the areas referred to by the hon. Lady are vested in the Office of Fair Trading. I have asked my officials to bring the hon. Lady's concerns to the attention of that organisation to which further questions should be directed.

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland whether all bank charges in Northern Ireland meet the code and ethics laid down by the UK banking industry; what steps the Government can take to protect Northern Ireland bank customers; and if he will make a statement. [165785]

Mr. Gardiner: Banking is a reserved matter under Schedule 3 to the Northern Ireland Act 1998 and Northern Ireland Departments have no powers in this area. Compliance with the Banking Code and the Business Banking Code is a matter for the Banking Code Standards Board. In relation to the steps the Government can take to protect Northern Ireland bank customers, I would refer the hon. Lady to the answer I gave today to Question Number 165784.

Benefit Fraud

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what his estimate is of the extent of benefit fraud in Northern Ireland; and what measures are in place to deal with it. [170482]

Mr. Spellar: I am totally committed to a robust approach to tackling fraud and error and abuse of the social security system wherever it occurs.

The Social Security Agency is unable to measure the amount of fraud across all benefits on an annual basis. However, a programme of Benefit Reviews is carried out on a regular basis across all of the major Social Security benefits. During the 2003–04 year the following levels were estimated:

Income support, 1.6 per cent. (£7.625 million) of benefit expenditure;

Jobseekers allowance, 6.1 per cent. (£6.626 million) of benefit expenditure;

Housing benefit, 2.2 per cent. (£6.967 million) of benefit expenditure.

During 2002–03, a Benefit Review was carried out in Incapacity Benefit. A total of 591 cases were examined of which only 2 (0.3 per cent.) were found to be fraudulent. Based on this small number of fraudulent cases, it is anticipated that this equates to £0.94 million of benefit expenditure.

The Social Security Agency has a comprehensive and rigorous strategy for combating fraud designed to ensure that:

claims entering the system are legitimate;

once in the system claims are maintained properly; and

where fraud does enter the system it is detected and appropriate action is taken.

In the period from April 2003 to March 2004, 7,761 cases of suspected fraud were investigated. Of these cases, 3,944 (51 per cent.) resulted in withdrawal of claims or changes in the rate of benefit paid and 345 were referred for prosecution. In the same period there were 101 cases where administrative penalties were imposed and 54 cases where cautions were issued.

Childhood Tumours

Mrs. Iris Robinson: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will take steps to ensure that *(a)* the new regional cancer unit at the Belfast City Hospital and *(b)* local research prioritise childhood tumours; and if he will make a statement. [171030]

Angela Smith: I have been asked to reply.

(a) The Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children is responsible for the management of childhood cancers and this will not change when the new Cancer Centre opens at the Belfast City Hospital in 2006. Children requiring radiotherapy will continue to be referred to Belfast City Hospital Trust, which currently provides radiotherapy for around 15 children each year.

The effective management of childhood cancers is already a key priority for the Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children. The Hospital is a member of the United Kingdom Children's Cancer Study Group, comprising 22 specialist centres. Each of the centres adheres to agreed protocols for the treatment of childhood cancers, developed in collaboration with European and worldwide oncology centres.

(b) In Northern Ireland, there is an active research base in both cancer and child health and welfare, through the Recognised Research Groups, supported by the R&D Office for the HPSS.

Hotel Accommodation

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how much capital grant has been paid by the Northern Ireland Tourist Board for the provision of upgrading hotel accommodation in each of the last five financial years. [170435]

Mr. Pearson: In April 2002 the Capital Investment Programme for accommodation development moved from the Northern Ireland Tourist Board (NITB) to Invest Northern Ireland (Invest NI). Invest NI has responsibility for allocation of resources to accommodation infrastructure projects through the Tourism Development Scheme whilst the NITB retains responsibility for investment in visitor attractions, visitor amenities and visitor servicing.

From April 1999 to March 2004 inclusive, £3,961,879 has been paid by the NITB and Invest NI towards the upgrading of hotels in Northern Ireland. The payment figure can be broken down as set out in the following table:

	Payments made (£)
1999–2000	1,048,199
2000–01	946,826
2001–02	1,045,610
2002–03	567,430
2003–04	353,814
Total	3,961,879

Housing Executive (Rent Levels)

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the annual changes in Northern Ireland housing executive rents were over the last six years. [171001]

Mr. Spellar: I refer the hon. Gentleman to the reply I gave on 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 820W, which provides information about the Housing Executive rents in Northern Ireland over the five year period 2000–01 to 2004–05. The increase for 1999–2000 was 4.5 per cent.

Road Safety

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many motorists have been prosecuted since the introduction of the legislation on the use of mobile phones in Northern Ireland. [169759]

Mr. Pearson: The Motor Vehicles (Construction and Use) (Amendment No. 5) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2003 came into operation on 1 February 2004 and I am advised that during that month the PSNI gave advice and warnings to motorists that committed an offence. I understand that the PSNI have issued 835 fixed penalty notices from 1 March 2004 in respect of contraventions. Statistics on the number of prosecutions in respect of hand-held mobile telephones are not yet available and could be obtained only at disproportionate cost.

Northern Ireland Police Board (Fair Employment)

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many formal complaints alleging breaches of fair employment and equal opportunity legislation by the Northern Ireland Policing Board have been made to the Office of Industrial Tribunals and the Office of Fair Employment Tribunals in *(a)* 2002, *(b)* 2003 and *(c)* 2004 to date. [170728]

Mr. Pearson: I have been advised by the Northern Ireland Policing Board of the following statistics relating to the number of formal complaints made to the Office of Industrial Tribunals and the Office of Fair Employment Tribunals alleging breaches of fair employment and equal opportunity legislation by the Northern Ireland Policing Board:

2002: None.

2003: Two Cases.

2004: None to date.

Mr. McNamara: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what assessment he has made of *(a)* the adequacy of the Northern Ireland Policing Board's equal opportunities policy and *(b)* the supply of appropriately qualified and trained staff to implement it; and what assessment he has made of the ability of the Board to comply with (i) equal opportunities and (ii) fair employment legislation, with particular reference to the requirement to preserve all relevant records and papers. [170404]

Mr. Pearson: The Northern Ireland Policing Board is designated as a public authority and is therefore required by Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act 1998, in carrying out its functions to have due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity and regard to promote good relations.

The Policing Board's Equality Scheme, which was approved on 12 February 2003 sets out how it proposes to fulfil its statutory duties. As like all other public

authorities the Policing Board produces an annual progress report on its Equality Scheme and submits this to the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland.

In addition as an employer I have been informed by the Policing Board that it has in place all the necessary procedures and processes to ensure that it complies with all relevant employment law. The Board has recently implemented their Equal Opportunities policy and undertaken the associated training for all staff.

I have also been advised that all relevant records and papers in respect of recruitment are retained in accordance with equal opportunities policies and legislative requirements.

Planning Policy

Lady Hermon: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland if he will reverse the practice of planning authorities in Northern Ireland of presuming in favour of development. [169920]

Angela Smith: This matter will be considered as part of the forthcoming review of Planning Policy Statement 1 which sets out among other matters the general principles that my Department observes in exercising control of development. This review, which will involve public consultation, is due to be completed by the end of 2005.

Public Administration Review

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what progress has been made with the Review of Public Administration; when interim proposals will be published; and if he will make a statement. [170437]

Mr. Pearson: Consultation on high level models of public administration concluded on 27 February 2004 with some 170 responses being received. These have now been published on the Review's website.

On 27 and 29 April 2004 I met representatives of all the main political parties to outline the key messages emerging from the consultation responses, and to discuss the core elements of a new system of public administration that reflects the views expressed in these responses. The parties have agreed to work with me over the coming months, and I hope to be in a position to publish firm proposals for consultation in the autumn.

Mr. Trimble: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the total cost incurred by the Review of Public Administration has been since the beginning of financial year 2001–02. [170438]

Mr. Pearson: In May 2002 the Northern Ireland Executive agreed an overall budget of £3 million for the Review of Public Administration. To date a total expenditure of £1 71 million has been incurred by the Review. Prior to that, some preparatory work was undertaken on the Review before a dedicated budget was established. This work was completed by officials in OFMDFM who were engaged on a variety of issues, and therefore it is not possible to identify these costs separately.

Respiratory Illnesses

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what steps are being taken to assist those people in Northern Ireland who suffer from respiratory illnesses and as a result of their condition have severe restriction in their mobility. [171003]

Angela Smith: A number of initiatives are currently under way to help people who are affected by chronic respiratory disease in Northern Ireland. For those people who are disabled with respiratory disease, many Trusts have developed multi-professional Pulmonary Rehabilitation Services. Further work is currently being undertaken by Trusts, in association with Boards, to ensure that the full range of these services is available to everyone in Northern Ireland.

Recognising the impact of respiratory diseases on the health of people in Northern Ireland, my Department intends to initiate a major review of respiratory services in 2004–05. The scope of the review is not yet finalised, but key themes will include: primary prevention and the development of links with other health promotion strategies; the encouragement and facilitation of self-care; the promotion of multi- disciplinary team working; and, the development of integrated care pathways across the primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare sectors.

Social Economy (Public Bodies)

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland where the first meeting of the Social Economy Forum in June 2003 was held; and how many attended, and what the cost of the meeting was. [170071]

Mr. Pearson: The first meeting of the Social Economy Forum was held at the Northern Ireland Council for Voluntary Action premises in Belfast. There were 26 attendees, evenly split between social economy sectoral representatives and Government officials. Room hire and catering costs were £310.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland what the *(a)* 2003–04 and *(b)* 2004–05 budget at the disposal of the (i) Social Economy Forum and (ii) Social Economy Agency is. [170072]

Mr. Pearson: The Social Economy Forum is a policy platform. The Forum of itself has no budget but as a policy platform it seeks to influence how others utilise their resources to develop the social economy sector.

£600,000 has been made available to the Social Economy Agency over a four-year period (2002–06). This is to establish and service a new high-level sectoral representative body, the Social Economy Network and its committees.

Mr. Swayne: To ask the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland how many staff are employed in the Department of Enterprise, Trade and Investment's inter-departmental steering group on the social economy. [170073]

Mr. Pearson: None. The Inter-Departmental Steering Group (IDSG) consists of senior officials from all 11 Northern Ireland Departments. It meets three to four

times per year and considers how departmental policies and programmes can support the growth of the sector, encourage greater cross-departmental co-operation and identify key action points to increase the sector's potential to build 'social capital' and create wealth and jobs, particularly in disadvantaged areas.

PRIME MINISTER

Middle East

Llew Smith: To ask the Prime Minister what assessment he has made of the recent open letter on Government policies on Iraq and the Israel/Palestine situation, signed by former British diplomats; and whether he plans to respond to the letter. [170994]

The Prime Minister: I set out my response to the letter at the press conference I gave with the Italian Prime Minister on 27 April. A full transcript of this is available on the Number 10 website.

Immigration

Keith Vaz: To ask the Prime Minister what steps he proposes to take to bring the immigration procedures and rules up to date. [171080]

The Prime Minister: I refer my hon. Friend to the written ministerial statement made by my right hon. Friend the Home Secretary on 22 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 23–25WS.

Iraq

Mr. Howard: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his statement of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 21–3, on Iraq and the Middle East Peace Process, (1) whether he raised in Washington the role of the British representative in Baghdad; [171165]

(2) whether he asked President Bush to designate the British representative as Ambassador Bremer's deputy. [171168]

The Prime Minister: I refer the right hon. and learned Gentleman to the answer I gave to the hon. Member for South Staffordshire (Sir Patrick Cormack) during my statement on 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 33.

Mr. Howard: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his statement of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 21–3, on Iraq and the Middle East Peace Process, what proposals were agreed with President Bush to improve the training and effectiveness of Iraqi security forces. [171166]

The Prime Minister: As I have made clear, discussions are still continuing on this.

Mr. Howard: To ask the Prime Minister pursuant to his statement of 19 April 2004, *Official Report*, columns 21–3, on Iraq and the Middle East Peace Process, (1) what arrangements are being made to replace the Spanish contingent; [171167]

(2) whether British commanders in Iraq have asked for reinforcements; and whether any such request has been made by the US Administration. [171169]

The Prime Minister: I refer the right hon. and learned Gentleman to the answer I gave him at Prime Minister's questions on 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1331–32.

MINISTER FOR WOMEN

Equal Pay

23. **Tony Lloyd:** To ask the Minister for Women what steps are being taken to erode the differential between male and female earnings. [170672]

Jacqui Smith: We are taking a number of steps to increase women's opportunities in the labour market such as increasing support for child care, flexible working and work-balance and the help we, together with the EOC, have provided employees to tackle unequal pay where it exists. Indeed, we welcome yesterday's publication of the EOC's interim report on modern apprenticeships, which looks at the issue of occupational segregation, one of the causes of the gender pay gap.

Employment

24. **Hugh Bayley:** To ask the Minister for Women what change there has been in the number of women in employment since 1997. [170673]

Ms Hewitt: The Government have implemented a substantial package of measures to give women greater choice when entering the labour market, including new rights for working parents, tax credits, New Deal for Lone Parents and New Deal for Partners. There are now more women in employment than ever before, 13 million, up from 12 million in spring 1997. This Government's initiatives have contributed to the significant increase.

Rape (Rwanda)

25. **Tom Brake:** To ask the Minister for Women what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for International Development regarding rape survivors in Rwanda. [170674]

Ms Hewitt: I fully support the work of my colleague the Secretary of State for International Development to assist women in post-conflict situations. The UK Government are providing direct assistance to the survivors of the genocide which is currently running at £200,000 per annum. I welcome the planned additional support of up to £850,000 which will include advice and counselling on issues around HIV/AIDS. I also welcome the financial assistance his Department is providing to witnesses, including rape survivors, at the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda.

Teenage Pregnancy

26. **Bob Russell:** To ask the Minister for Women what discussions she has had with the Secretary of State for Health regarding teenage pregnancy. [170675]

Jacqui Smith: My hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Health and my hon. Friend the Minister for Women are pleased with the early signs that the Government's Teenage Strategy is working. The under 18 conception rate has fallen by 9.4 per cent. between 1998 and 2002.

Maternity Leave (Dismissals)

27. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Minister for Women to how many companies she has made representations over the dismissal of women on return from maternity leave. [170676]

Jacqui Smith: Our message to employers is that those who discriminate against women returning from maternity leave are breaking the law. I welcome the EOC's formal investigation into pregnancy discrimination, as I am too aware that this type of unlawful discrimination still takes place. Hard evidence of the scope, nature of and reasons for such discrimination will enable us to tackle it more effectively.

Criminal Justice

28. **Vera Baird:** To ask the Minister for Women how she intends to respond to the Fawcett Society's Commission on Women and the Criminal Justice System. [170677]

Ms Hewitt: I welcome the wide-ranging and valuable contribution that the Fawcett Society's Commission on Women and the Criminal Justice System.

The recommendations will strengthen the work already in hand to support victims as outlined in the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victim's Bill, the three-year Action Plan to implement the Women's Offending Reduction Programme and Gender Equality PSA targets to increase women's participation in the criminal justice system.

TRADE AND INDUSTRY

Consumer Credit

11. **Mr. Plaskitt:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on responses received from businesses consulted on recommendations contained within the White Paper on reforming consumer credit legislation. [170688]

Mr. Sutcliffe: We have received a substantial number of responses to the Consumer Credit White Paper and its associated consultation. The responses represent views from a wide cross section of the credit industry; business, consumer groups and enforcement agencies.

The Department is currently analysing these comments with a view to publishing a full Government response in early June.

Aerospace Industry

13. **Mr. Todd:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what progress has been made in pursuing the recommendations of the Aerospace Innovation and Growth Team report. [170690]

Jacqui Smith: Good progress has been made across the wide range of recommendations contained in the report, covering the areas of technology, skills, process excellence, socio-economic environment and environment, safety and security.

EU (New Members)

14. **Chris Bryant:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on trade with the 10 new member states of the EU. [170691]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: Accession of the 10 new states to the EU creates a market of 450 million people (bigger than US and Japan combined).

It will be the largest single market in the world, creating unprecedented opportunities for business and workers.

The UK should be well-placed to compete in this market on the basis of our supportive business environment and highly skilled and flexible workforce.

Miners Compensation

15. **Mr. Barnes:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will arrange for a compensation scheme for ex-National Coal Board workers employed as cokemen and surface workers who contracted chest diseases. [170692]

Nigel Griffiths: Two coal compensation schemes were established following court judgements on vibration white finger and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. To date 4,143 payments have been made to miners in North-East Derbyshire. There have been no similar court judgements in the case of the other diseases, but claimants are entitled to seek compensation through the common law.

Science Research

16. **Dr. Cable:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the cost effectiveness of the Department's programme of financing science research. [170693]

Ms Hewitt: Since 1997, the Department of Trade and Industry has doubled the investment in science and research through the Science Budget—reaching £3 billion in 2005—and my right hon. Friend the Chancellor has confirmed that investment will continue to grow over the next Spending Review period.

The UK science and research base is recognised not only for its excellence: UK researchers are the most productive in the G8 countries, and I am confident that our investment will continue to pay dividends for our economy and our society.

Call Centres (Employment)

18. **Helen Jones:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of future employment prospects in the UK call centre industry. [170695]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department is today publishing a report of the study we commissioned to look at the competitiveness of the UK call and contact

centre industry. The study which covers a wide range of call centre issues forecasts that the UK industry is to gain around 200,000 jobs in the next three years, directly employing over a million people by 2007.

19. **Colin Burgon:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of future employment prospects in the UK call centre industry, with particular reference to Leeds. [170696]

Mr. Mike O'Brien: The Department is today publishing a report of the study we commissioned to look at the competitiveness of the UK call and contact centre industry. The study covers a wide range of call centre issues but does not specifically cover employment prospects for Leeds. The UK industry is forecast to gain around 200,000 jobs in the next three years, directly employing over a million people by 2007.

Equal Pay

20. **Mr. Denham:** To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what further action she will take to close the pay gap between women and men in the south-east. [170697]

Ms Hewitt: I am taking forward a number of measures to address the pay gap nationally. These include the introduction of the Equal Pay Questionnaire, and last month we launched plans to streamline equal value tribunal procedures. We know that the large pay gaps in London and the south-east are driven by the very high salaries of men in the finance sector, that is why we are already working with the EOC to promote pay reviews in retail finance and city sectors.

BNFL Strategy Review

Llew Smith: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will list in respect of the BNFL strategy review, to which reference is made at paragraph 15.27, page 126 of her Department's Annual Report, Cm 6216, *(a)* where the conclusions of the review were published, *(b)* who the members of the review were and *(c)* why neither the Thorp reprocessing plant nor the Sellafield Mox plant were included in the review. [170979]

Nigel Griffiths: The conclusions of the Joint Strategy Review of BNFL were announced in a written statement by my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State in the House of Commons on 11 December 2003 and were placed in the Libraries of the House. Full copies of the statement and the explanatory note are available at: http://www.dti.gov.uk/nuclearcleanup/wn.htm

The Review was a joint process between HMG, the company and their respective advisers. Mike Parker, the CEO at BNFL, led the BNFL team and was advised by N. M. Rothschild and Freshfields; the Government side was led by the DTI, and advised by HSBC, Deloitte and Touche and Herbert Smith. Other Government Departments, including HMT and the Shareholder Executive, were closely involved in the review process.

The joint review of BNFL was necessary to determine the future structure and broad strategic direction of the company before the NDA came into being. The Government White Paper, "Managing the Nuclear Legacy—a Strategy for Action", published in July 2001 had already stated that responsibility for THORP and the Sellafield MOX plutonium fuel plant would pass to the NDA. This policy has not changed, and accordingly, was not considered as part of the Strategy Review.

Disconnections

Jonathan Shaw: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what discussions she has had with the Office of Gas and Electricity Markets on expanding the moratoria on disconnections for vulnerable groups beyond the winter months. [171307]

Nigel Griffiths: The Department has discussed, and will continue to discuss as appropriate, disconnections issues with Ofgem. With DTIs encouragement, Ofgem has been in discussion with gas and electricity suppliers about the arrangements governing disconnections, particularly for vulnerable customers. Last month, Ofgem issued an industry consultation paper that set out proposed revisions to, and clarification of, those arrangements. This should ensure that vulnerable customers are not, in the future, disconnected.

Energy Supplies

Mr. Best: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the delivery of secure energy supply over the winter. [170282]

Nigel Griffiths: We saw evidence this winter that the Government's market-based approach to delivering secure energy supplies is working well. Generators brought mothballed plant back into service in response to rising electricity prices, and signals from NGT that they would like greater capacity going into the winter. The plant margin for winter 2003–04 rose from a projected level of 16.5 per cent. in July to 21.6 per cent. (January 2004 updated to National Grid Seven Year Statement), and electricity supply was sufficient to meet demand throughout the winter. The gas market also worked effectively, and there was sufficient supply to meet market demand throughout the winter.

In June, Ofgem are due to publish their next report into the performance of the electricity and gas industries in delivering security, covering the winter period. This follows from the commitment made in the Energy White Paper that Ofgem would publish six monthly retrospective reports on the delivery of energy security.

Fluorspar

Mr. McLoughlin: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what assessment she has made of the economic importance of a domestic marketable source of the vein mineral fluorspar; and what assessment she has made of its downstream value to the economy in associated industries, in particular those situated in *(a)* the north-west of England and *(b)* Derbyshire. [170379]

Nigel Griffiths: The DTI is aware of the economic importance of a domestic source of fluorspar and the value of the industry to the economies of the north-west, Derbyshire and the south-west. There have been no specific assessments made of the economic importance of a domestic marketable source of the fluorspar. However, currently deposits in the Peak Park district of Derbyshire are being worked economically providing jobs and contributing to the local economy. In what is a highly competitive global market the high quality of the

mineral being extracted is needed to underpin a viable fluorine producing industry in the north-west, that is itself providing a significant number of jobs and contributions to the local economy in that region. Officials are working with the companies concerned and local stakeholders to ensure that the UK continues to reap the economic benefits of working these deposits with minimal impact on the environment.

Free Parcel Postage (British Forces)

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the future provision of free parcel postage to British Forces Post Offices in regions of combat and theatres of peacekeeping operations. [169141]

Mr. Ingram: I have been asked to reply.

I refer the hon. Member to my written ministerial statement of 27 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 70WS, and subsequent answers of 5 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 1155W, to the hon. Member for Portsmouth, South (Mr. Hancock), and 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1605W, to the hon. Member for Mid-Norfolk (Mr. Simpson) and 5 May 2004, *Official Report*, columns 1526–1527W, to the hon. Member for Uxbridge (Mr. Randall).

Internet Fraud

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what the estimated cost of internet fraud has been to United Kingdom *(a)* consumers and *(b)* businesses in each of the last five years. [169376]

Ms Blears: I have been asked to reply.

The Government do not collect figures on the cost of credit card fraud. The Association for Payment Clearing Services (APACS) has estimated the total cost of losses due to fraudulent possession of card details (card-not-present fraud), which includes internet fraud, over the last five years is as follows:

	£ million
2003	116.4
2002	110.1
2001	95.7
2000	72.9
1999	29.3

Specific figures for costs to consumers or businesses are not available.

Postal Votes

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what plans the Royal Mail has to ensure *(a)* prompt delivery to electors and *(b)* the prompt return to the returning officer after posting by electors of postal votes for the forthcoming London and European elections in Hendon constituency; and if she will make a statement. [170193]

Nigel Griffiths: Royal Mail's plan for ensuring the prompt delivery and return of postal votes is an operational issue for the company. I understand that Royal Mail has developed a best practice guide on postal voting, which is designed to be used by Royal Mail's local operational staff, contacts within local authorities and regional returning officer departments. This operational guide is based on the company's experience of previous postal voting pilots and was drawn up in close co-operation with the Electoral Commission and local authority associations.

Royal Mail

Mr. Andrew Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry if she will make a statement on the Royal Mail's single delivery project. [170694]

Ms Hewitt: Royal Mail is currently undertaking a complete restructure of the business with the full backing of the Government. A key element of that change, and the most visible to Royal Mail's customers, is the move to a single delivery. The Royal Mail is the last postal company in the world to move to a single delivery and it is essential that it do so if the business is to become competitive. The second delivery is an anachronism. It accounted for 20 per cent. of Royal Mail's cost, but only 4 per cent. of post carried.

Once the single delivery changes have been made, the target will be for everybody to receive his or her post by lunchtime. Many households will receive their post at the same time as before; others, however, will receive their post later in the morning. I fully appreciate that this will be disappointing to some but continuing the second delivery with its high costs makes no sense.

This is a huge undertaking for the company. Single delivery has now been introduced in 1,100 out of 1,450 delivery offices. The process takes six to eight weeks to bed in, as postmen and women get used to new and longer delivery routes. I understand that for the most part the change has gone reasonably smoothly and is now working well. There have been some problems and Royal Mail has apologised for the fall in service. I have Allan Leighton's personal assurance that the problems customers are experiencing in certain areas while the single delivery is being introduced are being vigorously tackled and solutions being found.

Michael Fabricant: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry (1) what assessment she has made of *(a)* the effect of size-based pricing on mail order companies and *(b)* the accuracy of Royal Mail's assertion that 30 per cent. of mail will be affected by these changes; [171010]

(2) if she will make a statement on the introduction of size-based pricing by Royal Mail. [171011]

Nigel Griffiths: The introduction and the assessment of the effect of size-based pricing are matters for the Royal Mail and for the postal regulator, Postcomm.

Wind Farms

Mrs. Dunwoody: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what representations she has made to other Government Departments regarding obstruction to shipping lanes from wind farms. [168355]

Mr. Timms: I refer to the reply which my right hon. Friend the Secretary of State for Transport made on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1390W.

Adam Price: To ask the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry what evidence she has examined on low frequency noise emitted by wind turbines. [170186]

Nigel Griffiths: Research on low frequency noise emitted from wind turbines has been carried out under the Department's New and Renewable Energy Programme and reported in "Low Frequency Noise and Vibrations Measurement at a Modern Wind Farm" ETSU W/13/00392/REP.

The results of that study show that low frequency noise emitted from wind farms falls well within recognised acceptable limits.

FOREIGN AND COMMONWEALTH AFFAIRS

Brazil

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 965W, on Brazil, whether inspectors were denied access by Brazilian officials on 4 April. [170586]

Mr. MacShane: The Government's understanding of the situation remains as set out in my previous answer.

Departmental Annual Report

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how much the production of his Department's latest annual report cost; how many copies were printed; how many copies of it were sold at its cover price; to whom copies of the report have been provided free of charge; and how many copies were provided free of charge. [171144]

Mr. Straw: Production of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office's departmental report 1 April 2003 to 31 March 2004 cost £24,453, of which £13,930 was for printing and £10,838 was for design and editorial work. These costs to the Department are 25 per cent. lower than for the 2003 report. Other costs are met by the publisher.

1,900 copies of this year's report were printed, of which 1,350 are distributed internally at a price which covers printing costs. The Stationery Office publishes the report, and as a legal requirement, provides six copies free to the Copyright Library. As the current report was only published on 29 April 2004, information on sales is not yet available. Last year the Stationery Office issued 425 copies of the 2003 Foreign and Commonwealth Office departmental report.

Eritrea

Mr. Win Griffiths: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what representations he has made to the Government of Eritrea about the persecution and imprisonment of Eritrean Christians; and under what circumstances he would support the imposition of sanctions by the *(a)* UK and *(b)* EU. [170490]

Mr. Mullin: I raised this issue with President Isaias in Asmara on 15 January. Our Ambassador in Asmara raised the issue most recently on 29 March. The Government has no plans to introduce sanctions against Eritrea.

EU General Affairs and External Relations Council

Mr. Hood: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the outcome was of the General Affairs and External Relations Council held on 26 and 27 April; what the Government's stance was on the issues discussed, including its voting records; and if he will make a statement. [169788]

Mr. MacShane: The information is as follows.

Outcome of the 26 April 2004 General Affairs and External Relations Council

My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary and I represented the UK at the General Affairs and External Relations Council (GAERC) in Luxembourg on 26 April.

Conclusions were agreed on the Middle East Peace Process, Western Balkans, Cyprus and Africa.

General Affairs Session

Progress of work in other Council configurations

The Council took note of a progress report from the Presidency on work under way in the Council's other configurations (the Justice and Home Affairs Council and the Agriculture and Fisheries Council.)

Follow-up to the spring European Council: Intergovernmental Conference

The Council discussed the Presidency's plans for resuming negotiations in the Intergovernmental Conference on the draft EU Constitutional Treaty, with a view to reaching agreement no later than the 17–18 June European Council.

Enlargement

Commissioner Verheugen gave a presentation on the preparedness of the 10 Accession States (Cyprus, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Malta, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia) for membership of the European Union from 1 May.

He acknowledged their efforts to address the remaining areas of concern. He confirmed that implementation of the EU's rules and policies have been satisfactory and that no safeguard measures would be necessary at this stage, pending a definitive assessment once they had joined.

External Relations Session

WTO/DOHA Development Agenda (DDA)

Commissioner Lamy briefed on recent developments in the Doha Development Agenda (the negotiation agenda launched by the World Trade Organisation in November 2001 on Doha). The Council supported the Commission in its efforts and hoped to see progress by the end of July.

Commissioner Lamy also briefed on negotiations with Russia on its accession to the WTO, and on negotiations with Mercosur, which were aimed at concluding an Association Agreement.

Western Balkans

Conclusions were agreed on Serbia and Montenegro, Macedonia and the ESDP mission to Bosnia. There was a separate discussion on the planning and preparation for the Bosnia ESDP mission. The Council requested the Presidency and Secretary General/High Representative Solana to take forward the remaining strategic planning steps before the Istanbul NATO Summit in June.

EU-Africa

The Council agreed Conclusions on Africa. The Presidency debriefed on the recent EU-Africa Troika meeting, highlighting the African peace and security agenda, development, governance and multilateralism. There was also Conclusions on Sudan, which expressed concern about humanitarian situation in Darfur region.

China arms embargo

The Council exchanged views on the arms embargo against China. The Council agreed that the issue required further discussion and asked the Permanent Representatives Committee (Coreper) and the Political and Security Committee to take this forward.

Cyprus

Ministers discussed the situation in Cyprus following the 24 April referendum on the United Nations settlement plan. The Council also adopted Conclusions.

Middle East Peace Process

The Council discussed the Gaza disengagement proposals ahead of the forthcoming Ministerial Quartet meeting. The Council adopted Conclusions based on the Presidency statement made at the 15–16 April informal Foreign Ministers' meeting.

EU-Russia

The Council briefly discussed preparations for the 21 May EU/Russia summit in Moscow. The summit is expected to address progress achieved in the creation of the four 'common spaces' (economic; freedom, security and justice; research, education and culture; and external security).

AOB: EU-Canada—seal hunting

The Netherlands raised its concern about an increase in Canada's seal hunting quota. They were most concerned about the effect of hunting on the seal population and an absence of humane killing methods.

Iraq

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to the Answer of 26 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 774W, on Iraq, what form the second intelligence source reported in September 2002 took. [170513]

Mr. Straw: I regret that it would not be appropriate to comment publicly on the detail of this intelligence reporting. The security and intelligence agencies are not within the scope of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information (Part 1, Paragraph 6). An inquiry chaired by Lord Butler of Brockwell is currently examining the accuracy of the intelligence on Iraqi Weapons of Mass Destruction up to March 2003, and any discrepancies between the intelligence gathered, evaluated and used by the Government before the conflict, and what has been discovered by the Iraq Survey Group since the end of it.

Lynne Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs pursuant to his answer of 30 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 581W, on Iraq, whether his reference to the intelligence that the Government understand was discussed with the International Atomic Energy Authority is to the second source referred to in paragraph 93 of the Intelligence and Security Committee's report, Iraq Weapons of Mass Destruction. [171178]

Mr. Straw: I refer my hon. Friend to the answer I gave her today (UIN 170513).

Maghreb

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what discussions his Department has had with the countries of the Maghreb about assistance with the development of financial and banking institutions under the framework of the Euromed and Barcelona processes. [170306]

Mr. MacShane: We have no bilateral assistance programmes to the countries of the Maghreb, and have therefore had no direct discussions with them about assistance for the development of banking and financial institutions. But Foreign and Commonwealth Office and Department for International Development officials do discuss such matters, and other aspects of economic development, with members of the EuroMed Partnership (which includes the countries of the Maghreb) under the economic and financial chapter of the Barcelona Process.

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans his Department has to take forward the Euromed process in the context of *(a)* the G8 summit in June, *(b)* the US-EU summit in June and *(c)* the NATO summit in June, with specific reference to the countries of the Maghreb. [170307]

Mr. MacShane: As the Barcelona Process is an equal partnership between its 35 members (the EU, the Maghreb and Israel, Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey and the Palestinian Authority), it would not be appropriate to take the process forward in other fora. The Government will work with others to ensure that any discussions relating to the region with NATO, the G8 or at the EU-US Summit are consistent with the objectives of EuroMed. At the Istanbul Summit in June, Allies are expected to agree a package of measures to enhance security co-operation between NATO and the seven members of the Mediterranean Dialogue. We believe that by operating in its area of expertise, and focussing on practical co-operation, NATO's strengthened partnership will complement the Barcelona Process.

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans his Department has to increase engagement with non-EU Mediterranean countries in the context of the Barcelona Process, with specific reference to the countries of the Maghreb. [170309]

Mr. MacShane: The Maghreb is a region of increasing importance to the UK. As part of the UK's engagement with the non-EU members of the Barcelona Process, we will host, jointly with Morocco, a EuroMed Conference to look at the social consequences of economic reform in Marrakech on 20–21 May.

Middle East

Mr. Gordon Marsden: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what assessment his Department has made of the relationship between the EU EuroMed process and the US Greater Middle East Initiative. [170308]

Mr. MacShane: The Barcelona Process (or EuroMed Partnership) and the US Greater Middle East Initiative share common objectives of promoting stability and prosperity in the region. They seek to assist the region's development through broad-based reform. The Barcelona Process is a structured process of engagement and assistance across a broad range of issues with those countries on the southern shore of the Mediterranean. The US initiative offers programme assistance in focussed areas to a broader range of countries in the Middle East region and beyond. The Government believes the Barcelona Process and the US Greater Middle East Initiative have complementary roles to play in the pursuit of common objectives.

Parliamentary Questions

John Thurso: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs (1) how many *(a)* ordinary written and *(b)* named day questions his Department received in (i) the 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month; [170768]

(2) what proportion of *(a)* ordinary written questions to his Department were answered within five sitting days of tabling, and *(b)* questions for a named day received a substantive answer on that day, in (i) 2002–03 and (ii) this parliamentary Session up to the most recent date for which figures are available, broken down by month. [170769]

Mr. Straw: In the 2002–03 parliamentary Session my Department received 591 named day parliamentary questions (PQs) and 2,779 ordinary written PQs. My Department answered 74 per cent. of named day PQs on time and 76 per cent. of ordinary written PQs within five working days.

As of 4 May in the 2003–04 parliamentary Session my Department has received 250 named day PQs and 1,161 ordinary written PQs. My Department has answered 76 per cent. of named day PQs on time and 86 per cent. of ordinary written PQs within five working days.

I have placed a copy of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office PQ statistics, broken down by month, for both parliamentary Sessions in the Library of the House.

Visa Application Centres

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what plans he has to establish a visa application centre in Goa, India. [170400]

Mr. Mullin: There are currently no plans to establish a visa application centre in Goa. However, the situation is kept under review.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs how many visa application centres outsourced operations assisting British High Commissions. [170398]

Mr. Mullin: Our most developed and largest outsourced visa application centre scheme is in India, where there are 11 visa application centres. There are another three visa application centres worldwide that are similar to the outsourced operation in India. Two are situated in Bangladesh and one in Singapore. However, there are other types of outsourced visa operations worldwide, the most common being designated couriers or designated travel agents where applications can be submitted.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs what the total cost is of operating visa application centres. [170399]

Mr. Mullin: All visa application centres are self-financing and are therefore of no cost to UK visas or the UK taxpayer.

Keith Vaz: To ask the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs when he last visited a visa application centre. [170401]

Mr. Mullin: My right hon. Friend the Foreign Secretary has not visited a visa application centre, and has no plans to do so presently. Visa application centres accept visa applications only and then forward them to our visa sections. All visa application decisions are still made at a visa section of one of our missions.

TREASURY

Efficiency Gains

Mr. Letwin: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what progress has been made in implementing 2.5 per cent. per year efficiency gains since the 2004 Budget Statement. [168601]

Mr. Boateng: I refer the right hon. Gentleman to my answer to him of 1 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1677W, which gave more specifics of reductions in the tax—and in particular that of the 14,000 job reductions by 2007–08, 8,000 will be made by Inland Revenue, 3,000 by HM Customs and Excise and 3,000 will result from the merger.

Employment (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will make a statement on the levels of long-term *(a)* adult and *(b)* youth employment in Oldham, West and Royton in the last seven years. [170947]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Michael Meacher, dated 6 May 2004:

As National Statistician I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (170947)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Oldham, West and Royton Parliamentary Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (ISA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The attached table gives the annual average number of people claiming JSA for over 12 months, and the annual average number of these claimants aged 18 to 24 years, in the Oldham, West and Royton constituency, for each year since 1997. The table also shows the annual average total number of JSA claimants in the constituency for these years.

Annual average number of people claiming jobseeker's allowance (JSA), and number claiming for at least 12 months

Oldham, West and Royton parliamentary constituency, 1997–2003	*All claimants*	*Claimants for at least 12 months*[1] *All ages*	*Aged 18–24*
1997	2,615	664	107
1998	2,319	417	53
1999	2,364	388	14
2000	2,092	337	15
2001	2,033	267	8
2002	2,013	232	11
2003	1,868	175	9

[1] Computerised claims only.

Source:

Office for National Statistics.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many people were employed in tourism-related jobs in Oldham, West and Royton on the latest date for which figures are available. [170905]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Michael Meacher, dated 6 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about tourism-related jobs in Oldham, West and Royton. (170905)

The latest available data, from the 2002 Annual Business Inquiry, shows that the total number of jobs in tourism related industries in Oldham, West and Royton Parliamentary Constituency was 2,600. This total is obtained by combining figures for those working in the following industries, as identified by Standard Industrial Classification 2003:

hotels

restaurants

bars

activities of travel agencies

library, archives, museums etc

sporting activities

other recreational activities.

Government Revenue

John Mann: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what assessment he has made of which significant economic factors have had an effect on the level of Government revenue over the last seven years. [171258]

Ruth Kelly: An assessment on the main economic factors effecting Government revenues is made available each year in the public finances chapter of the pre-Budget report and Budget.

National Insurance Contributions/Numbers

Mr. Webb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer if he will estimate the effect on revenue from employee national insurance contributions (NICs) if the rate of NICs for employees who are not contracted out of the state second pension were to be reduced to the rate currently paid by employees who are contracted out. [171034]

Ruth Kelly *[holding answer 5 May 2004]:* The Government Actuary's Department estimates that rebates worth £1.9 billion would be accrued if all contracted-in employees were to pay national insurance contributions that were reduced by 1.6 per cent. of earnings between the lower earnings limit and upper earnings limit in 2004–05. This estimate excludes the additional age-related or employer rebates that would be paid for a contracted-out person.

Norman Lamb: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what checks are made on the national insurance numbers used by employment agencies and gangmasters; what action is taken if a non-valid national insurance number is being used for an individual employed by an agency or a gangmaster; and if he will make a statement. [171050]

Ruth Kelly: The Inland Revenue check the validity of national insurance numbers which are notified to them by an employer (including as appropriate gangmasters or employment agencies) when a new employee joins, and at the end of each tax year as part of the employer's annual return. Where a non-valid national insurance number has been used, the Inland Revenue will attempt to trace a valid number for the individual involved. Where this cannot be done, the Inland Revenue will write to the employer asking him to provide a valid national insurance number for that employee.

Tax Credits

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in West Lancashire have received child tax credit. [171494]

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many families in Stockton, South have received child tax credit. [171466]

Ruth Kelly: I refer my hon. Friends to the answer given to my hon. Friend the Member for Burton (Mrs. Dean) on 15 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 98W.

Ms Dari Taylor: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Stockton, South qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [171465]

Ruth Kelly: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 6,000 and 7,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Stockton, South constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02 respectively. However, year on year comparisons should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Tax Avoidance

Mr. Cousins: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what recent agreements he has reached with regard to the creation of an international tax avoidance prevention task force; and what contribution he proposes to make to such a task force. [171040]

Ruth Kelly: As a result of a Memorandum of Understanding signed in Williamsburg, Virginia on 23 April 2004, the Tax Commissioners of Australia, Canada, the United Kingdom and the United States will establish a joint task force, within the framework of bilateral tax treaties, to increase collaboration and coordinate information about abusive tax transactions, arrangements and schemes.

The task force will be comprised of officials from the respective tax administrations. It will supplement the on-going work of these administrations in addressing the challenges arising from abusive tax transactions.

Tax Rates

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Preston qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [169680]

Ruth Kelly: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 5,000 and 6,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Preston constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02 respectively. However, year-on-year comparisons should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in the Huntingdon constituency qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [170847]

Ruth Kelly: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 10,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Huntingdon constituency in 2000–01 and 2001–02. Estimates should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer how many senior citizens in Oldham, West and Royton qualified for the 10p rate of income tax in each year since its introduction. [170899]

Ruth Kelly: All income taxpayers benefit from the 10p starting rate. The Survey of Personal Incomes estimates there are about 5,000 state retirement pension age taxpayers in the Oldham, West and Royton constituency in 2001–02. In the Survey of Personal Incomes the sample size of pensioners living in this constituency is relatively small compared to other constituencies so a reliable estimate cannot be given for 2000–01 and the estimate for 2001–02 should be treated with caution because of sampling variation. Figures for 1999–2000 are currently not available.

Unemployment (Huntingdon)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Chancellor of the Exchequer what the level of unemployment was in the Huntingdon constituency in each year since 1997. [170844]

Ruth Kelly: The information requested falls within the responsibility of the National Statistician, who has been asked to reply.

Letter from Len Cook to Mr. Jonathan Djanogly, dated 6 May 2004:

As National Statistician, I have been asked to reply to your Parliamentary Question about unemployment. (170844)

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) compiles statistics of unemployment from the Labour Force Survey (LFS) following International Labour Organisation definitions. However, the LFS sample size is too small to give reliable estimates of unemployment in the Huntingdon Constituency.

ONS also compiles statistics of those claiming Jobseeker's Allowance (JSA) for local areas including parliamentary constituencies.

The table below gives the annual average number of JSA claimants for the Huntingdon constituency for each year since 1997.

Annual average number of JSA claimants—Huntingdon constituency, 1997–2003

	Number of claimants
1997	1,451
1998	1,214
1999	1,198
2000	964
2001	712
2002	786
2003	870

CABINET OFFICE

Recycled Paper

Norman Baker: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office by what date his Department expects to implement in full the quick win targets set by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs to ensure that *(a)* all copying paper bought by the Department is 100 per cent. recycled with a minimum of 75 per cent. post-consumer waste content and *(b)* all paper for printed publications bought by the Department is 60 per cent. recycled, of which a minimum is 75 per cent. post-consumer waste. [167736]

Mr. Alexander: The Cabinet Office has already implemented in full the quick win targets for copying paper and paper for printed publications.

Regulatory Impact Assessments

Mr. Stephen O'Brien: To ask the Minister for the Cabinet Office which of the regulatory impact assessments used in the Burdens Barometer 2004 published by the British chambers of commerce relate to legislation originating from *(a)* the UK Parliament and *(b)* the EU. [170310]

Mr. Alexander *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The Regulatory Impact Assessments which the British Chambers of Commerce used in their "Burdens Barometer 2004" are a matter for them.

CONSTITUTIONAL AFFAIRS

CPS Guidance

Mr. Hawkins: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what guidance on which matters to prosecute his Department and its predecessor have given to the Crown Prosecution Service since May 1997; and if he will publish all such guidance issued. [169865]

Mr. Leslie: None. Ministerial responsibility for Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) lies with the Law Officers. CPS Prosecution decisions are undertaken in accordance with the Code for Crown Prosecutors. Specific guidance on prosecuting particular offences is contained in the CPS Prosecution Manual. This guidance and the Code are published under the CPS Freedom of Information publication scheme.

Juries

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs whether the consultation paper on jury research and investigations into juror impropriety has been published. [170518]

Mr. Leslie: The consultation paper has not yet been published.

Operation Payback

Mr. Ben Chapman: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs if he will make a statement on the implementation of Operation Payback on the Wirral; [170213]

Mr. Leslie: I refer the hon. Member to the answer I gave to him on 4 May 2004, *Official Report*, column 1453W.

Queen's Counsel

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what discussions he has had with the legal professions concerning the future of the QC system. [167092]

Mr. Leslie: The Secretary of State and his officials have discussed the future of the QC rank with representatives of the legal professional bodies for England and Wales and Northern Ireland.

Speed Cameras

Mr. Gregory Campbell: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs how much money was received by central Government funds in 2003 in Northern Ireland in fines paid by motorists who were prosecuted for speeding as a result of the location of fixed cameras. [169760]

Mr. Leslie: Between 1 July 2003, when the fixed speed camera initiative commenced and 31 December 2003, the money received in fines paid by motorists prosecuted for speeding as a result of the location of fixed cameras was £412,223.

Trials (Merseyside)

Mrs. Curtis-Thomas: To ask the Parliamentary Secretary, Department for Constitutional Affairs what steps he is taking to reduce the percentage of ineffective trials in Merseyside. [170533]

Mr. Leslie: From 1 April 2003 to 31t March 2004 the ineffective trial rate in Merseyside decreased from 36.7 per cent. to 34.8 per cent..

The following initiatives have recently been implemented in Merseyside to further reduce ineffective trials. The Effective Trial Management Programme (ETMP) was rolled out in February 2004. ETMP is part of the Government's Criminal Case Management Programme which incorporates the "Charging" and "No Witness, No Justice" initiatives, with a view to improving the criminal justice process. A fifth District Judge and an extra Deputy District Judge have been appointed to the Liverpool Magistrates' Court and a case progression system has been initiated to track the progress of all cases listed for trial. The impact of these will continue to improve performance in the Magistrates' Courts.

In the Crown Courts the latest figure for March 2004 is 25.1 per cent.

EDUCATION AND SKILLS

Adoption

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many children aged *(a)* under two and *(b)* over two years were adopted in each of the last five years. [169041]

Margaret Hodge: The following table shows the number of looked after children adopted in England during the years ending 31 March 1999 to 2003.

Looked after children adopted during the years ending 31 March[1]

Age at adoption	*1999*[2]	*2000*[2]	*2001*[3]	*2002*[3]	*2003*[3]
Under 2	600	680	800	900	1,000
2 and over	1,600	2,100	2,200	2,500	2,500
Total	2,200	2,700	3,100	3,400	3,500

[1] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short-term placements.
[2] Figures are based on the Key Statistics Return (KS1) and the SSDA903 sample return.
[3] Figures are based on the AD1 return.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many adoption placements broke down in each of the last five years. [169042]

Margaret Hodge: The following table shows the estimated number of placements for adoption in England that ended without the making of an adoption order during the years ending 31 March 1999 to 2003.

	Number of placements that ended without the making of an adoption order[1, 2]
1999	320
2000	260
2001	270
2002	270
2003	250

[1] Figures exclude children looked after under an agreed series of short-term placements.
[2] Figures are rounded to the nearest 10.
Source:
The information provided is derived from the SSDA903 return, a one-third sample survey of all looked after children in England, and as such these are estimated figures.

African Educational Institutions

Hugh Bayley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assistance his Department gives to English schools to work with schools in Africa. [165706]

Alan Johnson: My Department is committed to international school linking and partnership activity, which can provide a powerful and enjoyable framework for the delivery of curriculum objectives, increase motivation, and raise awareness of citizenship and global issues within schools.

To encourage and support this aim the Global Gateway, our new one-stop-shop website for international education, was launched in February 2004. Managed on our behalf by the British Council, the Global Gateway, enables schools to find partner schools in other countries and provides information about development programmes.

My Department funds various programmes through which schools are supported in their work with Africa. This includes:

grant funding to the British Council to provide school linking services and advice, grants for schools to go on linking visits, and to deliver specific programmes such as the linking of 150 schools to South African schools;

grant funding to the League for the Exchange of Commonwealth Teachers, to pay for teacher exchange and linking throughout the Commonwealth including a range of African countries;

the Teachers International Professional Development (TIPD) Programme, introduced in May 2000, which promotes links between UK schools and schools in other countries by providing for teacher study visits. To date 1,053 teachers have visited Africa on this programme;

support for the teacher development work and opportunities offered by Voluntary Services Overseas, including support for the Sabbatical Guide booklet (produced in 2003). We are also developing new work, such as with the Link Community Development on the 'Global Teachers Awards' under which 50 teachers a year will work on educational projects in Africa;

In addition, our Sustainable Development Action Plan in Education and Skills aims to raise awareness of global development issues and developing countries in our schools, and we are working closely with the Department for International Development and other organisations to deliver this goal.

Apprenticeships

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many residents of Oldham, West and Royton have undertaken apprenticeships in each of the last five years. [170933]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The information requested is not available at parliamentary constituency level. Nor is the information available on a consistent geographical basis over the last five years. However, the following table shows the number of starts on modern apprenticeships in the Greater Manchester Learning and Skills Council (LSC) area between April 2001 and the end of July 2003, as well as the number of starts from April 1996 to March 2001 in the six Training and Enterprise Councils (TECs) that amalgamated into Greater Manchester LSC—Bolton and Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Stockport and High Peak and Wigan.

TEC/LSC	Advanced MAs	Foundation MAs
April 1998 to March 1999		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	800	600
Manchester	2,400	700
Oldham CCTE	400	300
Rochdale CCTE	500	100
Stockport and High Peak[1]	800	100
Wigan CCTE	700	300
April 1999 to March 2000		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	900	1000
Manchester	2,800	1,800
Oldham CCTE	500	500
Rochdale CCTE	500	600
Stockport and High Peak[1]	700	700
Wigan CCTE	700	600
April 2000 to March 2001		
Bolton and Bury CCTE	700	1,200
Manchester	3,200	2,600
Oldham CCTE	500	700
Rochdale CCTE	400	700
Stockport and High Peak[1]	800	1,000
Wigan CCTE	900	800
April 2001 to July 2002		
Greater Manchester LSC	4,800	9,800
March 2001 to July 2002		
Greater Manchester LSC	2,900	6,800

[1] Denotes TEC also became part of Derbyshire LSC

Notes:

TECs reported the figures in financial years. LSC reports figures in academic years.

Source:

TEC management information

LSC Individualised Learner Record

The first LSC 'year' was 16 months in order to bring the financial year figures into line with academic years.

Boarding Schools

Mr. Maude: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many boarding schools the National Care Standards Commission has inspected; how many were identified as having a significant defect; and if he will estimate the cost of such inspections in each year since the inspections began. [164263]

Margaret Hodge: Boarding schools are inspected once every three years.

Between 1 April 2002 and 29 February 2004, 116 boarding schools have been inspected by the National Care Standards Commission. The estimated cost of each of these inspections was £1,477 for 2002–03 and £1,566 for 2003–04.

Where the National Care Standards Commission had concerns about services failing to safeguard the welfare of children provided with accommodation by a school or college, they were required under section 105(2) of the Care Standards Act 2000, to make a statutory notification to (i) the relevant education authority or (ii) the Secretary of State. Two such notifications have been made between 1 April 2002 and 29 February 2004.

Building Schools for the Future

Dr. Kumar: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what progress he is making with his Building Schools for the Future programme. [169301]

Mr. Miliband: We have made excellent progress on Building Schools for the Future, working closely with local government and other partners. This is starting to deliver our commitment to a 10 to 15-year programme of rebuilding and renewal to ensure that secondary education in every part of England has facilities of 21-Century standard.

Four in five respondents to our consultation last year supported our new approach to capital investment. In February 2004, we announced the first wave of 16 projects, involving an estimated 180 schools across 19 local authorities. We also published 11 exemplar designs which show what the schools of the future may look like. This month, we have established Partnerships for Schools, a new body to ensure that the investment is good value for money. Lastly, following the Chancellor's announcement of this Department's spending review settlement, we are well placed to announce the next waves of projects later this year.

Child Care Subsidies

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what discussions he has had with providers of subsidies for child care places; and which three sources provided the highest subsidy for child care places in the latest year for which figures are available. [168367]

Margaret Hodge: We hold discussions with a range of organisations that help with the cost of child care in variety of ways, on both the supply and demand sides. Government provides the following substantial support for key groups of parents with their child care costs:

The working tax credit where working parents can receive help with up to 70 per cent. of the costs of child care, subject to limits of £200 a week, or £135 a week for one child. This is paying out well over £700 million a year and can help families with incomes up to £42,500, where the family has two or more children;

The Care to Learn scheme for teenage parents that can provide up to £5,000 a year for those returning to education;

The new deal for lone parents can cover child care costs for lone parents going on training, attending interviews or working up to 16 hours a week, up to the same limits as the child care element of the Working Tax Credit;

The Childcare Grant pays full time HE students with dependent children up to 85 per cent. of actual child care costs up to the same limits as for the WTC;

The national health service provided over £70 million since April 2001 for child care for NHS staff, with a significant amount of that being capital costs for building nurseries or direct subsidies to parents to help with child care costs.

Help with the cost of child care was considered as part of the child care review and in the Budget we announced that:

From April 2005 a new tax exemption will apply to both employer-contracted child care and child care vouchers to encourage more employers to support their staff with child care.

Government will be consulting in Summer 2004 on a voluntary light touch approval scheme extending access to the child care element of the working tax credit to users of a broad range of additional types of child care, to be implemented by April 2005.

It is not possible to make meaningful comparisons between organisations that subsidise the cost of child care but the recently published National Audit Office report (Early Years: Progress in developing high quality child care and early education accessible to all, HC 268,

27 February 2004) provides a helpful overview of the situation, showing, on page three, how much different sectors contributed to the total cost of child care across the country in 2002–03:

	£ million	*Percentage*
Private individuals (parents)	3,010	45
Local government	2,540	38
DfES and Sure Start	680	10
Childcare Tax Credit	315	5
Private companies	140	2

Child Abuse

Ms Shipley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what restrictions there are on convicted child abusers working *(a)* as private tutors and *(b)* in private schools. [165944]

Margaret Hodge: My Department's guidance to employers in the education service makes it clear that thorough checks should be carried out on all people who are appointed to work with children, including people who are employed as private tutors by agencies, and people who work in private schools. We recommend that employers check a person's identity, academic qualifications, professional and character references, previous employment history, criminal record, List 99 status, health, and in the case of teachers, whether they are registered with the General Teaching Council.

Parents and other individuals are not able to obtain criminal record or List 99 checks on self-employed private tutors, but can safeguard against employing a convicted child abuser by engaging a private tutor through a tuition agency.

Connexions

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many young people with learning disabilities have used the Connexions Service, broken down by region, in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement. [170397]

Margaret Hodge: Information on the use of Connexions services by young people with learning disabilities is not collected centrally.

In support of their key target of reducing the proportion of young people who are not in education, employment or training, many Connexions Partnerships have agreed a local target to increase the proportion of 16–19 year olds with learning difficulties and disabilities in education, employment and training. It is encouraging that there was a small increase of two percentage points in the numbers of young people with learning difficulties and disabilities in education, employment or training between June 2003 and March 2004.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what representations he has received concerning the effect on private contractors of his Department's encouragement of Connexions partnerships to improve tax efficiency; and if he will make a statement. [169977]

Margaret Hodge: My Department has received a number of representations from private companies, Connexions Partnerships and other organisations regarding the effect on private contractors of the need to reduce VAT transition funding.

The decision about what tax efficiency means for each partnership, is the responsibility of individual Boards. Establishing a tax efficient delivery model does not necessarily affect the relationship with private sector companies. But the Department remains in discussion with representatives from Connexions service providers and will continue to consider any issues that they bring forward.

Some partnerships have for some time been in the process of changing their model of governance. The need for tax efficiencies has not always been the catalyst for this but it does bring these partnerships in to line with others looking at how they structure themselves to become more tax efficient.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many contracts between the Connexions Service and private contractors have been terminated in the last year; and if he will make a statement. [169978]

Margaret Hodge: One private sector contract has been terminated in the last year by Essex Southend and Thurrock Connexions Partnership. In addition, Lifetime Careers (part of the Nord Anglia group) were not selected by Greater Manchester Connexions to deliver services in Stockport and Bury in 2004–05 following a competitive tendering exercise.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many subcontracting Connexions Partnerships have a local authority as the lead body for the receipt of grant. [169979]

Margaret Hodge: Of the 47 Connexions Partnerships, there are three subcontracting Connexions Partnerships who have a local authority as the lead body—Hertfordshire Connexions, Norfolk Connexions and Central London Connexions.

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many private sector contractors have been used by the Connexions Service in each year since its establishment. [169981]

Margaret Hodge: Connexions Partnerships are themselves private companies. Many will also sub contract some services to other private sector companies. Information on the numbers involved is not collected centrally.

Dyslexia

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what steps his Department is taking to identify cases of dyslexia at the earliest opportunity; and if he will make a statement. [169133]

Margaret Hodge: Early intervention is one of the key themes of "Removing Barriers To Achievement", our strategy for special educational needs, published in February. Guidance on identifying and assessing special educational needs is given in the SEN Code of Practice, to which schools and local education authorities must

have regard. A range of material for teachers on dyslexia and dyscalculia has also been produced as part of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to help promote inclusion of pupils with specific learning difficulties. The guidance has been well received and other material is in preparation.

The Department continues to work closely with the British Dyslexia Association and the Dyslexia Institute to help raise awareness and develop new resources that will be of practical assistance to teachers and other staff. We have, for example, supported a dyslexia friendly schools pack and a handy hints poster for primary schools. The Department has also supported research into eye movement characteristics as a possible means of identifying dyslexia.

Early Years Education

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps have been taken to deliver Early Years education in rural areas; and if he will make a statement. [167876]

Margaret Hodge: All authorities have received sufficient funding to enable them to fund free places for all three and four-year-olds whose parents want one, through the under-fives sub-block of their Education Formula Spending Share (EFSS)—the main source of funding for education. For 2004–05, over £2.6 billion of EFSS was distributed through the under-five sub-block. The funding includes 'top ups' which relate to the LA's local circumstances i.e. deprivation and area costs.

Education (Heywood and Middleton)

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many and what percentage of pupils in Heywood and Middleton reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years; [168502]

(2) how many and what percentage of 11-year-old pupils in Heywood and Middleton reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [168503]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

	Pupils achieving Level 4+: Mathematics			*Pupils achieving Level 4+: English*		
	Heywood and Middleton		*England*	*Heywood and Middleton*		*England*
	Number	*Percentage*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Percentage*
2003	936	69	73	927	69	75
2002	1,031	72	73	1,069	75	75
2001	981	69	71	1,056	74	75
2000	975	72	72	991	73	75
1999	993	72	69	997	72	71
1998	790	58	59	882	65	65
1997	787	61	62	780	61	63

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding was spent on higher education in Heywood and Middleton in each of the last seven years. [168505]

Alan Johnson: The only publicly-funded institution providing higher education in Heywood and Middleton is Hopwood Hall College. The amounts of public funding spent in the years for which figures are available are shown in the table. Expenditure was by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and by the Student Loans Company (SLC). The latter relates only to spending on tuition fees, student loans (cash cost) and the dependants grant. Data prior to 1999/2000 are not available. The figures for student support do not include spending on other additional grants, namely, disabled students allowance, care leavers grant and travel grant. These were paid through local education authorities, up to 2003/04, and figures are not held centrally.

£000

Academic Year	*HEFCE funding*	*SLC funding*
1999/2000	264	183.9
2000/01	273	232.5
2001/02	342.5	367.3
2002/03	443	405.7
2003/04	508.2	n/a

In addition, institutions located outside Heywood and Middleton may be undertaking activities in the area, for example, outreach to raise the attainment and aspirations of potential higher education entrants, or special arrangements with schools and colleges to improve progression into higher education. This information is not held centrally.

Education (Stalybridge and Hyde)

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on higher education in Stalybridge and Hyde in each of the last seven years. [168752]

Alan Johnson: The only publicly funded institution providing higher education in Stalybridge and Hyde is Tameside college. The amounts of public funding spent in the years in which figures are available are shown in the following table. Expenditure was by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and by the Student Loans Company (SLC). The latter relates only to spending on tuition fees, student loans (cash cost) and the dependants grant. Data prior to 1999–2000 are not available. The figures for student support do not include spending on other additional grants, namely, disabled students allowance, care leavers grant and travel grant. These were paid through local education authorities, up to 2003–04, and the figures are not held centrally.

£000

Academic year	HEFCE funding	SLC funding
999/2000	455	336.1
2000/01	562	363.4
2001/02	636	431
2002/03	670	495.3
2003/04	724	n/a

In addition, institutions located outside Stalybridge and Hyde may be undertaking activities in the area, for example outreach to raise the attainment and aspirations of potential higher education entrants, or special arrangements with schools and colleges to improve progression into higher education. This information is not held centrally.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of pupils in Stalybridge and Hyde reached the *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English standard in each of the last seven years. [168754]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

	Pupils achieving Level 4+: Mathematics			Pupils achieving Level 4+: English		
	Stalybridge and Hyde		England	Stalybridge and Hyde		England
	Number	Percentage	Percentage	Number	Percentage	Percentage
2003	855	71	73	893	74	75
2002	902	72	73	904	72	75
2001	875	71	71	914	74	75
2000	904	70	72	933	72	75
1999	824	64	69	861	67	71
1998	667	53	59	740	58	65
1997	650	54	62	695	58	63

Education (Oldham, West and Royton)

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding each school in Oldham, West and Royton has received from the New Deal for Schools; [170918]

(2) how much public funding has been spent on repairing schools in Oldham, West and Royton in each year since 1997. [170916]

Mr. Miliband: Table A shows schools in Oldham, West and Royton constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deals for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Since 2001, the majority of capital support has been allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level; this should be held locally. Table B sets out the capital support provided by the Department to Oldham local education authority and its schools since 1997–98, in total and by programme (including all allocations through NDS mentioned in table A).

Table A: NDS allocations to schools in Oldham and Royton constituency

Year/School	Project	Package	Grant (£)
NDS1[1] 1997/98			
Whitegate End Junior and Infant School	Roof renewal	LEA wide grant	784,000
South Chadderton School	Laboratory refurbishment	LEA wide grant	784,000
Grange School	Re-roofing of main block and sports hall	LEA wide grant	784,000
Yew Tree Junior School	Roofing security measures	LEA wide grant	784,000
Corpus Christi RC Primary School	Security fencing	LEA wide grant	784,000
Grange School	Security CCTV	LEA wide grant	784,000
Broadfield Primary School	Security fencing	LEA wide grant	784,000
St. Martin's CofE Junior Infant and Nursery School	Security fencing	LEA wide grant	784,000
NDS2 1998/99			
The Hathershaw Technology College	Replacement of the heating system	—	641,580
Grange School	Replacement of the heating system	—	542,790
The Hathershaw Technology College	Re-roofing and associated window replacements	—	625,000
Byron Street Infant and Nursery School	Renewal of the roof covering and rainwater goods and upgrading of insulation	—	194,997
The Radclyffe School	Improved access and escape arrangements	—	71,500
Mills Hill Primary School	Replacement of the Early Years Building	—	515,500
NDS3 1999/2000			
Burnley Brow Community School	Replacement of School	—	3,344,291
NDS4 2000/01			
The Radclyffe School	Re-roofing and asbestos removal	—	149,336
Freehold Community Junior Infant and Nursery School	New Roof	—	103,351
Holy Rosary RC Junior Infant and Nursery School	Electrical re-wire	—	112,284

Table A: NDS allocations to schools in Oldham and Royton constituency

Year/School	*Project*	*Package*	*Grant (£)*
Fitton Hill Infant and Nursery School	Replacement of Boiler/Heating system	—	109,697
Firbank Junior and Infant School	Replacement of boiler plant	—	51,884
Bare Trees Junior School	Replacement of boiler/heating system	—	159,935
Royton and Crompton School	Replacement of dilapidated temporary classrooms	—	105,934
St. Hilda's CofE Primary School	Replacement of boiler/heating system	—	202,768
South Chadderton School	Re-roofing	—	57,923
St. Anne's CofE Junior and Infant School	Replacement of Boiler Plant and Heating System	—	214,447
North Chadderton School	Window replacements	—	193,949

[1] For NDS 1, the grant of £784,000 was allocated for Oldham local education authority as a whole, part of which was used for capital investment at each of the schools mentioned in the Oldham and Royton constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to each school.

Table B: Capital allocations—Oldham education authority

£000

	1997–98	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*
Assistance with Asset Management Plans	—	—	35	—	—	—	—
Voluntary Aided formulaic allocations	—	—	—	—	68	386	499
Basic Need	1,630	2,564	982	1,206	245	107	167
City Learning Centres	—	—	—	—	93	—	—
Class Size initiative	—	1,112	1,363	22	234	1,436	—
Condition	—	—	—	—	1,810	2,792	3,621
Devolved Formula	—	—	—	1,876	1,516	2,314	3,560
Energy	—	85	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation	—	—	—	—	—	1,381	2,669
NDS 1	784	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 2	—	2,591	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 3	—	—	3,344	—	—	—	—
NDS 4	—	—	—	3,369	—	—	—
Nursery Provision	—	—	—	66	—	—	—
School Labs	—	—	—	174	174	—	—
School Security	70	87	88	88	62	53	—
Schools Access Initiative	31	70	100	140	232	375	549
Secondary Learning Support Units	—	—	—	77	67	—	—
Seed Challenge	—	—	—	179	198	332	330
Specialist Schools	—	—	—	200	—	200	—
Staff Workspace	—	—	—	—	—	69	139
Supplementary Credit Approvals	1,336	109	—	54	507	25	—
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools	—	—	—	129	47	—	—
Targeted Capital Funding	—	—	—	—	1,116	5,000	2,508
Voluntary Aided School Grant	773	286	350	615	1,539	1,930	—
Total	4,624	6,904	6,262	8,195	7,908	16,400	14,042

To date we have allocated £75.4 million capital funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06, including £60 million of PFI credits.

Education (Huntingdon)

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in the Huntingdon constituency in *(a)* each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures were available. [170840]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the full-time equivalent number of teaching assistants employed in maintained schools in Huntingdon constituency in each January between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	210
1998	240
1999	260
2000	260
2001	320
2002	340
2003	370

Source:
Annual School Census.

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in schools in the Huntingdon constituency on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he has taken to reduce them. [170841]

Mr. Miliband: Information on teacher vacancies is not available by constituency as it is collected at local education authority level. In January 2003, the latest information available, there were 32 full-time teacher vacancies in Cambridgeshire local education authority.

Like other areas, since 1997 Cambridgeshire has benefited from the initiatives that the Government has put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in the former Cambridgeshire LEA area has risen by 450 from 5,400 to 5,850 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the area has grown by 1,080 from 2,470 to 3,550 in 2003.

Education Maintenance Allowance

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what estimate his Department has made of the number of young people who will continue in education as a result of the education maintenance allowance. [167988]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The estimated number of young people of compulsory school leaving age expected to continue in full time education in 2004–05 is 505,000. This is out of a population of 666,000. Based on evidence from the pilot evaluation the Centre for Research in Social Policy and the Institute of Fiscal Studies an additional 72,000 young people will be participating in further education by 2006–07 as a result of the EMA.

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) in which education authority areas pupils are able to benefit from the education maintenance allowance; and how many qualify in each; [169119]

(2) in which education authority areas pupils are not able to benefit from the education maintenance allowance; and how many would have qualified for the allowance in each; [169120]

(3) what estimate he has made of the likely take-up of education maintenance allowance and the costs. [169121]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: At present, young people are able to receive an education maintenance allowance (EMA) if they live in one of the 56 LEA pilot areas listed in table one. This table also shows for each LEA area the numbers of young people who have benefited from EMA in each area. It should be noted that different LEAs have been testing different versions of the scheme, in order to inform our decisions about the best national model.

Table one: EMA pilot areas and recipients in 2003/04

Local education authority	*Number of students who have received EMA in 2003/04*
Barking and Dagenham	924
Barnsley	1,377
Birmingham	9,780
Bolton	2,227
Bradford	4,417
Brent	1,767
Camden	1,206
Cornwall	4,968
Coventry	1,089
Doncaster	2,492
Ealing	1,618
Gateshead	1,780
Greenwich	1,404
Hackney	1,887
Halton	1,127
Hammersmith and Fulham	853
Haringey	1,183
Hartlepool	807
Islington	1,324
Kingston upon Hull	2,025
Knowsley	1,943
Lambeth	1,603
Lancashire (East)	2,268
Leeds	4,764
Leicester	3,554
Lewisham	1,903
Lincolnshire (N.E.)	1,364
Liverpool	4,821
Luton	1,796
Manchester	4,554
Middlesbrough	1,112
Newham	2,577
North Tyneside	1,500
Northumberland	2,632
Nottingham	2,907
Oldham	2,510
Salford	1,212
Sandwell	1,872
Sheffield	3,876
Southampton	1,285
Southwark	1,370
South Tyneside	1,604
St. Helens	1,428
Stoke on Trent	2,705
Suffolk	2,460
Sunderland	2,287
Tameside	2,117
Tower Hamlets	2,754
Wakefield	2,249
Walsall	2,473
Waltham Forest	1,140
Wandsworth	1,055
Wigan	2,453
Wirral	2,457
Wolverhampton	2,377
Worcestershire	2,960
England—total	128,197

From September 2004, the national EMA scheme will be available throughout England to all young people aged 16 at the start of the 2004/05 academic year who meet the eligibility criteria. It will also to be available to 17 and 18-year-olds in the pilot areas. Our forecast is that around 270,000 young people will take up EMA in 2004/05. By 2006 EMA will provide support to over 400,000 young people.

The Department estimates the cost of the education maintenance allowance Scheme over the next three financial years to be:

	£ million
2004–05	275
2005–06	403
2006–07	476

These estimates take account of the phased roll-out to one cohort at a time and the cost of administering, promoting and evaluating the scheme.

English/Mathematics

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 11-year-old pupils in Burnley reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [167928]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

	Pupils achieving Level 4+: Mathematics			*Pupils achieving Level 4+: English*		
	Burnley		*England*	*Burnley*		*England*
	Number	*Percentage*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Percentage*
2003	876	67	73	918	70	75
2002	939	69	73	931	68	75
2001	879	68	71	905	70	75
2000	896	70	72	935	73	75
1999	913	66	69	909	66	71
1998	775	58	59	830	62	65
1997	784	59	62	785	59	63

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many and what percentage of 11-year-old pupils in Preston reached level four in *(a)* mathematics and *(b)* English in each of the last seven years. [168125]

Mr. Miliband: The information requested is as follows:

	Pupils achieving Level 4+: Mathematics			*Pupils achieving Level 4+: English*		
	Preston		*England*	*Preston*		*England*
	Number	*Percentage*	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*	*Percentage*
2003	851	68	73	850	68	75
2002	864	68	73	843	66	75
2001	827	62	71	894	67	75
2000	819	65	72	844	67	75
1999	794	61	69	798	62	71
1998	655	51	59	762	60	65
1997	664	52	62	666	53	63

Field Trips

Norman Lamb: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what steps his Department is taking to increase the number of field trips available to *(a)* GCSE science and *(b)* A-level biology students; [171054]

(2) if his Department will commission research to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the state of fieldwork in secondary science education for 14 to 19 year olds; [171055]

(3) what assessment he has made of the report by the National Foundation for Educational Research on Outdoor Learning; and if he will make a statement. [171056]

Mr. Miliband: We have no plans to commission further research to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of fieldwork in secondary science education for 14 to 19 year olds, having only just received the findings of NfER's "Outdoor Learning Review", which we partly funded. My officials will meet the English Outdoor Council, who also partly funded the review, in the near future to discuss ways forward.

We are already working with the Field Studies Council, subject associations and others, together with our new national network of Science Learning Centres, to develop continuing professional development to improve teachers' confidence and skills in the planning, risk assessment and management of fieldwork. We see these as the key to developing both the quantity and quality of fieldwork in 14–19 science. This is in addition to the Science and Geography teaching resources provided by our Growing Schools programme.

Further Education (Level 2)

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what plans he has to expand the number of places available on level two courses in further education colleges. [169327]

Alan Johnson: The availability of learning at level two in further education institutions is key to meeting our Skills Strategy objective, outlined in the White Paper 21st Century Skills—Realising Our Potential, of reducing the number of adults without the foundation of skills needed for employability. Local Learning and Skills Councils are prioritising level two provision for those lacking such skills in their discussions with colleges about their plans for 2004–05. From September this year we will be trialling, in the North East and South East regions, a new entitlement enabling adults in the labour force without a full level two qualification to have access to free learning for their first full level two qualification.

Higher Education

Huw Irranca-Davies: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many admissions to the higher education sector there have been of students from *(a)* overseas, *(b)* the Gulf States and *(c)* the United Arab Emirates in each of the last 10 years. [168567]

Alan Johnson: The available figures covering all overseas entrants to higher education in UK HE institutions are given in the table.

Overseas domiciled entrants[1] to UK HE institutions

Academic year	*All non-EU overseas*	*Gulf States[2]*	*United Arab Emirates*
1994/95	47,776	1,337	231
1995/96	50,332	1,504	256
1996/97	51,604	1,639	338
1997/98	57,133	1,739	302
1998/99	58,481	2,144	357
1999/2000	61,385	2,407	427
2000/01	68,879	2,439	466
2001/02	78,625	2,419	498
2002/03	98,538	3,027	528

[1] Figures are a snapshot as at 1 December and cover both postgraduate and undergraduate study.

[2] Includes: Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates, Yemen and Qatar.

Source:

Higher Education Statistics Agency.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much public funding has been spent on higher education in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last seven years. [167440]

Alan Johnson: There is no higher education institution in Manchester Gorton receiving funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England. We are aware of a small number of students (less than 10 in the 2002/03 academic year) at the Partnership for Theological Education receiving financial support via the Student Loans Company (SLC). The available figures for funding for these students are shown below. These relate only to funding for tuition fees, student loans (cash cost) and the Dependants Grant. Data prior to 1999/2000 are not available. The figures do not include any spending on other additional grants, namely Disabled Students Allowances, Care Leavers Grant and Travel Grant. These were paid through local education authorities, up to 2003/04, and figures are not held centrally.

Academic year	*SLC funding (£000)*
1999/2000	29.2
2000/01	49.5
2001/02	47
2002/03	28.4

In addition, institutions located outside Manchester Gorton may be undertaking activities in the area, for example outreach to raise the attainment and aspirations of potential higher education entrants, or special arrangements with schools and colleges to improve progression into higher education. This information is not held centrally.

Industry Interchange

Helen Jones: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what steps he is taking to encourage a greater interchange of staff between education and industry; and what discussions he has had *(a)* with other departments and *(b)* with employers on how best to facilitate such an interchange. [169454]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: My Department supports a number of schemes that encourage greater interchange of staff between education and industry: the Learning and Skills Council's Professional Development Placement scheme enables teachers in schools and further education colleges to undertake short placements in business; the Centre for Excellence in Leadership in co-operation with the Association of Colleges runs a work shadowing programme open to colleges and training providers involving exchanges of managers; and the Higher Education Funding Council supports a range of activities, often in partnership with the DTI, to make university staff more aware of business needs, including Business Fellowships.

There are regular discussions with DTI and Treasury on promoting links between education and business. The Government's approach to promoting such links draws on a number of consultations with business including, for example, through Howard Davies' review of enterprise education in 2002

Information and Communication Technologies

Malcolm Bruce: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills pursuant to his answer of 27 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 975W, on information and communication technologies, if he will place in the Library the independent research to which he refers. [171289]

Mr. Charles Clarke: I have today placed in the Library copies of the ImpaCT2 Pupil Attainment report.

Key Workers

Mr. Horam: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills for what reasons further education lecturers are not permitted to apply for higher equity loans under the Key Worker Living housing programmes announced in March. [169822]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* FE teachers, like school teachers and other key workers, in London and other high housing cost areas in the South East and East regions, are eligible for equity loans of up to £50,000 under the Key Worker Living initiative announced by the Deputy Prime Minister on 23 March. This is the first time FE teachers have been eligible for such support.

In addition, as part of the London Challenge, there is a specific scheme in London to retain school teachers who have the potential to be future leaders of the education service in London. This was developed in the light of evidence that, although London is very attractive to young school teachers, many leave London when they want to settle down and start a family. This is just the moment when they are beginning to take on crucial middle leadership roles in schools. The London Challenge Key Teacher Homebuy Scheme therefore offers school teachers in London equity loans of up to £100,000 to enable them to afford family homes.

Learning and Skills Council

Mrs. Spelman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on the transfer of the learning and skills councils to the proposed regional assemblies. [170091]

Alan Johnson: In our White Paper "Your Region, Your Choice" we set out proposals for each assembly to appoint two members to the Board of each local Learning and Skills Council (LSC) in its region, and for the national LSC to consult assemblies on its guidance to the local LSCs. We also propose that local LSCs will be required to have regard to assembly strategies, including in drawing up their spending plans; and to consult the relevant assembly about their local plans.

Mr. Dismore: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on achievement levels of *(a)* young people and *(b)* adults in relation to basic skills in the North London Learning and Skills Council area. [170661]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: This is a matter for the Learning and Skills Council (LSC). The Local LSC will write to the hon. Gentleman with the information requested and a copy of his reply will be placed in the Library.

Learning Disabilities

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many local education authorities have provided parent partnership services for families of children with special educational needs; what proportion of families have been provided with the service; and if he will make a statement. [170611]

Mr. Miliband: Every local education authority is required under Section 332A of the Education Act 1996 to make arrangements for parent partnership services. Arrangements vary, with some authorities providing the service themselves, while others buy in the service from another provider such as a voluntary organisation or another local authority. Information on the proportion of families that have used the service is not collected centrally.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many schools have increased accessibility to children with learning disabilities through the School Access Initiative; what funding will be provided for the initiative over the next three years; and if he will make a statement. [170612]

Mr. Miliband: The Schools Access Initiative is designed to increase the accessibility of mainstream schools for pupils with disabilities. Over £274 million has been made available since the scheme began in 1996. A further £100 million will be made available each year for 2004–05 and 2005–06. Funding for the scheme beyond 2005–06 is subject to decisions relating to the outcome of the 2004 Spending Review.

It is for local education authorities to decide which of the capital projects proposed by their schools should be supported in the light of local needs and circumstances detailed in their Accessibility Strategy. They are not required to provide us with information detailing how they have spent their allocation of the School Access Initiative to increase access to pupils with specific disabilities. It is therefore not possible to say how many schools have increased their accessibility for children with learning disabilities.

Medical Courses/Schools

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many places were available for *(a)* UK nationals and *(b)* fee paying students from overseas to study medicine in each of the last five financial years; and how many places are available in 2004, broken down by academic institution. [151237]

Alan Johnson: The available figures from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) are given in tables 1 and 2. Data are given for English medical schools only. Allocation of places for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved administrations.

Target figures for overseas students have remained constant during this period and are given separately in table 2.

Figures for UK nationals only are not available.

Table 1: Total places available to study medicine in England by Institution

			Target[1]			
University	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*	*20042*
Birmingham	232	332	332	332	372	372
Brighton/Sussex	—	—	0	0	128	128
Bristol	169	169	169	230	249	249
Cambridge	276	276	296	296	296	296
East Anglia	—	0	0	110	110	130
Hull/York	—	—	0	0	130	130
Leeds	218	218	258	298	258	258
Leicester Warwick	190	239	303	303	403	403
Liverpool	218	218	268	268	308	308
Manchester/Keele	261	311	341	341	396	396
Newcastle/Durham	201	220	290	340	340	340
Nottingham	194	202	218	234	324	324
Oxford	113	113	160	170	180	180
Peninsula	—	0	0	127	167	167
Sheffield	218	223	238	238	238	238
Southampton	171	200	200	200	200	240
Imperial	311	326	326	326	326	326
King's College	360	360	370	380	390	400
QMW	241	247	253	253	305	305
St. George's	187	222	222	257	257	257
UCL	330	330	330	330	330	330
England total	3,890	4,200	4,574	5,033	5,707	5,777

[1] Target figures include all UK, EEA and non-EEA domiciles.

Source:
HEFCE

Table 2: Overseas places available to study medicine in England by Institution

Institution	*Overseas target*
Birmingham	16
Brighton/Sussex	0
Bristol	12
Cambridge	19
East Anglia	0
Hull/York	0
Leeds/Bradford	15
Leicester/Warwick	13
Liverpool	15
Manchester/Keele	18
Newcastle/Durham	14
Nottingham	13
Oxford	8
Peninsula	0
Sheffield	15
Southampton	12
Imperial	21
Kings	26
QMW	17

Table 2: Overseas places available to study medicine in England by Institution

Institution	*Overseas target*
St. George's	13
UCL	25
Total	272

Source:
HEFCE

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what recent representations he has received on access to medical degree courses. [168913]

Alan Johnson: I have discussions from time to time with various groups on such matters, including the British Medical Association (BMA) Medical Students Committee and the Brightside Trust.

Mr. Steen: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the intake into medical schools was in *(a)* England and Wales, *(b)* Scotland and *(c)* Northern Ireland in each year since 1997. [166859]

Alan Johnson: The latest available figures for medical schools in England are shown in the table.

Information for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved administrations.

Actual intakes of medical schools: England

Year of entry	*Intake*
1997	3,749
1998	3,735
1999	3,972
2000	4,300
2001	4,713
2002	5,277
2003[1]	6,030

[1] Provisional
Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many applications were made in the last academic year by students wishing to train as a medical practitioner from *(a)* the UK, *(b)* other countries in the European Union and *(c)* outside the European Union. [155878]

Alan Johnson: The available information is taken from the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) and covers the number of applicants to full time undergraduate pre-clinical medicine courses. Figures are given in the table.

Applicants[1] through UCAS to pre-clinical medicine, 2003 entry

Domicile	*Number*
Home	12,728
EU	942
Other Overseas	2,220
Total	15,890

[1] Includes any student who made at least one application for medicine.
Source:
Universities and Colleges Admissions Service

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will list the universities, colleges and medical schools which provide places for the training of medical practitioners. [155879]

Alan Johnson: The institutions in England which offer undergraduate courses of medicine are listed as follows. Information for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved administrations.

University Medical Schools and Colleges:

Birmingham
Brighton/Sussex[1]
Bristol
Cambridge
East Anglia
Hull/York[2]
Leeds
Leicester Warwick[3]
Liverpool
Manchester/Keele[4]
Newcastle/Durham[5]
Nottingham
Oxford
Peninsula[6]
Sheffield
Southampton
Imperial
Kings College
Queen Mary and Westfield
St. Georges Hospital Medical School
University College London

[1] A joint partnership by the University of Brighton and the University of Sussex, taught at the University of Brighton.

[2] A joint partnership by the University of Hull and the University of York, taught at both institutions.

[3] Those with a degree in Biological Sciences can study at the University of Warwick for the 4 year graduate medicine program from the University of Leicester.

[4] The University of Manchester medicine course can be studied at the University of Keele. The University of Keele is developing it's own curriculum, expected for 2007 entry.

[5] Option to study the first two years of the University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne medicine programme at the University of Durham.

[6] A joint partnership by the University of Exeter and the University of Plymouth, taught at both institutions.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many places for the training of medical practitioners at each university, college and medical school were available in 1997; and how many will be available this September. [155880]

Alan Johnson: The information is shown in the table. Information for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved administrations.

Medical school intake targets: England

University medical school	*1997*	*2004*
Birmingham	213	372
Brighton/Sussex[1]	—	128
Bristol	155	249
Cambridge	254	296

Medical school intake targets: England

University medical school	*1997*	*2004*
East Anglia[1]	—	130
Hull/York[1]	—	130
Leeds	200	258
Leicester Warwick	175	403
Liverpool	200	308
Manchester/Keele	240	396
Newcastle/Durham	185	340
Nottingham	178	324
Oxford	104	180
Peninsula[1]	—	167
Sheffield	200	238
Southampton	157	240
Charing Cross[2]	174	—
Imperial	112	326
Kings College	118	400
Royal Free[2]	110	—
Queen Mary and Westfield	202	305
St. George's	172	257
University College London	220	330
United Medical and Dental School[2]	225	—
Total England	3,594	5,777

[1] Brighton/Sussex and Hull/York were set up in 2003, East Anglia and Peninsula in 2002.

[2] Charing Cross merged with Imperial College: Royal Free merged with University College; United Medical and Dental Schools merged with Kings.

Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Bob Russell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students who entered medical training in the current academic year were from *(a)* the UK, *(b)* other countries in the European Union and *(c)* outside the European Union; and what the corresponding figures were for each of the past 10 years for which figures are available. [155881]

Alan Johnson: The available information for England is shown in the table. Information for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved Administrations.

Intake of medical students in English higher education institutions, by domicile and fee-paying status

Academic year	*Total intake*	*Estimate of students from the UK*[1]	*Estimate of students from other countries in the European Union*[2]	*Estimate of students from countries outside the European Union*[3]
2003–04[4]	6,030	5,507	105	418
2002–03	5,277	4,835	88	354
2001–02	4,713	4,315	84	314
2000–01	4,300	3,923	82	295
1999–2000	3,972	3,640	77	255
1998–99	3,735	3,378	71	286
1997–98	3,749	3,431	39	279
1996–97	3,594	3,271	53	270
1995–96	3,486	3,187	38	261
1994–95	3,514	3,231	33	250
1993–94	3,374	3,125	34	215

[1] These are UK domiciled students with home and overseas fee-paying status.

[2] Tese are overseas domiciled students with home fee-paying status.

[3] These are overseas domiciled students with overseas fee-paying status.

[4] The intake for year 2003–04 is a provisional figure based on institutions' estimates in October 2003.

Note:
All student numbers relate to a headcount.

Source:
HEFCE Medical and Dental Survey.

Mr. Kevin Hughes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many new undergraduates were admitted to each medical school in 2003–04. [161510]

Alan Johnson: The latest available figures are shown in the table. Information for Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish medical schools is the responsibility of the devolved administrations.

Actual intakes of medical schools 2003: England

University medical school	*Intake*
Birmingham	428
Brighton/Sussex	135
Bristol	272
Cambridge	299
East Anglia	110
Hull/York	130
Leeds	279
Leicester Warwick	448
Liverpool	318
Manchester/Keele	425
Newcastle/Durham	355
Nottingham	353
Oxford	182
Peninsula	176
Sheffield	263
Southampton	221
Imperial	334
Kings College	401
Queen Mary and Westfield	309
St. Georges	251
University College London	341
Total England	6,030

Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England.

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many students *(a)* entered and *(b)* graduated from medical schools in England in each year since 1997; and how many graduates from medical schools in England in each year since 1997 have commenced full-time employment in the NHS. [162097]

Alan Johnson: The latest intake and output data for medical schools are shown in the first table. There is no precise data on how many students either do not complete undergraduate medical degree courses or do not join the NHS medical workforce after graduating. However, these figures do not include overseas students who return home immediately upon graduating based on figures from the annual NHS workforce survey as shown in the second table, the Department of Health believe that virtually all graduates from English medical schools take up posts as Pre-Registration House Officers (PRHOs) in the NHS within 18 months of graduating apart from those overseas students who return home immediately upon graduating.

Actual Intake and Output of Medical Schools in England 1997–98 to 2002–03

Academic year	*Intake*	*Graduate output*
1997–98	3,749	3,261
1998–99	3,735	3,097
1999–2000	3,972	3,373

Actual Intake and Output of Medical Schools in England 1997–98 to 2002–03

Academic year	*Intake*	*Graduate output*
2000–01	4,300	3,286
2001–02	4,713	3,280
2002–03	5,277	3,522
2003–04	[1]6,030	[2]—

[1] Provisional until November 2004 when a finalised figure will be declared.
[2] Not available until November 2004.
Source:
Higher Education Funding Council for England

UK Qualified Pre-Registration House Officers in England 1997–2003

	Number of House Officers
1997	3,028
1998	3,173
1999	3,122
2000	3,297
2001	3,176
2002	3,205
2003	3,344

Source:
Department of Health medical and dental workforce survey

Mr. Clappison: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average cost is of the education of a medical student up to registration with the General Medical Council; and what the expected average cost is of educating a medical student who commences on a clinical sciences foundation year up to registration with the General Medical Council. [168185]

Alan Johnson: The cost of training a doctor from entry to medical school to full registration with the General Medical Council is estimated to be of the order of £200,000 to £250,000, including the year as a Pre-Registration House Officer (PRHO). This is a considerable investment in medical training from public funds. Some students commence their medical training with a foundation year, for which the Higher Education Funding Council for England provides funding to the institution of £5,922.

Modern Universities

Mr. Yeo: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills to which universities he was referring in his statement to the House on 8 January when he made reference to modern universities which have strong records in recruiting students from poorer backgrounds. [148532]

Alan Johnson: The Secretary of State was not referring to specific universities but making a general point. The following table, taken from data published by the Higher Education Funding Council for England, shows the 11 universities with the highest proportion of entrants from the three lowest social classes.

Proportion of young full-time first degree entrants from social classes IIIN, IV, V[1] 2001–02

	Proportion
University of Wolverhampton	45
University of East London	42
University of North London	42
London Guildhall University	41
University of Luton	41
University of Westminster	40
University of Sunderland	39
University of Central England	39
Coventry University	39
Middlesex University	38
University of Teesside	38

[1] Skilled manual, semi-skilled and unskilled.
Source:
Performance Indicators in Higher Education in the UK Table T1A, published by HEFCE.

National Childcare Strategy

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will make a statement on the number of children in Oldham, West and Royton who have gained from the National Childcare Strategy; [170915]

(2) how many child care places have been created in Oldham, West and Royton since 1997. [170932]

Margaret Hodge: The Department is unable to provide details of child care places for Oldham, West and Royton. However, from April 1999 to March 2004 Oldham local authority created 5,489 new child care places helping some 9,979 children. This shows an increase in the stock of child care places, taking into account turnover, of 4,114 helping some 7,551 children.

New Deal for Schools

Mr. Djanogly: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how much funding each school in the Huntingdon constituency received from the New Deal for Schools; [170845]

(2) how much money has been invested in the Huntingdon constituency since 1997 to build long-term sustainable facilities for school sports. [170839]

Mr. Miliband: Table A shows the schools in the Huntingdon constituency that benefited from investment through the New Deal for Schools (NDS) programme, which ran between 1997–98 and 2000–01.

Since 2001, the majority of capital support has been allocated to schools and local education authorities by formula, and they decide how to invest it in line with their asset management plans. The Department does not, therefore, have complete information about capital investment at constituency level; this should be held locally. Table B sets out the capital support provided by the Department to Cambridgeshire Local Education Authority and its schools since 1997–98, in total and by programme (including all allocations through NDS mentioned in table A).

Table A: NDS allocations to schools in the Huntingdon constituency

Year	School	Project	Package	Grant (£)
NDS1 1997–98	Longsands College	Extensive repair and refurbishment work to roof, gas and electrical supplies, damaged floor surfaces and toilets	LEA wide grant	1,065,000
NDS2 1998–99	Ernulf Community School	Replacement of unsafe and defective lighting fittings in science block and other lower school buildings	—	45,600
	Priory Park Infant School	Electrical work	—	34,200
	Middlefield Primary School	Replacement of 3 condemned mobiles	—	192,110
NDS3 1999–2000	Thorndown Community Infant School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 8 schools	185,516
	Thongsley Infant School	Replacement of mobiles	Project including 14 schools	2,181,348
	Thorndown Junior School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 8 schools	185,516
	Wheatfields Infant School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 8 schools	185,516
	St. Ivo School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 8 schools	185,516
NDS4 2000–01	Spring Common School	Replacement of Mobiles	—	225,605
	Hinchingbrooke School	4 Science Laboratories	—	255,103
	Barnabas Oley CofE Primary School	Provision of School Hall	—	239,702
	Hemingford Grey Primary School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 17 schools	229,153
	Offord Primary School	Replacement of Temporaries-	Project including 27 schools	734,693
	Huntingdon Infant School	Replacement of Temporaries-	Project including 27 schools	734,693
	Thorndown Community Infant School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 17 schools	229,153
	Eastfield Infant and Nursery School	Replacement of Temporaries	Project including 13 schools	1,542,906
	Eastfield Infant and Nursery School	Replacement of Temporaries-	Project including 27 schools	734,693
	Thorndown Junior School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 17 schools	229,153
	Little Paxton Primary School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 17 schools	229,153
	Wheatfields Infant School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 17 schools	229,153
	Alconbury CofE Primary School	Replacement of Temporaries	Project including 13 schools	1,542,906
	Holywell CofE Primary School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 17 schools	229,153
	Eynesbury CofE C Primary School	Replacement of Temporaries-	Project including 27 schools	734,693
	Wheatfields Junior School	Asbestos Removal	Project including 17 schools	229,153
	Crosshall Infant and Junior Schools	Replacement of Temporaries	Project including 13 schools	1,542,906
	Crosshall Infant and Junior Schools	Replacement of Temporaries-	Project including 27 schools	734,693

Note:

1. For NDS 1, the grant of 1,065,000 was allocated for Cambridgeshire local education authority as a whole, part of which was used for capital investment at the school mentioned in the Huntingdon constituency. The LEA will be able to say how much was allocated to the school.

2. Where the project includes a package for a number of schools, each school received a share of the funding available.

Table B: Capital allocations—Oldham education authority

£000

	1997–98	1998–99	1999–2000	2000–01	2001–02	2002–03	2003–04
Assistance with Asset Management Plans	—	—	72	—	—	—	—
Voluntary Aided formulaic allocations	—	—	—	—	29	63	11
Basic Need	6,985	7,220	6,608	8,693	11,229	10,393	16,261
Class Size initiative	—	543	777	500			
Condition	—	—	—	—	2,665	3,917	4,994
Devolved Formula	—	—	—	3,663	3,022	4,561	7,047
Energy	—	108	—	—	—	—	—
Modernisation	—	—	—	—	—	1,928	3,378
NDS 1	598	—	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 2	—	1,978	—	—	—	—	—
NDS 3	—	—	2,367	—	—	—	—
NDS 4	—	—	—	5,859	—	—	—
Outside Toilets	—	98	—	—	—	—	—
School Labs	—	—	—	174	174	—	—
School Security	157	149	170	171	121	104	
Schools Access Initiative	45	105	150	280	452	701	970
Secondary Learning Support Units	—	—	—	85	92	116	—
Seed Challenge	—	—	—	287	327	379	582
Specialist Schools	—	—	—	—	300	200	
Staff Workspace	—	—	—	—	—	108	239
Supplementary Credit Approvals	1,100	118	464	1,761	—	75	—
Supplementary NDS for VA Schools	—	—	—	307	—	—	—
Targeted Capital Funding	—	—	—	—	904	813	5,000
Teaching Environments for the Future	—	—	—	—	—	—	460
Voluntary Aided School Grant	216	667	774	375	180	404	—
Total	9,146	10,986	11,382	22,250	19,590	24,062	39,142

To date we have allocated £44.6 million capital funding for 2004–05 and 2005–06.

Overseas Students

Mr. Simmonds: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement about the number of overseas students attending UK universities following the recent report published by the British Council, Vision 2020: Forecasting International Student Mobility—A UK Perspective. [168969]

Alan Johnson: This is an important and valuable report. We have every intention of remaining one of the most popular destinations for overseas students. That is why we launched the Prime Minister's Initiative in 1999 to recruit an additional 50,000 international higher education students by 2005. UK Higher Education institutions have already exceeded that target by recruiting an additional 64,635 international students. We remain confident that overseas students will continue to choose to come here to take advantage of the high quality higher education which is on offer.

Positive Activities for Young People

Diana Organ: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement about the Positive Activities for Young People Initiative. [169875]

Mr. Ivan Lewis: The Department for Education and Skills and New Opportunities Fund have joined forces with the Youth Justice Board, Home Office and Department for Culture Media and Sport to combine existing holiday activity schemes and deliver a Positive Activities for Young People (PAYP) programme. It is designed to divert and develop those young people aged 8–19 most at risk of social exclusion and committing crime and to steer their energy in a positive direction. It is being delivered across England from May 2003 to March 2006. £25 million funding for activities is available for the first year of the three year programme. A further £13.75 million is provided, annually, by the Connexions Service to fund Keyworkers throughout England.

Provision takes place in all of the school holiday periods. Easter activities have already taken place but it is too early to measure it's success. In addition to activities one to one support is available for the most at risk young people.

The programme comprises of quality arts, sports and cultural activities and encourages young people to continue in these activities after the programme ends. It aims to bring together young people from different geographical and ethnic minority communities to help break down prejudices and misunderstanding.

Evaluation is scheduled to take place across the three year period but feedback indicates that at least 75,000 young people participated during summer 2003 and a further 40,000 in October half term in line with planned delivery targets.

Pre-school Education (Wigan)

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* free nursery and *(b)* pre-school places were available for (i) three and (ii) four year olds in Wigan in each of the last seven years. [169280]

Margaret Hodge: The information is not available in the form requested. Figures on the number of free nursery education places taken up by three and four year olds in Wigan local education authority area are shown in the table.

The latest figures on provision for three and four year olds in England were published in a 'Statistical Bulletin Provision for children under five years of age in England—January 2003' which is available on the Department's website www.dfes. gov.uk/rsgateway/.

From April 2004, six months ahead of our original target, all three year olds in England whose parents want one, will be eligible for a free, part-time early education place.

Psychology Postgraduates

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many education psychology training places have been available for postgraduate study in each year since 1997. [168633]

Alan Johnson: The information is not held centrally.

Quality Protects

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the original target number was for families to be included in the Quality Protects Programme; how many families have been included in the programme; and if he will make a statement. [170178]

Margaret Hodge: Specific information on the number of families who benefited from the Quality Protects Programme was not collected centrally.

School Funding

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how much school funding *(a)* in 2003–04 was and *(b)* is planned for 2004–05 will be provided from (i) central Government and (ii) council tax revenue, broken down by local education authority. [171083]

Mr. Miliband: The Government does not fund local education authorities for school funding separately. Rather, they receive an amount of revenue support grant which provides revenue support for all their services. The amount of council tax revenue is a matter for local education authorities to decide.

School Nurses

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many school nurses were employed in *(a)* 2003, *(b)* 2002, *(c)* 2001, *(d)* 2000, *(e)* 1999, *(f)* 1998 and *(g)* 1997. [170371]

Mr. Miliband: The number of nurses working in schools is not identified separately. The following table shows the full-time equivalent number of medical staff employed in maintained nursery and primary, secondary, PRUs and all special schools in each January between 1997 and 2003.

	Number
1997	1,190
1998	1,220
1999	1,190
2000	1,180
2001	1,200
2002	1,780
2003	1,750

Source:
Annual School Census.

Numbers include matrons, nurses and other medical staff.

The increase in numbers between 2001 and 2002 may reflect the change in data collection methods between these two years.

Sex Education

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of whether there is a correlation between teenage sex education *(a)* advice programmes and *(b)* clinics and the prevalence of (i) sexually transmitted diseases and (ii) teenage pregnancy rates; and if he will make a statement. [167064]

Margaret Hodge: Increasing rates of sexually transmitted infections and high levels of teenage pregnancy have complex underlying causes. The best international research evidence supports the multifaceted approach being taken by our Teenage Pregnancy and Sexual Health and HIV Strategies.

Increasing and improving access to contraception and sexual health advice services is one essential part. We are also helping young people to resist pressure to have sex, improving sex and relationship education to increase their knowledge and skills, promoting condom use for those who are sexually active and supporting parents to talk to their children about sex and relationships without embarrassment.

The number of family planning sessions aimed at young people has increased to tackle high levels of teenage pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections. In turn, increased provision will have created greater opportunities for raising awareness of sexually transmitted infections, increased screening and testing and identification of previously undiagnosed infections.

Since 1998, the baseline year for the Teenage Pregnancy Strategy, there has been a 9.4 per cent. reduction in the under 18 conception rate with 80 per cent. of local authorities seeing declining rates.

Special Educational Needs

Mr. Collins: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what the average age for identification of special needs has been in each year since 1997, broken down by *(a)* local education authority and *(b)* ethnic group. [167556]

Margaret Hodge: The information requested is not collected centrally.

A table has been placed in the House of Commons Library giving the most relevant information. This shows the age group of children for whom statements were made for the first time.

Specialist Speech and Language Support

Mrs. May: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) what assessment has been made of the need for children with severe speech difficulties to have access to specialist speech and language support within mainstream schools; [169942]

(2) what guidelines exist for the minimum level of specialist speech and language teaching support to be provided by each local education authority. [169943]

Margaret Hodge: Speech and language needs and the necessary the collaboration between education and health to meet those needs were considered in a research report published in November 2000, "Provision for children with speech and language needs in England and Wales: facilitating communication between education and heath services" (Department for Education and Employment Research Report RR239). This was published alongside the report of the Working Group on Speech and Language Therapy Services to Children with Special Educational Needs (England).

Local education authorities, maintained schools, early years settings and others have to have regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice published in November 2001. This gives practical advice on carrying out their statutory duties to identify, assess and make suitable provision for children with SEN. The Code includes a section on speech and language therapy support.

No guidance has been issued in relation to the minimum level of specialist speech and language teaching support, since provision should reflect the assessed needs of individual children, some of whom may have severe or complex needs or multiple disabilities. The DfES and Department of Health have however established an Action Forum to improve provision for children with speech, language and communication needs in mainstream schools or other settings. This group brings together key interests with a view to identifying and promoting good practice.

Staff Disciplinary Cases

Mr. Todd: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills whether he has reviewed the handling of serious staff disciplinary cases in colleges following the publication and distribution of the Newby Report, Review of complaints against St. Austell College. [170641]

Mr. Miliband: Further Education institutions are independent corporate bodies and are therefore responsible for their own employment policies. The Government does however expect colleges to have robust and defensible policies and practices in place. In July 1996, at the request of the Secretary of State for

Education and Employment, the Further Education Funding Council (FEFC) commissioned Professor Howard Newby to review the actions of and disciplinary and grievance procedures used by St. Austell College whilst conducting a staff disciplinary case. In his review Professor Newby concluded that serious errors had been made by the College, The FEFC published the review in June 1998 to advise and inform other Further Education institutions in reviewing their procedures.

Student Finance

Mr. Willis: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will estimate for each English university the net benefit from tuition fees if *(a)* the maximum fee is charged to all students, *(b)* the maximum fee is charged to 50 per cent. of students and *(c)* the maximum fee is charged to 25 per cent. of students. [166853]

Alan Johnson *[holding answer 21 April 2004]:* Information on the additional income from fees in different scenarios is contained in the Regulatory Impact Assessment published on 8 January alongside the HE Bill. Because of the nature of a variable scheme, the additional net income from fees will vary not only according to the number of students an institution recruits, but also depending on decisions the higher education institutions themselves take on the level of fee and the cost of any measures, such as bursaries for students from lower income backgrounds, that they put in place to safeguard access. Figures for extra fee income cannot therefore be estimated precisely. Copies of the Regulatory Impact Assessment were placed in the Library of the House; it is also available on the Department for Education and Skills website.

Sure Start/Early Excellence Centres

Mr. Frank Field: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many *(a)* Sure Start centres and *(b)* early excellence centres have been created in Birkenhead. [166302]

Margaret Hodge: There are three Sure Start local programmes in Birkenhead-Birkenhead North, Birkenhead Central and Ferries. Five neighbourhood nurseries are being developed in Birkenhead. Of these, four are open and offering 175 Places. Two of these are linked to the Birkenhead North and Ferries programmes and are operating from temporary accommodation while the main building is completed. The fifth is due to open in the next few weeks. There are no Early Excellence Centres in Birkenhead.

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* Sure Start centres and *(b)* Early Excellence centres have been created in Bootle; [169081]

(2) how many new nurseries have been established in Bootle since 1997. [169082]

Margaret Hodge: There are two Sure Start local programmes in Bootle constituency; Litherland Bootle and Orrell and Seaforth and Bootle. Seaforth and Bottle local programme have built a Sure Start centre in Seaforth. Litherland Bootle and Orrell have not yet created any new buildings. Sefton local authority have submitted their strategic plans for Children Centres and these two Programmes are included in these plans.

No Early Excellence Centres have been created in Bootle.

Sefton local authority are responsible for determining local need for nursery places in Bootle they maintain information on current provision. Under the Neighbourhood Nursery Scheme three nurseries were opened in Bootle constituency providing a total of 110 places. A further two nurseries are to be opened in June providing another 115 places.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* Sure Start centres and *(b)* Early Excellence centres have been created in Burnley; [167919]

(2) how many new nurseries have been established in Burnley since 1997. [167920]

Margaret Hodge: No early excellence centres have been created in Burnley since 1997. There are three Sure Start Local Programmes in Burnley. The first Local programme Burnley (Daneshouse and Stoneyholme) was approved in August 2000 and has spent all of their capital funding of 1,548,000, The other two Local Programmes Duke Bar and Burnley Wood and South West Burnley were approved by the Sure Start Unit with indicative capital funding of 1,000,000 for each of the programme. Duke Bar and Burnley Wood and South West Burnley have not yet submitted their capital plan for this money. This money will support the development of new nurseries places in Burnley.

Lancashire local authority is responsible for determining the local need for nursery in Burnley. They collect information on current provision. Under the Neighbourhood Nurseries scheme 97 new nursery places have been opened in Burnley.

Lancashire county council is currently developing plans to implement Children's Centres in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards, Burnley will be included in these plans.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) how many *(a)* Sure Start Centres and *(b)* Early Excellence Centres have been created in Preston; [168136]

(2) how many new nurseries have been established in Preston since 1997. [168133]

Margaret Hodge: No Sure Start Centres have yet been completed in Preston. There are five Sure Start local programmes in Preston. Sure Start Ribbleton has commenced work on a Sure Start Centre which is due to be completed in December 2004. Sure Start Preston West is building a Sure Start Centre as an extension to a nursery school which will be completed in August 2004. The other three programmes have yet to submit plans for the use of the majority of their capital funding.

One Early Excellence Centre has been created in Preston, based at Stoneygate Nursery School.

Lancashire county council is responsible for determining local need for nursery places in Preston and maintaining information on current provision. Under the Neighbourhood Nurseries scheme 198 new nursery places have been created in Preston in six nurseries.

Lancashire county council is currently developing plans to implement Children's Centres in the 20 per cent. most disadvantaged wards, Preston will be included in these plans.

Teacher Recruitment/Vacancies

Mr. Rosindell: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills if he will make a statement on progress with the recruitment of teachers; and how many new teachers have been appointed as a direct result of his Department's initiatives. [169954]

Mr. Miliband: Although difficulties persist in some individual schools and areas, the overall teacher supply position is continuing to improve. Recruitment to courses of initial teacher training in England fell for eight years in a row from 1992/93, but has risen for four successive years since the introduction of training bursaries and Golden Hellos in September 2000. This is having an impact on the numbers of teachers in schools. National Statistics published by my Department on 29 April showed that there were 427,800 full-time equivalent regular teachers working in maintained schools in England in January 2004. That is 28,600 more than in 1997 and more than at any time since 1981. The teacher vacancy rate is now 0.7 per cent., down from 0.9 per cent. the previous year. There were 2,670 full-time teacher vacancies in January 2004, compared to 3,410 in January 2003.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teacher vacancies there were in Oldham, West and Royton on the latest date for which figures are available; and what steps he is taking to reduce them. [170909]

Mr. Miliband: Information on teacher vacancies is not available by constituency as it is collected at local education authority level. In January 2003, the latest information available, there were 19 full-time teacher vacancies in Oldham local education authority.

Like other areas, since 1997 Oldham, West and Royton has benefited from the initiatives that the Government have put in place to recruit and retain teachers and to increase the number of staff supporting them in schools. Since 1997, the number of full-time equivalent regular teachers in maintained schools in Oldham LEA has risen from 2,240 to 2,250 in 2003. Over the same period, the number of full-time equivalent school support staff in the area has grown by 520 from 720 to 1,240 in 2003.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many teaching assistants there were in schools in Oldham, West and Royton *(a)* in each of the last seven years and *(b)* on the latest date for which figures are available. [170910]

Mr. Miliband: The following table gives the full time equivalent number of teaching assistants employed in maintained schools in Oldham, West and Royton constituency in each January between 1997 and 2003, the latest year for which data are available.

	Number
1997	200
1998	210
1999	230
2000	250
2001	290
2002	310
2003	350

Source:
Annual School Census.

Unexplained Infant Deaths

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills how many civil cases relating to unexplained infant deaths have been reviewed since the statement on 20 January 2004, *Official Report*, column 1215; what the outcome was of each; and if she will make a statement. [167813]

Margaret Hodge: I refer the hon. Member to the statement that I made on 23 February 2004, *Official Report*, column 37, and the answer given in the other place by my right hon. Friend Baroness Ashton of Upholland on 30 March 2004, *Official Report*, column WA153.

University Fees (EU Enlargement)

Mr. Sheerman: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills what assessment he has made of the cost to United Kingdom universities of the changed fee obligations of students from the accession countries after EU enlargement. [166735]

Alan Johnson: In 2002–03 around 3,400 full-time undergraduate students in UK higher education institutions came from countries about to join the EU. Assuming that international students pay upwards of £6500 in 2004–05 in tuition fees, the likely loss of that direct fee income to higher education institutions—the difference between the "overseas" and the "home" fee rate—from those students would be at least 18 million.

From the start of the 2004–05 academic year, higher education institutions will be eligible for funding from the HE funding councils in respect of students from the accession countries, on the same basis as other EU students and home students. The exact amount will depend on the course of study. The students themselves will generally pay a means-tested fee contribution. Higher education institutions have been aware of this change for some years and of the need to budget accordingly.

University Science Departments

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Education and Skills (1) if he will list in the last five years, universities which have closed science departments, broken down by subject; and if he will make a statement; [165526]

(2) how many chemistry departments have been closed in UK universities since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [169936]

Alan Johnson: Information on the closure of particular university departments is not collected by either the Department for Education and Skills or the Higher Education Statistics Agency (HESA). Higher Education Institutions are autonomous bodies and any decisions on closures of departments are made by the institutions themselves and not Government or the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE).

However, I am aware of two recent chemistry course closures; one at Kings College London and one at Queen Mary and Westfield College (University of London). These closures were largely due to lack of demand for the undergraduate Chemistry courses. Sir Gareth Robert's Review into the supply of people with Science Technology Engineering and Maths Skills made a number of recommendations concerning this issue and we are making good progress in their implementation.

WORK AND PENSIONS

Asthma

Dr. Stoate: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many cases of occupational asthma there were in *(a)* the United Kingdom and *(b)* England in each of the last five years. [170236]

Jane Kennedy: Information on estimated numbers of new cases of occupational asthma reported in Great Britain and in England by consultant chest physicians and occupational physicians in each of the last five years for which data are available is in the table.

Occupational asthma: estimated number of cases reported by chest physicians and occupational physicians, 1998 to 2002

	Great Britain	*England*
1998	808	665
1999	1,128	887
2000	785	688
2001	649	524
2002[1]	670	596

[1] Provisional data

Source:
The Health and Occupation Reporting (THOR) network.

Cases of occupational asthma may not be seen by consultant physicians and may go undiagnosed. It has been estimated that the actual number of new cases may be around 5,500 per year.

Information regarding Northern Ireland is a matter for the Northern Ireland Office.

Chemical Plants

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what the average length of time was for the Health and Safety Executive to produce reports on leaks at chemical sites in 2003; and if he will make a statement. [165639]

Mr. Pond: HSE only prepares publicly available reports on the most serious incidents (including significant leaks) at chemical sites. The length of time for their publication is dependent on the nature and complexity of the incident and the action that was taken. If there were a prosecution, a report would not be published until that had concluded.

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many gas leak incidents have occurred at chemical plants in the UK in each of the last 10 years; and if he will make a statement. [165640]

Jane Kennedy: The number of releases from chemical plants in Great Britain reported to the Health and Safety Executive under RIDDOR[1] since 1996–97 is as follows:

[1] Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations

	1996–97	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*	*2001–02*	*2002–03*	*2003–04*[1]
Pipeline defect	12	15	7	6	10	12	4	7
Release of flammable substance	58	63	55	45	33	31	26	36
Release of other substance	112	91	84	80	62	74	57	48
Totals	182	169	146	131	105	117	87	91

[1] (provisional only)

Note:
Information is not readily available prior to 1996–97 and the statistics include all reported chemical releases.

Child Support Agency (Solihull)

Mr. John Taylor: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will cause enquiries to be made into the conduct of the Child Support Agency case of Mary Ahern of Haslucks Croft, Shirley in the Solihull constituency. [170654]

Mr. Pond *[holding answer 4 May 2004]:* The administration of the Child Support Agency is a matter for the Chief Executive, Mr. Doug Smith. He will write to the hon. Member with the information requested.

Letter from Doug Smith to Mr. John Taylor, dated 6 May 2004:

In reply to your recent Parliamentary question about the Child Support Agency the Secretary of State promised a substantive reply from the Chief Executive.

You asked the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, if he will cause enquiries to be made into the conduct of the Child Support Agency case of Mary Ahern of Haslucks Croft, Shirley in the Solihull constituency.

As individual cases, are confidential, I will write to you separately about Mary Ahern when I respond to your letter dated 22 April 2004. This is in line with paragraph 12, part 2 of the Code of Practice on Access to Government Information.

Civil Partnerships

John Barrett: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions whether those registering a civil partnership will be entitled to the same pension rights as married couples; and if he will make a statement. [171111]

Malcolm Wicks: Provisions in the Civil Partnership Bill would extend state pension rights and contracted-out survivor pension rights to same-sex couples who have formed a civil partnership.

Schedule 17 of the Bill amends state pensions legislation. These amendments would extend those state pension benefits that are equally available to husbands and wives to civil partners when the Bill comes into force. Other state pension benefits would be extended to civil partners from 2010, when the conditions of entitlement for all state pension benefits will be the same for husbands and wives.

The Civil Partnership Bill contains a pensions enabling power (Clause 187) which would allow my Department to amend the contracting out rules in relation to survivor pensions. The intention is to use this power to require:

contracted-out defined benefit pension schemes to take account of periods of pensionable service after commencement of the Civil Partnership Bill for the purposes of calculating survivor pensions for civil partners; and

contracted-out defined contribution schemes to provide survivor pension for civil partners from the protected rights accrued after commencement of the Civil Partnership Bill, if the member is in a registered civil partnership at the point of retirement.

Jobcentre Plus

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will list the membership organisations of the Job Centre Plus Provider Liasion Group. [168632]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mrs. Annette Brooke, dated 6 May 2004:

As Jobcentre Plus is an Executive Agency, the Secretary of State has asked me to reply direct to your question about the membership organisations of the Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of the Agency.

The Jobcentre Plus Provider Liaison Group's membership includes representatives from several of our largest work-based private sector providers, together with providers in the voluntary and community sector, smaller private providers and Further Education establishments. In addition, membership includes the Association of Learning Providers (ALP), a trade body for the work-based sector who represent approximately 30 per cent. of Jobcentre Plus providers. The Group is supported by a small secretariat from Jobcentre Plus. Full membership of the Group is set out in Annex 1.

The purpose of the Group is to provide a forum in which providers are consulted on changes to policy and operational processes. In practice this gives them the opportunity to comment upon policies from their perspective as organisations that deliver these policies. The Group enables Jobcentre Plus to obtain the views of providers from a wide background and should help ensure that our business can be delivered more effectively and efficiently.

I hope this is helpful.

Annex 1: Jobcentre plus provider group membership

Contact	*Provider*
David Bailey	Action for Employment
Steve Marsland	Action for Employment
Pat Taylor	Personnel Evaluation Consultants
George Allon	BTCV
Roger Cole	Pelcombe Training
Stephanie Baslington	Rathbone
Janet Pibworth	Seetec
Jim McIntosh	Shaw Trust
Teresa Jolly/Colin Kearney	Sheffield city council
George Baines	Standguide
Jim Gambles	Standguide
Martin Dunford	TBG learning
Dawn Marsh	The Training Network Group
A Townson	Bournemouth and Poole College
Gerard Irwin	Reed Co. UK.
Sian Woolson	Dash Training Ltd.
Diane Prosser	Dash Training Ltd.
Sharon Cooke	Bethany Group
Sarah Cooke	DHP enterprises
David Cameron	Scottish Council for voluntary organisations
Sarah Knight	Instant Muscle
Paul Warner	ALP
Adrienne Nolan	WACG LMD Skills and Int
Beth Simpson	DFES
Peter Jordan	LSC
David Williams	TD management Services
Jill Valentine	UFI

Charles Hendry: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) what the duties and responsibilities of Jobcentre Plus personal advisors are; [169973]

(2) what the set-up costs of Jobcentre Plus have been; [170023]

(3) how many *(a)* Jobcentre and *(b)* Jobcentre Plus centres there are in England. [170025]

Jane Kennedy: The administration of Jobcentre Plus is a matter for the Chief Executive of the Jobcentre Plus, David Anderson. He will write to the hon. Member.

Letter from David Anderson to Mr. Charles Hendry, dated 6 May 2004:

The Secretary of State has asked me to reply to your questions concerning the cost of introducing Jobcentre Plus, the numbers of offices delivering our services to the public and what the duties and responsibilities of personal advisors are. This is something which falls within the responsibilities delegated to me as Chief Executive of Jobcentre Plus.

The total cost recorded for Jobcentre Plus Implementation to the end of March 2004 is £608.9 million. Some financial adjustments still need to be made and the final figure for the year end is expected to show an increase on this amount.

In England our delivery network comprises:

388 Jobcentre Plus offices

454 Jobcentres

237 Social Security offices

We plan to complete the rollout of the new integrated service across Great Britain by 31 March 2006.

Jobcentre Plus is helping a wider range of customers than ever to secure employment with special focus on those customers who have to overcome particular barriers. Jobcentre Plus services are work focused for all customers, with personal advisers addressing individual customer needs.

Personal advisers make a key contribution to realising the Jobcentre Plus vision of a welfare system for people of working age that promotes work as the best form of welfare while providing appropriate help and support for those without jobs. They also deliver the service through which Jobcentre Plus will meet many of its aims, objectives and performance targets.

The key responsibilities for personal advisers are to:

carry out diagnostic, work targeted interviews to help customers understand the benefits of working and agree a realistic course of action to gain or move them closer to employment;

submit customers to appropriate vacancies;

manage a caseload of customers;

develop and maintain partnership working with Jobcentre Plus colleagues and employers/relevant external organisations to improve and extend the range of support for customers; and

help to protect the integrity of the benefit system by making sure people fulfil their responsibilities and remain entitled to benefit.

I hope this is helpful.

Jobcentres

Chris Ruane: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what degree of flexibility he will give jobcentres over their budgets *(a)* to improve local skills and *(b)* to target jobless blackspots. [166681]

Jane Kennedy: Jobcentre Plus has a wide range of employment programmes to support clients improve their employability and help them to move into work. Within the framework of national programme design, District Managers are responsible for ensuring that the provision meets the needs of their local labour market. Programme budget management processes support this local tailoring.

Since 26 April 2004, the District Manager's Discretionary Fund (DMDF) has been made available to all District Managers and will run for two years, with lessons learned being taken forward.

DMDF will allow greater freedom and flexibility to tackle local problems, including local skills gaps, and allow investment in local partnerships.

In addition, since 1 April 2004 we have launched the Working Neighbourhoods pilots in 12 of the most deprived neighbourhoods in the country. The pilots include a flexible, discretionary fund for each neighbourhood to allow personal advisers in cooperation with local strategic partners to tackle the substantial and varied barriers that prevent residents in these neighbourhoods from returning to work.

New Deal for Lone Parents

Mr. Pickthall: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in West Lancashire have gained work through the New Deal programme. [171723]

Jane Kennedy: 650 lone parents in West Lancashire have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other New Deal Programmes are not available.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents in Oldham, West and Royton have gained work through the New Deal programme. [170948]

Jane Kennedy: 480 lone parents in Oldham, West and Royton have gained work through the New Deal for Lone Parents since the start of the programme in October 1998. Figures for lone parents who have gained work through other New Deal programmes are not available.

Mr. Meacher: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many women in Oldham, West and Royton have benefited from *(a)* the New Deal for Lone Parents and *(b)* the New Deal for Partners since 1997; and if he will make a statement. [170950]

Jane Kennedy: Through the New Deal we have introduced a wide range of initiatives to help individuals improve their employment prospects by giving them the skills, support and confidence they need to move into work. From 12 April we enhanced the New Deal for Partners in order to offer partners taking part in that programme the same level of help and support as our successful New Deal for Lone Parents programme. Also from this April we have started to roll out Work Focused Interviews for Partners, offering greater support to partners of benefit recipients.

720 women have started New Deal for Lone Parents in Oldham, West and Royton since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, of whom, 460 have gained a job. Information on the number of women who have benefited from the New Deal for Partners is not available.

Martin Linton: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many lone parents have *(a)* gained work and *(b)* entered training or education through the New Deal for Lone Parents in Battersea. [169768]

Jane Kennedy: Since the beginning of the programme in October 1998, 400 lone parents have gained work, and 70 have participated in training or education, through the New Deal for Lone Parents in Battersea.

Part-time Employees' Pension Rights

Mr. Grogan: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions when the Government intends to lay regulations before the House amending the Pensions Act 1995 and the Occupational Pension Schemes (Equal Treatment) Regulations to reflect the time limits of the European Court of Justice ruling in the Preston case. [169883]

Malcolm Wicks: Draft regulations were prepared and issued for consultation in July last year. They will be finalised as soon as possible but in the meantime employment tribunals are making decisions in light of the judgments of the courts about access to pension schemes.

Pension Entitlements

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what steps the Government are taking to calculate the cost of compensating those people who have already lost some or all of their pension entitlement; and if he will make a statement. [170103]

Malcolm Wicks: We are currently working with trustees to gather data about defined benefit schemes that are winding up under-funded. Using these data we will establish firm estimates of the extent of the problem and the potential scale of losses. The potential cost of any assistance would depend on these estimates and on the nature of any assistance provided.

State Pension

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions if he will estimate the cost, net of savings in means-tested benefits and additional tax revenues, of paying a full basic state pension to each individual *(a)* regardless of contribution record and *(b)* on the current system of entitlement at the rate of the guarantee credit, from the age of 80 years; and if he will estimate in each case the cost in each of the following four years on the assumption that the pension was then indexed to earnings. [168860]

Malcolm Wicks: The information is not available in the format requested. However, such information as is available is in the table.

£ billion

	(a) Net cost of guarantee level basic state pension paid to those over 80 regardless of contribution record	*(b) Net cost of guarantee level basic state pension paid to those over 80 on current system of entitlement*
2005–06	2.4	2.0
2006–07	2.6	2.1
2007–08	2.8	2.2
2008–09	2.9	2.4

Notes:

1. Figures are for Great Britain in 2004–05 price terms, rounded to the nearest £100 million. It is assumed the change comes into effect from April 2005 and basic state pension is up-rated in line with earnings thereafter. It is assumed that part *(a)* would not apply to those overseas, and so for consistency, part *(b)* also does not include any changes to the state pensions of those who are overseas.
2. Gross costs are estimated by the Government Actuary's Department and are consistent with Budget 2004 assumptions and use 2002-based population projections.
3. For part *(a)* it is assumed that for those over 80 the basic state pension has been increased to the guarantee credit rate, any additional pension is then added to the full basic state pension.
4. In addition, no allowances are made for couples, and individuals aged over 80 have been assumed to receive basic state pension at the single rate of the guarantee credit, including those previously receiving no basic state pension through their own contributions.
5. For part *(b)* for those over 80, the maximum rate of category A basic state pension is raised to the level of the guarantee credit and those receiving less than the maximum category A basic state pension and other categories of basic state pension will receive an increased pension according to the rules of the current system.
6. Income related benefit offsets are calculated using the DWP policy simulation model and April 2004 benefit rates. It is assumed that the savings credit is left unchanged from the existing system and the current rules apply. Consistent with previous answers it is assumed that the offset for the first year will remain constant for subsequent years.
7. Additional income tax revenue is estimated by the Inland Revenue using 2004 tax rates. The income tax estimates for 2004–05 to 2006–07 are based on the 2001–02 Survey of Personal Incomes and are projected in line with March 2004 Budget assumptions. For illustrative purposes, it is assumed income tax revenue will be a fixed percentage of the gross cost for this option in 2007–08 and 2008–09.

Mr. Willetts: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many *(a)* divorced and *(b)* widowed people who have made a claim for state retirement pension have yet to receive it; and how long they have been waiting in each case. [167336]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of claims to state pension from divorced and widowed customers who have yet to receive their award, as at 21 April 2004, is broken down as follows:

	Number
Divorced	4,349
Widowed	1,083
Total	5,432

Information on how long they have been waiting in each case can be provided only at a disproportionate cost.

StepUP Programme

Sir Archy Kirkwood: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to extend the StepUP programme. [170042]

Jane Kennedy: StepUP builds on the New Deal for Young People and New Deal 25 plus by providing transitional jobs for people who have not secured sustained employment through New Deal. There are currently 20 StepUP pilots operating in selected wards across Great Britain.

An interim report (Evaluation of StepUP:Interim Report 186/2004) was published on 16 March and is available in the Library. It is too soon to say whether StepUP will be rolled out nationally. However, a final report on the programme, which will establish its effectiveness in helping people into sustained work, work, will include recommendations on roll out.

The report is due to be published in July 2005 and a copy of this will be placed in the Library.

Sure Start Maternity Grant

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (1) how many mothers in Burnley have taken up the Sure Start maternity grant; [167888]

(2) how many mothers in Burnley have received the Sure Start Maternity Grant. [168323]

Mr. Pond: The information is not available in the format requested. The available information is in the table.

Sure Start Maternity Grants in Greater Manchester Lancashire Social Fund District/East Lancashire Jobcentre Plus District

	Applications	*Awards*
2000–01	2,936	2,405
2001–02	3,746	2,998
2002–03	4,637	3,452
2003–04	5,297	3,539

Notes:

1. Data are not available by parliamentary constituency. Burnley parliamentary constituency is part of East Lancashire Jobcentre Plus District, which was previously called Greater Manchester Lancashire Social Fund District.

2. Sure Start Maternity Grants were introduced on 27 March 2000. The very small number of cases for 1999–2000 has been excluded for data protection reasons.
3. Data are given for all applications and awards, irrespective of whether the application was made by the mother or her partner.
Source:
DWP Social Fund Policy, Budget and Management Information System.

Toilet Soaps

Bob Spink: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions what plans he has to amend the current Cosmetic Products (Safety) Regulations and Biocidal Products Regulations for toilet soaps. [167222]

Jane Kennedy: There are no such plans. The legislation applying to toilet soaps is clear: where they are already regulated under the Cosmetic Products (Safety) Regulations they are excluded from the scope of the Biocidal Products Regulations.

Winter Fuel Allowance

Mr. Neil Turner: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Wigan have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [169313]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Wigan constituency who benefited from a winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	14,650
2000–2001	16,665
2001–2002	16,780
2002–2003	16,820
2003–2004	16,990

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.
Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions how many senior citizens in Preston have benefited from the winter fuel allowance since 1997. [169726]

Malcolm Wicks: The number of senior citizens in the Preston constituency who have benefited from the winter fuel payment in each year since 1999–2000 (including provisional figures for 2003–04) is in the table. Information relating to the 1997–98 and 1998–99 winters is not available.

	Payments made
1999–2000	15,375
2000–01	16,830
2001–02	16,735
2002–03	16,570
2003–04	16,425

Notes:
1. Numbers are rounded to the nearest 5.
2. Please note that the figures for 2003–04 refer only to the main payment run i.e. they do not include the late payment run figures. We estimate that there are approximately 100,000 people in Great Britain paid via late payment runs (0.8 per cent. of all payments). However, since late payment runs are mainly in respect of non-system cases whose claim had not been received by Qualifying Week, they are heavily skewed towards men aged 60.
Source:
IAD Information Centre, 100 per cent. samples.

HEALTH

Drug Addicts

Mr. Clapham: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the number of addicts in the UK using *(a)* class A drugs and *(b)* heroin in each of the last five years for which figures are available. [168723]

Miss Melanie Johnson: It is estimated that there are 250,000 Class A problem drug users in England and Wales (Home Office Research Study 2002). Problem drug users are defined as people who use illegal drugs and experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems.

The Government is committed to tackling substance misuse and launched the updated drugs strategy in 2002. The Government is on track to meet the target in this strategy to double the number of people in treatment from 100,000 in 1998 to 200,000 by 2008 and to increase year on year the numbers retained in, or successfully completing treatment.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people from Liverpool, Walton are receiving drug treatment. [166985]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There were 2,191 people receiving drug treatment in Liverpool in 2000–01. This is the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 have not yet been finalised and published.

Accident and Emergency Departments

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many patients were seen at Warrington hospital accident and emergency in each of the last five years. [168689]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

First attendances at accident and emergency department

		Number
2002–03	North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	84,465
2001–02	North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust	84,171
2000–01	Warrington Hospital NHS Trust	55,978
1999–2000	Warrington Hospital NHS Trust	57,786
1998–99	Warrington Hospital NHS Trust	56,796

Source:
Department of Health.

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the cost is of the new accident and emergency unit at Warrington hospital; and what facilities it will provide. [168690]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The new accident and emergency unit at Warrington hospital will cost a total of £6 million. It will include major and minor injury areas, four bed resuscitation area, a chest pain area, a seven bed coronary care unit, a paediatric area and x-ray facilities. The unit will provide a dedicated paediatric unit for the first time for residents of North Cheshire and comprehensive coronary care.

Source:

North Cheshire Hospitals National Health Service Trust

Alcohol

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what plans he has to place health warning labels on alcoholic products; and if he will make a statement. [169938]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government's alcohol harm reduction strategy for England, published in March 2004, recommends that the Department of Health and the Home Office consult the alcohol industry on the introduction of a voluntary social responsibility scheme. As part of this scheme, the strategy urges that the drinks industry should be encouraged to display information on sensible drinking and on the unit content of drinks.

Allergies

Jon Cruddas: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) whether he uses the estimates of the extent of allergies in the June 2003 report by the Royal College of Physicians, "Allergy: the Unmet Need", as a basis for NHS planning; and what other evidence-based planning data he proposes to use; [169904]

(2) what his latest estimate is of the annual cost to the NHS of allergies; and what assessment he has made of the recent changes in the incidence of more serious systemic allergies. [169905]

Dr. Ladyman: We welcomed the Royal College of Physicians' report and believe it is a useful contribution to the debate on how to improve national health service allergy services. It is the role of primary care trusts, in partnership with local stakeholders, to decide what services to provide for their populations, including those with allergies. They are best placed to understand local health care needs and commission services to meet them.

Information about the annual cost to the NHS of allergies is not centrally available.

We are aware that there has been a particular increase in severe allergic disease, including anaphylaxis; severe reactions to food and drugs are now common.

Asthma

Mr. Drew: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what strategies the Department plans to put in place to deal with an increased incidence of asthma. [170139]

Dr. Ladyman: A number of initiatives are underway in the national health service in England to improve services for patients with asthma. These include:

The national service framework (NSF) for children: asthma, as one of the most common childhood conditions, will be used as a key exemplar that will accompany the main NSF report.

The chronic disease management programme provides arrangements for health promotion under the general practitioner contract including fixed annual payments for participating GPs, around 94 per cent. of the total, for running organised programmes of care for patients with asthma.

The general medical services contract, launched in February 2003, includes a specific quality indicator for treatment and care of people with asthma.

Breast Screening Sites

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what percentage of breast screening sites are providing screening for women aged 65–70 years; and if he will make a statement. [170975]

Miss Melanie Johnson: As at 31 March 2004, 44 per cent., of the 81 local breast screening programmes in England had begun inviting women aged 65–70 for breast screening. All local programmes are on track to begin inviting the older women by the target date of December 2004. Since the age extension began in April 2001, over 200,000 more women have been invited for breast screening. 400,000 more women a year will be invited once the extension is fully implemented.

Cancer

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when the Coalition for Cancer Information was established; what its budget is; what its remit is; what its membership is; how often it has met; and if he will make a statement. [169715]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The coalition for cancer information (CCI) was formed in June 2002 as a result of a recommendation from the cancer information advisory group and is chaired by Professor Mike Richards, National Cancer Director. The CCI does not hold a budget, but is supported by departmental secretariat. The CCI brings together producers and consumers of cancer information from national voluntary organisations, the National Cancer Research Institute, the national health service and the Department. It was established to oversee the development and dissemination of high quality information materials for those affected by cancer.

Since being established, the coalition has met approximately three times a year.

Chest Pain Clinics

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in Burnley. [167947]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The East Lancashire Hospitals National Health Service Trust holds rapid access chest pain clinics at Burnley General Hospital. The Trust is meeting the national service framework two week target for patients to be seen from date of referral by general practitioner.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many rapid access chest pain clinics there are in Preston. [168107]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Lancashire Teaching Hospitals National Health Service Trust has rapid access chest pain clinics at both the Royal Preston Hospital and Chorley and South Ribble Hospital. Both clinics are meeting the national service framework two week target for patients to be seen from date of referral by general practitioner.

Cystic Fibrosis Screening

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 17 March 2004, *Official Report*, column 386W, on cystic fibrosis screening, if he will make a statement on the conclusions of the National Screening Committee on implementation of the Government's commitment to newborn screening for cystic fibrosis. [170582]

Dr. Ladyman: Following discussion at its meeting in March 2004 the United Kingdom National Screening Committee (NSC) has asked the UK newborn screening programme centre, a collaboration between Great Ormond Street Hospital for Children, the Institute of Child Health and the Institute of Education to develop an implementation plan.

The expectation is that, in England, with the emphasis in the current year on bringing existing provision up to high standards, this will enable a rollout within two to three years. The precise pace of the roll-out will be determined by local priorities. However the NSC will be providing advice and help on costs, feasibility and timetables and learning from the experience of other UK countries.

Dentistry

Miss McIntosh: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on the provision of NHS dental services in North Yorkshire. [169970]

Miss Melanie Johnson: 49.9 per cent. of adults and 68.2 per cent. of children in North Yorkshire were registered with a National Health Service dentist at the end of February 2004. There has been very little change in these numbers over the previous 12 months. There were 248 dentists treating NHS patients in north Yorkshire at the end of 2003.

Departmental Expenditure (Entertainment)

Mr. Laws: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what his latest estimate is of the amount spent by his Department on entertainment in each year from 1996–97 to 2004–05. [169003]

Ms Rosie Winterton: Expenditure arises on hospitality and entertainment only in the context of promoting the Department's business objectives. All such expenditure is made in accordance with published departmental guidance on financial procedures and propriety/based on the principles set out in "Government Accounting".

Information for 2004–05 is not available. The total amount spent by the Department on hospitality for years since 1996–97 is shown in the table.

£

	Expenditure
1996–97	105,192
1997–98	90,883
1998–99	67,953
1999–2000	50,114
2000–01	93,091
2001–02	121,968
2002–03	125,291
2003–04	76,742

Direct Payments

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the original target was for the extension of direct payments; to how many people direct payments have been extended; and if he will make a statement. [170201]

Dr. Ladyman: In 2002–03, 9,600 people received a direct payment. The Department has not set a target for the extension of direct payments. Increasing the take up of direct payments will contribute to the annual overall assessment of a council's performance. To achieve a performance rating of 'very good', councils must have at least 150 people receiving direct payments per 100,000 population aged 18 or over. The national average for 2002–03 was 23.

Drug Treatment (Burnley)

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people in Burnley are receiving drug treatment. [168319]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the number of people receiving drug treatment on a constituency basis is not gathered centrally.

In 2000–01, there were a total of 2,874 people receiving drug treatment in the are covered by the drug action team for Lancashire. These are the latest available data. Data broken down by drug action team for 2001–02 and 2002–03 have not yet been finalised and published.

Source:

Department of Health Statistics

Employment-Health Link

Mrs. Brooke: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what research his Department has *(a)* undertaken and *(b)* commissioned into the link between employment and a person's health; and if he will make a statement. [168718]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There are two recent studies; working with the Employment Service, the Department undertook a study of the health impact of the new deal for young people which was published in 2002.

More recently the Department has, in collaboration with the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister, commissioned a further study on the health impact of the new deal for communities.

Erectile Dysfunction

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what guidance he issues to general practitioners on what constitutes severe distress for the purposes of the treatment of erectile dysfunction. [168446]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Health Service Circular (HSC) 1999/177, issued on 6 August 1999 contains guidance to general practitioners on the treatment of erectile dysfunction and severe distress.

Eye Tests

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Burnley have access to free eye tests; [167949]

(2) how many residents in Burnley aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [167950]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens are not collected centrally.

The total number of sight tests paid for by Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority in the year 2002–03 for people aged 60 and over was 189,100.

The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 429,300. Sight tests cannot be equated to the number of patients.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many residents in Manchester, Gorton aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests; [167382]

(2) how many senior citizens in Manchester, Gorton have access to free eye tests. [167381]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizens is not collected centrally.

The total number of National Health Service sight tests paid for by the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority in 2002–03 for patients aged 60 and over was 189,900. The total number eligible for a free sight test for those aged 60 and over was 493,100. Sight tests cannot be equated to the numbers of patients.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many senior citizens in Preston have access to free eye tests; [168098]

(2) how many residents in Preston aged over 60 years have benefited from the abolition of charges for eye tests. [168099]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data for the number of sight tests by constituency or by the number of senior citizensis not collected centrally.

The total number of sight tests paid for by Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority in the year 2002–03 for those aged 60 and over was 189,100.

The total number of eligible for a free eye test for those aged 60 and over was 429,300. Sight tests cannot be equated to the number of patients.

Source:

Department of Health Statistics.

GM Foods

Mr. Whittingdale: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) what discussions have been held by officials of the Food Standards Agency with, and what representations have been received by the Agency from, *(a)* the Food and Drink Federation, *(b)* the European Federation of European Food Additives and Food Enzymes Industries, *(c)* the Confederation of Food and Drink Industries of the European Union, *(d)* individual companies involved in the fermentation sector and *(e)* other stakeholders about the interpretation of the new traceability and labelling regulations in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms; [169958]

(2) what the policy objectives of the Food Standards Agency are for the forthcoming discussions with the European Commission and other member states about the interpretation of the new traceability and labelling regulations in relation to products produced with genetically modified micro-organisms; and what communication the Agency *(a)* has had and *(b)* intends to have with other member states to secure those objectives; [169959]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Food Standards Agency (FSA), in conjunction with the Department for Environment, Rural Affairs and Food, has held stakeholder meetings with a number of interested parties, including industry bodies and associations, to discuss the implications and scope of both the Genetically Modified Food and Feed Regulation (EC) 1829/2003 and the Traceability and Labelling Regulation (EC) 1830/2003.

The food and feed industry has raised specific concerns in relation to the labelling of products arising from a fermentation process using either genetically modified micro-organisms and/or genetically modified substrates. This issue has been raised throughout Member States and the Commission has undertaken to take forward a discussion at Standing Committee where the FSA will seek clarification on the status of these products.

Heart Disease

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last five years. [167378]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Health Expenditure

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Burnley in each of the last five years. [167956]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Preston in each of the last five years. [168103]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations of funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Health Service Publications

Dr. Cable: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what estimate he has made of the cost of publications in 2003 by *(a)* his Department, *(b)* primary care trusts and *(c)* hospital trusts. [167850]

Ms Rosie Winterton: The estimated cost of publications, including posters, leaflets, fact-sheets and resource packs produced by the Department's Communications Directorate in 2003–04 is £14.85 million. The estimated costs of publications produced by primary care trusts and hospital trusts cannot be given, as these figures are not held centrally.

Health Services (Bootle)

Mr. Benton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding was spent on *(a)* heart disease and *(b)* cancer care in Bootle in each of the last five years. [170536]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not collected centrally. Allocations for funding for particular treatments are matters for the local primary care trust.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health on how many occasions the Accident and Emergency Department of University Hospital, Aintree exceeded a four-hour wait for treatment between February 2002 and February 2004. [166952]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Department began collecting accident and emergency performance figures from the second quarter of 2002–03. The available information is shown in the table.

Total time spent in Accident and Emergency from arrival to admission, transfer or discharge, Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust, July 2002 to December 2003

	Quarter	*Name*	*Total attendances*	*Percentage of patients who spent less than four hours in A&E*	*Actual number of patients spending over four hours in A&E*
2002–03	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	19,630	52.1	9,394
2002–03	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	18,931	59.3	7,702
2002–03	4	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	18,360	75.4	4,516
2003–04	1	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	20,106	77.4	4,547
2003–04	2	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	21,348	90.8	1,957
2003–04	3	Aintree Hospitals NHS Trust	19,016	85.0	2,853

Source:
Department of Health dataset QMAE.

Mr. Kilfoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many hospital beds were available in Liverpool for each year between 1997 and 2003. [166953]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the table.

Average daily number of available beds by sector, NHS organisations in Liverpool, 1997–2003

ID	*Organisation*	[1]*2002–03*	[1]*2001–02*	[1]*2000–01*	[1]*1999–2000*	[1]*1998–99*	[1]*1997–98*
REM	Aintree University Hospitals NHS Trust	905	949	1,163	1,110	1,152	1,190
RQ6	Royal Liverpool and Broadgreen University Hospitals NHS Trust	1,228	1,212	1,262	1,227	1,205	1,156
RBQ	The Cardiothoracic Centre -Liverpool NHS Trust	196	214	192	186	184	185
RET	Walton Centre for Neurology	124	153	114	111	104	104
REN	Clatterbridge Centre for Oncology	107	106	105	113	119	137
RBS	Royal Liverpool Childrens Hospital	241	243	238	242	243	241
Total		2,801	2,877	3,074	2,989	3,007	3,013

[1] Available
Source:
Department of Health form KH03

Heart Surgery

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Heywood and Middleton awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [168492]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is not held centrally.

Hospices

Mr. Hoyle: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on funding for hospices in the NHS. [169854]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The latest survey by the National Council for Hospice and Specialist Palliative Care Services indicates the National Health Service allocation in 2000 to specialist palliative care was

£130 million, of which £65 million went to voluntary hospices and the remainder to specialist palliative care services provided by the NHS.

The Government subsequently pledged in the NHS cancer plan to increase NHS investment in specialist palliative care, including hospices, by an extra £50 million per annum by 2004. This pledge has been met and represents an increase of nearly 40 per cent. in the amount of funding provided by the NHS over 2000 figures.

Human Fertilisation and Embryology

Mr. Amess: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many prosecutions have been brought since 1991 for breach of the prohibition in section 3 (4) of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990 on the keeping or using for treatment or research of embryos beyond the 14 day limit; [166909]

(2) when the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority will publish the results of its work with the Medical Research Council on the long-term effects of IVF; [166911]

(3) how many cases of ovarian hyper stimulation syndrome have been reported since 1991; and if he will make a statement. [166912]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Human Fertilisation and Embryology Authority (HFEA) has advised me that no prosecutions have been brought in respect of a breach of section 3(4) of the Human Fertilisation and Embryology Act 1990.

No date has yet been set for publication of the outcome of the work that the Medical Research Council and the HFEA have been doing on the long term health effects of assisted conception treatments, including in vitro fertilisation.

Data on incidences of ovarian hyper stimulation syndrome are not collected centrally nor routinely recorded by the HFEA.

Inflammatory Bowel Disease

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of trials using pigs' whip worm eggs to treat inflammatory bowel disease. [170164]

Dr. Ladyman: We are aware of the promising results from the research trials in the United States. The product, however, has not yet been licensed by the European Agency for the Evaluation of Medicinal Products.

Learning Disabilities

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many people with learning disabilities are inappropriately accommodated in long-stay hospitals; when he expects to be able to provide more appropriate accommodation; and if he will make a statement. [170198]

Dr. Ladyman: The Government are committed to the closure of the remaining long stay hospitals: it is not right that people with learning disabilities should live in national health service accommodation on a long term basis. Strategic health authorities are responsible for ensuring that primary care trusts and NHS trusts are working in partnership with local authorities to develop and deliver plans that will achieve the closure of the remaining hospitals.

The latest information available (April 2004) is that 622 people are still living in long stay hospitals; this compares with about 1,500 when the White Paper, "Valuing People: A New Strategy for Learning Disability for the 21st Century", was published in March 2001. It is disappointing that the 2004 closure date in "Valuing People" has been missed, but each remaining hospital now has an individually agreed closure date between now and April 2006.

Liquid-based Cytology

Dr. Gibson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how much has been allocated for liquid-based cytology in 2004–05; [167460]

(2) what assessment he has made of the use made of the £1.2 million funding for liquid-based cytology in 2003–04. [167490]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The Government provided £1.2 million in 2003–04 and is providing a further £6 million in 2004–05 to kick start the national implementation of liquid based cytology (LBC) across the cervical screening programme. Funding for further years is in primary care trust baselines. The intention is that cytology training centres should be converted first in order to be in a position to train the rest of the programme.

The £1.2 million funding for 2003–04 was distributed to the service, and eight of the nine cytology training centres are at various stages of training in LBC techniques. The ninth is assessing which of the two main LBC technologies to implement before commencing training.

Lupus

Helen Jackson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what action he is taking to raise awareness of the particular problems of patients and carers suffering from lupus. [170726]

Dr. Ladyman: We are taking no specific action to raise awareness of the problems of patients and carers with lupus. Ministers however, have had two meetings with the All Party Parliamentary Group on Lupus in the past year.

Mental Health Services

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much funding has been provided to improve child and adolescent mental health services over the last three years; what the planned spending on these services is; and if he will make a statement. [170613]

Dr. Ladyman: In the three years to March 2004, we have invested an additional £83.6 million for the development of child and adolescent mental health services (CAMHS) delivered by the national health service and local authorities.

A number of positive outcomes have been reported including improved access to specialist services, the development of new services for groups that traditionally have found it difficult to access CAMHS and better support to other agencies. In particular, this additional investment has led to a significant increase in multi-disciplinary and joint working across professions and agencies, engaging key local players in the development of the service.

This is only the first stage in a continuing programme of radical improvements in the quality and quantity of CAMHS. Our current public service agreement target provides for an expansion of the service by at least 10 per cent., per year for the three years to March 2006. This development is further underpinned by £252 million of additional funding over the next two years.

Mobile MRI Scan Units

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of the ability of mobile MRI scan units to share data with the NHS; and if he will make a statement. [167711]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Data produced by mobile magnetic resonance imaging units, including images acquired, will be provided in a format that is compatible with current national health service systems.

MRSA

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to the answer of 20 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 427W, on MRSA, whether the Commission for Social Care Inspection will collect and publish information on MRSA infections in care homes. [169719]

Miss Melanie Johnson: I understand from the Chairman of the Commission for Social Care Inspection (CSCI) that the Commission does not collect information specifically about methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA), although regulated service providers must notify CSCI of death, illness and other events.

National Information Centre

Paul Holmes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health (1) how many people have used the National Information Centre in each of the last three years; and if he will make a statement; [170605]

(2) how much the National Learning Disability Information Centre and Helpline has cost to set up; and if he will make a statement. [170200]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Learning Disability Centre and Helpline was launched in December 2001. In 2002, the Helpline answered 6,482 enquires. The equivalent figure for the period from January to December 2003 was 10,522.

The Department and Mencap each gave £250,000 per year to run the National Learning Disability Centre and Helpline from 2001 until March 2004. We have recently confirmed that Government funding will continue for another two years from April 2004. The first year's allocation included set up costs.

National Service Framework for Older People

Sandra Gidley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what age-related policies have been reported by local health authorities in response to the National Service Framework for Older People; and if he will make a statement. [171020]

Dr. Ladyman: I refer the hon. Member to the response I gave to her on 28 April 2004, *Official Report*, column 1091W.

NHS Staff

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Heywood in each of the last seven years; and if he will make a statement. [168484]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The table shows the number of doctors and nurses within the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority area, the number of general medical practitioners and practice nurses in Heywood and Middleton and the number of doctors and nurses in the Pennine Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust (including its predecessor organisations) each year since 1997.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1], General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2] Qualified Nursing, Midwifery and health visiting staff and Practice Nurses employed by Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs)[3] for Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority and specified organisations

Number (headcount)

	1997	*1998[4]*	*1999[4]*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Greater Manchester							
Doctors[1]	5,322	5,441	5,634	5,695	5,834	5,951	5,965
of which:							
HCHS Doctors[1]	3,837	3,957	4,124	4,172	4,315	4,440	4,384
General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2]	1,485	1,484	1,510	1,523	1,519	1,511	1,581
Nurses	19,551	19,834	19,818	20,087	20,213	20,982	21,609
of which:							
Qualified Nursing, Midwifery and health visiting staff	18,678	18,907	18,767	19,163	19,258	20,053	20,674
Practice Nurses	873	927	1,051	924	955	929	935
Heywood and Middleton PCT							
Doctors[1]	[5]—	[5]—	44	45	[5]—	[5]—	[5]—
Nurses	[5]—	[5]—	21	21	[5]—	[5]—	[5]—

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1], General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers)[2] Qualified Nursing, Midwifery and health visiting staff and Practice Nurses employed by Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs)[3]for Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority and specified organisations

Number (headcount)

	1997	1998[4]	1999[4]	2000	2001	2002	2003
Heywood and Middleton PCG							
Doctors[1]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	45	45	45
Nurses	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	65	142	144
Oldham NHS Trust							
Doctors[1]	211	224	220	229	232	[5]	[5]
Nurses	1,185	1,191	1,203	1,292	1,296	[5]	[5]
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust							
Doctors[1]	173	224	220	229	232	[5]	[5]
Nurses	1,001	1,040	859	1,015	915	[5]	[5]
North Manchester Health Care NHS Trust							
Doctors[1]	320	315	376	373	366	[5]	[5]
Nurses	1,184	1,195	1,103	1,085	885	[5]	[5]
Bury Health Care NHS Trust							
Doctors[1]	163	171	183	196	203	[5]	[5]
Nurses	881	878	907	944	997	[5]	[5]
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust							
Doctors[1]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	919	696
Nurses	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	[5]	2,922	3,221

[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospitals.
[2] All Practitioners (excluding retainers) include Restricted Principals, Assistants, GP Registrars, Salaried Doctors (Para. 52 SFA), PMS Other, Flexible Career Scheme GPs and GP Returners.
[3] UPEs include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs.
[4] Headcount Practice Nurse figures are estimated for these years.
[5] Not available.
Note:
Data as at 30 September every year except GPs which are as at 1 October 1997–99.
Sources:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census.
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census.

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* doctors and *(b)* nurses there were in Burnley in each of the last seven years. [167951]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Information on the number of national health service doctors and nurses is not gathered on a constituency basis. The tables show information based on NHS organisations serving the Burnley area.

Hospital, Public Health Medicine and Community Health Services (HCHS) Doctors[1] and General Medical Practitioners (excluding retainers) for Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority and specified organisations serving the Burnley area as at 30 September

	All Doctors[1]						
	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	3,173	3,283	3,263	3,380	3,350	3,413	3,494
Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care[2]	201	211	219	239	250	238	n/a
Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust[2]	211	232	238	280	232	230	n/a
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	499
Burnley PCG	n/a	n/a	52	53	n/a	n/a	n/a
Pendle PCG	n/a	n/a	51	51	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rossendale PCG	n/a	n/a	33	31	n/a	n/a	n/a
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	138	151	158

n/a = not available
[1] Excludes Hospital Medical Hospital Practitioners and Hospital Medical Clinical Assistants, most of whom are GPs working part time in hospital
[2] Mental Health elements transferred to Lancashire Care Trust from 1 April 2002
Note:
Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–1999.
Sources:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.
Department of Health Medical and Dental Workforce Census.
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census.

Qualified Nursing, Midwifery and health visiting staff and Practice Nurses employed by Unrestricted Principals and Equivalents (UPEs)[1] for Cumbria and Lancashire Strategic Health Authority and specified organisations serving the Burnley area as at 30 September

		Nurses						
		1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Cumbria and Lancashire SHA	Q13	13,359	13,400	13,859	13,494	13,794	15,011	15,049
Blackburn, Hyndburn and Ribble Valley Health Care[1]	RMB	1,260	1,274	1,547	1,189	1,206	1,161	n/a
Burnley Healthcare NHS Trust[2]	REU	1,382	1,369	1,358	1,364	1,536	1,185	103
East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust	RXR	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	2,143
Burnley PCG	4PG13	n/a	n/a	37	39	n/a	n/a	n/a
Pendle PCG	4TA20	n/a	n/a	49	31	n/a	n/a	n/a
Rossendale PCG	4DK34	n/a	n/a	22	22	n/a	n/a	n/a
Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale PCT	5G8	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	392	403

n/a = not available
[1] UPEs include GMS Unrestricted Principals, PMS Contracted GPs and PMS Salaried GPs.
[2] Mental Health elements transferred to Lancashire Care Trust from 1 April 2002.
Note:
Data as at 30 September every year except GP as at 1 October 1997–1999
Source:
Department of Health General and Personal Medical Services Statistics.
Department of Health Non-medical Workforce Census.

Mr. Kaufman: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many NHS *(a)* therapists and *(b)* scientists were located in Manchester, Gorton in each of the last seven years. [167384]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Available information is shown in the table.

NHS hospital and community health services: Qualified scientific, therapeutic and technical staff in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority[1] and each specified organisation as at 30 September each specified year

Headcount

	1997	*1998*	*1999*	*2000*	*2001*	*2002*	*2003*
Greater Manchester SHA[1]	5,701	5,796	5,956	6,248	6,589	7,029	7,170
of which:							
Manchester HA	2,040	2,045	2,096	2,160	2,432	[2]—	[2]—
Central Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	673	668	705	730	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Manchester Childrens Hospitals NHS Trust	187	189	191	211	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—
Central Manchester PCT	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	116	152	152
Central Manchester and Manchester Children's University Hospitals NHS Trust	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	[2]—	923	1,045	1,115

[1] Figures for Greater Manchester SHA are based on the 2002 organisational structure.
[2] Not applicable.
Source:
Department of Health Non-Medical Workforce Census.

Osteoporosis

Diana Organ: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on services for people with osteoporosis. [169870]

Dr. Ladyman: Services to identify, treat and offer preventative advice are available on the National Health Service. The Government's response to osteoporosis has been to include it in the falls standard of the national service framework for older people. The standard requires local health services to establish appropriate interventions and advice to prevent osteoporotic fractures.

To support this requirement, the Department has asked the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to develop clinical guidance on osteoporosis and undertake a technology appraisal on new treatments.

Diana Organ: To ask the Secretary of State for Health when he expects the National Institute for Clinical Excellence to report its recommendations on a technology appraisal on *(a)* the newer osteoporosis treatments and *(b)* a clinical guideline on osteoporosis. [169871]

Dr. Ladyman: The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) is due to publish its appraisal of technologies for the secondary prevention of osteoporotic fractures in postmenopausal women in October 2004. A clinical guideline on the assessment of fracture risk and the prevention of osteoporotic fractures in individuals at high risk is expected to be published in June 2005. A further appraisal of technologies for the primary prevention of osteoporotic fragility fractures in postmenopausal women is being informed by work being carried out by the World Health Organisation and the NICE guideline development group, and is also expected to be published in 2005. Copies of the draft guidance and information on their progress can be found on the NICE website at www.nice.org.uk.

Diana Organ: To ask the Secretary of State for Health which primary care trusts provide preventative osteopososis services. [169873]

Dr. Ladyman: This information is not collected centrally.

Dr. Murrison: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what assessment he has made of preventative measures likely to be of help in the management of osteoporosis; and if he will make a statement on how he will encourage an increase in *(a)* dietary calcium, *(b)* dietary vitamin D and *(c)* weight-bearing exercise. [169922]

Dr. Ladyman: The Department gives general lifestyle messages for preventing osteoporosis, revolving around diet, exercise, reducing smoking and avoiding excessive consumption of alcohol.

We are linking the national service framework for older people with wider work on healthy active life in older age to encourage older people to increase levels of physical activity and to assist with accident prevention.

We are funding projects around increasing and encouraging physical activity in residential care settings and increasing the availability of training for those offering exercise as part of falls prevention.

In June 1998, the Department issued guidelines to general practitioners and primary healthcare teams entitled, "A quick reference Primary Care Guide on the Prevention and Treatment of Osteoporosis". It recommends that adequate intakes of calcium and vitamin D at the reference nutrient intake are maintained.

The Royal College of Physicians guidelines on osteoporosis recommended to health authorities that they should put arrangements in place so that those at particularly high risk of osteoporosis have the opportunity to receive appropriate investigation, prophylaxis, such as hormone replacement therapy or calcium and vitamin D or calcium and bisphosphonates, and advice, for example, about smoking and physical activity.

PCTs (North Derbyshire)

Mr. Barnes: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what information he collates on the workings of the out-of-hours patient service in the areas of the three primary care trusts in North Derbyshire. [170095]

Dr. Ladyman: Information on the workings of local general practitioner out-of-hours services is not collected centrally. Strategic health authorities have responsibility for the performance management of their primary care trusts in their delivery of out-of-hours services.

Prostate Cancer

Mr. Watson: To ask the Secretary of State for Health pursuant to his answer of 21 April, *Official Report*, column 558W, on prostate cancer, if he will make an assessment of the recent findings of research by the US National Cancer Institute on the effect of frequent ejaculation in protecting men against prostate cancer. [170162]

Miss Melanie Johnson: We are aware of the research undertaken by the United States national cancer institute on the effect of frequent ejaculation in protecting men against prostate cancer. The prostate cancer risk management programme is supported by a scientific reference group. This issue will be discussed when the group next meets in the summer.

Public Funding

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Heywood and Middleton in each of the last seven years. [168491]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head of the population in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Heywood and Middleton, has increased from £582.33 in 1997–98 to £992.61 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how much public funding has been spent on health in Stalybridge and Hyde in each of the last seven years. [168769]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. Expenditure per weighted head of the population in the Greater Manchester Strategic Health Authority (SHA) area, which includes the constituency of Stalybridge and Hyde, has increased from £582.33 in 1997–98 to £992.61 in 2002–03 (the latest year available). This does not represent the total expenditure per head as an element of health expenditure cannot be identified by SHA area.

Radon Gas

Mr. Burstow: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will assess the risk to health of radon gas in the United Kingdom. [169711]

Miss Melanie Johnson: Radiation-induced lung cancers have been reported in uranium and hard rock miners for a long time. However, the aetiological role of radon was not recognised until 1951, when it was discovered that the lung hazard was due to radiation dose from the decay products of radon. Since the 1980s, the National Radiological Protection Board has kept the risk to health from radon gas under review. The main risk is still lung cancer, although it has been suggested that radon may also cause other types of cancer. On theoretical grounds, some such radon-induced cancers would be expected, but these would be far fewer than the lung cancers and have not been detected in well-designed epidemiological studies.

School Blood Donations

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many children donated blood at mobile blood units visiting schools in 2003–04. [169481]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The age limit for first time donors is 17 to 60 years, although regular donors can continue to give blood until the age of 70 as long as they continue to meet all the donor selection criteria.

During 2003–04 across all donor sessions:

20,776 donors aged 17 (as at 1 April 2003) made a total of 30,344 donations; and

22,826 donors aged 18 (as at 1 April 2003) made a total of 32,309 donations.

The national blood service (NBS) actively targets 17-year-olds. In March 2004, the NBS launched a new direct marketing campaign targeting 17-year-olds. This mailing encourages individuals who have just turned 17 to pre-register to give blood. So far, 3,266 17-year-olds have signed up as blood donors because of this campaign.

Surplus Property Sales

Tim Loughton: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what the total costs associated with the proposed sale of surplus NHS sites and Inventures to date have been. [169125]

Mr. Hutton *[holding answer 27 April 2004]*: The total project and property selling costs associated with the proposed real estate partnership was some £13.4 million at the end of 2003–04, a very small proportion of the likely eventual value of the property portfolio.

Waiting Lists

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list time in the last seven years for the residents of Heywood and Middleton. [168486]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the form requested. The table shows the number of patients waiting for admission to the Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust (including its predecessor organisations) each year since 1997.

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

		Patients waiting for admission by months waiting						
NHS Trust	*Total number of patients waiting for admission*	*Less than three months*	*Three to five months*	*Six to eight months*	*Nine to 11 months*	*12 to 14 months*	*15 to 17 months*	*18 plus months*
March 1997								
Oldham NHS Trust	8,436	3,837	2,293	1,339	967	—	—	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,464	2,472	868	577	374	173	—	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	5,787	2,961	1,506	708	427	157	22	6
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,223	1,471	399	196	120	37	—	—
March 1998								
Oldham NHS Trust	8,332	3,954	1,976	1,650	736	16	—	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,684	2,702	924	581	305	132	40	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	6,002	2,911	1,253	827	528	308	175	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,437	1,581	375	251	128	91	11	—
March 1999								
Oldham NHS Trust	7,338	4,156	1,904	895	315	67	1	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,168	2,351	873	484	257	167	36	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	4,699	3,342	737	369	148	76	27	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,153	1,210	367	240	127	158	51	—
March 2000								
Oldham NHS Trust	6,484	4,012	1,364	682	371	50	5	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,032	2,102	841	568	330	130	61	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	4,262	3,131	653	230	150	78	20	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,103	1,218	341	219	164	105	56	—
March 2001								
Oldham NHS Trust	6,427	4,092	1,478	601	213	43	—	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,039	2,456	876	397	249	45	16	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	4,016	2,884	680	303	119	27	3	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	1,916	1,250	367	181	118	—	—	—
March 2002								
Oldham NHS Trust	6,297	3,830	1,631	611	225	—	—	—
Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	4,530	2,675	1,029	527	254	45	—	—
North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	4,008	2,804	795	265	114	30	—	—
Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	2,045	1,411	336	218	78	2	—	—
March 2003								
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	15,872	10,226	3,607	1,575	464	—	—	—
February 2004								
Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	15,892	9,720	4,536	1,491	145	—	—	—

Source:

DH form KH07 and Monthly Monitoring.

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many and what percentage of suspected cancer patients in Heywood and Middleton saw an NHS consultant within two weeks in each of the last seven years. [168487]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the format requested. The table shows the number and percentage of suspected cancer patients, seen within two weeks of urgent referral by a general practitioner, at the Pennine Acute Hospitals National Health Service Trust and its predecessor organisations for each quarter since quarter four of 2000–01. Earlier figures are not available.

Waiting times for first consultant outpatient appointment for suspected cancer following urgent GP referral

Quarter	NHS Trust	Seen within two weeks (percentage)	Number
2000–01			
4	Oldham NHS Trust	93.3	167
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.0	200
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	93.9	200
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	97.1	374
2001–02			
1	Oldham NHS Trust	94.8	181
1	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	97.8	224
1	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	94.9	242
1	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	96.1	345
2	Oldham NHS Trust	96.4	162
2	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	93.0	227
2	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	90.6	298
2	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	99.0	385
3	Oldham NHS Trust	98.9	181
3	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.6	235
3	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	94.7	286
3	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	99.5	398
4	Oldham NHS Trust	98.5	197
4	Rochdale Healthcare NHS Trust	99.5	209
4	North Manchester Healthcare NHS Trust	99.7	302
4	Bury Healthcare NHS Trust	100.0	450
2002–03			
1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.8	1,215
2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	99.1	1,240
3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	98.4	1,325
4	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	95.8	1,190
2003–04			
1	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	92.2	1,214
2	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	94.9	1,174
3	Pennine Acute Hospitals NHS Trust	97.6	1,276

Source:
DH form QMCW

Jim Dobbin: To ask the Secretary of State for Health if he will make a statement on NHS waiting times for heart surgery in Heywood and Middleton. [168488]

Miss Melanie Johnson: There were two patients waiting nine to 11 months for heart surgery in the Heywood and Middleton Primary Care Trust area in June 2002, since when no patients have waited more than nine months.

James Purnell: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what changes there have been to NHS waiting list times in the last seven years for the residents of Stalybridge and Hyde. [168771]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information is not available in the form requested. The table shows the number of patients waiting for admission to the Tameside and Glossop Acute Services National Health Service Trust each year since 1997.

Patients waiting for elective in-patient admission

NHS Trust	Total number of patients waiting for admission	Patients waiting for admission by months waiting						
		Less than 3 months	3–5 months	6–8 months	9–11 months	12–14 months	15–17 months	18 + months
March 1997								
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	3,216	2,062	767	321	66	—	—	—
March 1998								
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	3,704	2,416	789	349	150	—	—	—
March 1999								
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	3,142	2,453	432	197	60	—	—	—
March 2000								
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	3,460	2,686	486	225	63	—	—	—
March 2001								
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	3,523	2,508	650	237	93	35	—	—
March 2002								
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	3,660	2,216	920	406	118	—	—	—
March 2003								
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	3,502	2,408	808	254	32	—	—	—
February 2004								
Tameside and Glossop Acute Services NHS Trust	3,077	2,140	747	189	1	—	—	—

Source:
Department of Health form KH07 and Monthly Monitoring

Mr. Pike: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Burnley awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [167945]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not collected centrally.

Mr. Hendrick: To ask the Secretary of State for Health how many residents in Preston awaiting heart surgery have had the option of choosing an alternative hospital for quicker treatment in the last 12 months. [168109]

Miss Melanie Johnson: This information is not collected centrally.

Ward Managers

Mr. Lansley: To ask the Secretary of State for Health whether ward managers are provided with NHS purchasing cards. [167705]

Mr. Hutton: The NHS Purchasing and Supply Agency has agreements for the provision of purchase cards to the national health service. In 2001, each ward manager was allocated a budget of £5000 to improve the ward environment. The use of purchase cards was developed as part of this initiative, but it was for decision by individual NHS trust whether to join the scheme and to issue cards to ward managers. As at April 2004, there are 2000 purchase cards being used in the NHS.

Warrington Hospital

Helen Southworth: To ask the Secretary of State for Health what capital expenditure has been undertaken at Warrington hospital in each year since 1997; and for what purposes. [168707]

Miss Melanie Johnson: The information requested is shown in the tables.

Expenditure on capital additions—purchased

£ thousand

Warrington Hospital NHS Trust	*1997–98*	*1998–99*	*1999–2000*	*2000–01*
Land	171	0	0	0
Buildings, installations and fittings	773	1,060	1,621	756
Assets under construction	0	0	0	0
Equipment	687	748	1,668	1,860
Total	1,631	1,808	3,289	2,616

North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust

	2001–02
Land	0
Buildings, Installations and Fittings	1,750
Assets under Construction	0
Equipment	2,327
Total	4,077

North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust

	2002–03
Land	0
Buildings excluding dwellings	2,380
Dwellings	7
Assets under construction and payments on account	1,545
Plant and machinery	2,165
Transport equipment	0
Information technology	83
Furniture and fittings	22
Total	6,202

Sources:
Audited summarisation schedules of the Warrington Hospital NHS Trust 1997–98 to 2000–01
Audited summarisation schedules of the North Cheshire Hospitals NHS Trust 2001–02 and 2002–03

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PARLIAMENTARY DEBATES

OFFICIAL REPORT

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19th April 2004—6th May 2004

Printed indexes to Hansard

The volume index is one of three printed indexes to Commons Hansard produced from the House of Commons Library's Parliamentary On-Line Indexing Service (POLIS). It contains references to material in the bound volume of Hansard. The other indexes produced are:

- The index to the daily parts of Hansard. This covers the same date range as the volume index but references may be different as a result of changes to the text and column numbering.
- The sessional index to Hansard. This contains references to material in the bound volumes for a whole session..

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- The names of all Members contributing to the Parliamentary business recorded in Hansard.
- The names of some types of Parliamentary business whenever they occur in Hansard. These are 'Ministerial statements', 'Business statements', 'Opposition days' and 'Estimates days'.

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- All headings are in one word-by-word alphabetical sequence, with Members' contribution entries distinguished from other entries by italics.
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- *Speaker and Chair*—Contributions by the Speaker and deputies are brought together under the heading 'Speaker and deputies'. Contributions from the chair during Committees of the Whole House are brought together under 'Chairman of Committee of the Whole House'. Significant rulings and statements (as opposed to routine comments) are indicated by the sub-heading 'Rulings and statements' in both cases.

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- *Concept thesaurus*—A copy of the subject thesaurus to POLIS, listing the concept entries used in the index, is available on the Parliamentary website. A hard copy is available from the Head of the POLIS Unit, House of Commons Library, 1 Derby Gate, London, SW1A 2DG (020 7219 6456).

REFERENCES

- References in the indexes are to columns rather than pages.
- References to debates, but not questions, are accompanied by the date of the item.
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  - References ending in 'wh' indicate Westminster Hall sittings.
  - References ending in 'ws' indicate written statements.
  - References ending in 'w' indicate written questions.
- References under all headings except the names of Members contributing to Parliamentary business and the titles of legislation are listed in one numerical sequence irrespective of whether the material is taken on the floor of the House, is discussed at a Westminster Hall sitting, is a written statement or is a written question.
- References under the names of Members contributing to Parliamentary business and the titles of legislation are listed in numerical sequence under the following headings:
  - *Chamber Debates* (which includes interventions and points of order as well as significant contributions to debates);
  - *Westminster Hall Debates* (covering all debates held as part of the Westminster Hall sittings);
  - *Written Statements* (consisting of ministerial statements issued in writing); and
  - *Questions* (which includes all written, oral and urgent questions).

ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used in connection with the progress of bills:

- 1R = First reading
- 2R = Second reading
- Com = Committee stage
- Rep = Report stage
- 3R = Third reading
- res = resolution
- amendt(s) = amendment(s)
- * = matter taken formally without debate or division
- (HL) = Bill starting in House of Lords
- (SP) = Bill in Scottish Parliament.

Parliamentary background

- The Parliamentary website at http://www.parliament.uk contains a range of information about Parliament and the full text of some Parliamentary papers and proceedings including Hansard.
- Information on current Parliamentary business is provided in the House of Commons Information Office *Weekly Information Bulletin*, available on the website and from The Stationery Office (020 7873 8499).
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